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**GERMANY**

**STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR DR CHRISTOPH ISRANG  
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF GERMANY TO THE OPCW  
AT THE EIGHTIETH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

Mr Chairman, Mr Director-General, distinguished colleagues,

Thank you for giving me the floor.

Germany fully aligns itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the European Union by H.E. Pierre-Louis Lorenz, Permanent Representative of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg.

Please allow me to join those who have expressed a warm welcome to the new Deputy Director-General, H.E. Ambassador Hamid Ali Rao. We are looking forward to working closely with him.

At this time, we commemorate the first international agreement banning the use of chemical weapons. In 1675, 340 years ago, representatives of France and the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation signed the Strasbourg Agreement, which ended hostilities, but also banned the use of poisoned bullets in future armed conflicts. Tomorrow at lunch time, you are all cordially invited by the French and German delegations, as well as the Technical Secretariat, to attend a reception for the opening of an exhibition about this Agreement. The treaty includes two elements that we still talk about today. The first is the issue of accountability, that those responsible for violating the Agreement should be punished. The second element is that the whole Agreement is based on trust.

When we talk about the use of chemical weapons in the Syrian Arab Republic, both issues – trust and accountability – are of the utmost importance. Germany deplores the fact that the international community still cannot have sufficient confidence that the Syrian Government is not using toxic chemicals as a weapon, has not withheld undeclared chemical weapons and is thus fulfilling all its obligations under the Chemical Weapons Convention. We will come back to concerns over the unresolved gaps, inconsistencies and discrepancies, as contained in the Technical Secretariat's latest report, later in this session.

We welcome United Nations Security Council resolution 2235 (2015) and the creation of the Joint Investigative Mechanism (JIM), as it will focus on the issue of accountability. Those responsible for the use of toxic chemicals as a weapon must be brought to justice. The continuation of the work of the FFM, as well as close cooperation between the OPCW and the United Nations, will be crucial for the success of the JIM.



Germany condemns the use of chemical weapons anywhere and by anyone. This also includes the use of mustard gas by terrorists in northern Iraq. This Organisation must do its part in preventing non-State actors from producing, acquiring or using chemical weapons. The new Chairperson of the OEWG on Terrorism, H.E. Ambassador Dr Joe Tony Aidoo of Ghana, has our full support to explore ways to do this.

As the OPCW family, we must appeal to States Parties to meet their obligations, but we must also appeal to the responsibility of individuals. This is the reason why the German delegation has encouraged the establishment of ethical guidelines for chemical professionals. We are very pleased to see that chemists from all regional groups have recently reached consensus on the text of these ethical guidelines. We would like to thank the Technical Secretariat for serving as a platform for this activity and providing the scientists with practical support. It is now our common task to spread the word by launching the guidelines at a large conference that gathers prominent chemists from all parts of the world.

As States Parties to the OPCW, we have to live up to our obligations under the Chemical Weapons Convention. This also includes full national implementation of the Convention and timely payment of annual contributions and verification invoices. In its report, the Advisory Body on Administrative and Financial Matters (ABAF) has expressed concern about the fact that a considerable number of States Parties are in arrears and that this situation is having a severe impact on the Organisation's cash-flow situation.

We encourage all possessor States to continue their destruction activities. We are pleased to note progress in the United States of America and the Russian Federation. We are particularly happy to note that the work at four Russian CWDFs was successfully concluded recently. As you will recall, Germany supported this effort by contributing roughly EUR 400 million.

Germany welcomes the debate on the future of the OPCW beyond 2025. The retreat last week was an important step, but certainly not the last one in this process.

I would like to request that this statement be circulated as an official document of this Council meeting and posted to the OPCW website. Thank you, Mr Chairman.

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