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OPENING STATEMENT BY THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL TO THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL AT ITS EIGHTY-THIRD SESSION

Madam Chairperson,
Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,

1. I welcome you all to the Eighty-Third Session of the Executive Council.
2. The intersessional period was marked by a major undertaking to remove the remaining Category 2 chemical weapons from Libya for destruction outside its territory. This followed the decision of the Council of 20 July (EC-M-52/DEC.1, dated 20 July 2016), which was endorsed by the United Nations Security Council in its resolution 2298 (2016).
3. On 26 August, the Council approved the “Plan for the Destruction of Libya’s Remaining Category 2 Chemical Weapons Outside the Territory of Libya” (EC-M-53/DEC.1, dated 26 August 2016), which I had presented in accordance with the Council’s request made on 27 July.
4. By 27 August, which was five weeks after the original decision in July, all chemical weapons had been removed from Libya and on 6 September they arrived at the port of Bremen in Germany. The arrival of the entire consignment of 23 tanks was verified by representatives of the Technical Secretariat as well as the Libyan National Authority, which played a crucial role throughout the mission. Destruction operations are currently under way at the designated GEKA facility in Munster, Germany.
5. This was yet another extraordinary operation. I commend the Danish effort; the maritime transportation was carried out in a volatile situation. I also wish to acknowledge the generous assistance provided by a number of States Parties to ensure the success of the mission; it bears further testimony to the willingness of States Parties to take actions they deem necessary to preserve the goals of the Chemical Weapons Convention.
6. This mission serves to remind us that flexibility and adaptability must be counted as essential features of our Organisation as we review its ability to meet unexpected challenges in the future.
7. More than anything else, the norms of the Convention can only be upheld if we show zero tolerance for the use of chemical weapons or the use of toxic chemicals as weapons. This has tragically re-emerged as a grim reality and is a negation of the



fundamental norms of the Convention, which are regarded as universal. States Parties have repeatedly stressed that the use of chemical weapons by anyone under any circumstances is reprehensible and completely contrary to the legal norms established by the international community. I have recently received several communications from chemical industry associations and chemical societies from different parts of the world, condemning the use of chlorine as a weapon.

8. The OPCW-UN Joint Investigative Mechanism (JIM) has recently reconfirmed the use of chemical weapons in the conflict in Syria. In accordance with the terms of the supplementary arrangement concerning the implementation of Security Council resolution 2235 (2015), I have transmitted to the members of the Executive Council, as well as other States Parties, the three reports of the JIM. These include the latest report, submitted to the United Nations Security Council on 24 August. The JIM is expected to submit another report to the Security Council in the course of this month, which I will circulate once received.
9. There have been further allegations of the use of toxic chemicals as weapons in the Syrian Arab Republic, over which I have expressed my serious concerns. The OPCW Fact-Finding Mission will continue its work and will endeavour to establish the facts surrounding all credible allegations of chemical weapons use in the Syrian Arab Republic. I will continue to encourage States Parties to share with the Secretariat information that they may possess that is pertinent to the FFM's work. Last week, the Secretariat provided a briefing regarding the activities of the FFM.
10. The security situation in the Syrian Arab Republic continues to preclude access for the safe destruction of one remaining aircraft hangar, as well as two above-ground facilities. The maintenance and repair of the remote monitoring system, installed at four destroyed underground structures, have been carried out during the intersessional period. Secretariat representatives are scheduled to visit the five destroyed underground structures at the end of November. In order to secure the continued support of the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) for our work in the Syrian Arab Republic, an extension of UNOPS' contract until the end of May 2017 is expected to be concluded soon.
11. As regards the work of the Declaration Assessment Team, I have shared with States Parties the exchange of communications with the Syrian Arab Republic following the previous session of the Council in July 2016. In his last letter, received at the end of August, the Head of the Syrian National Authority has expressed Syria's willingness to continue engagement on outstanding issues. Replies to some of the questions addressed by the Secretariat have also been provided, and I have responded to this latest communication. I continue to underscore the need for the provision of original documentation regarding the Syrian chemical weapons programme, access to officials with overarching knowledge about the programme, and scientifically and technically plausible explanations on outstanding issues. These steps are necessary in order to resolve all identified gaps, inconsistencies, and discrepancies in Syria's declaration so that it can be considered accurate and complete in accordance with the Chemical Weapons Convention and Council decision EC-M-33/DEC.1 (dated 27 September 2013).

12. I have also urged the Syrian Arab Republic to declare all relevant parts of the Syrian Scientific Studies and Research Centre under Articles III and VI of the Convention.
13. Following certain recent allegations regarding the use of chemical weapons in Sudan, the Secretariat has been in contact with the Permanent Representation of Sudan, requesting it to share all available relevant information. The OPCW also offered its assistance and support to any enquiry that the Sudanese authorities might decide to undertake.
14. Progress on the destruction of the remaining chemical weapons stockpiles continues, and as at 30 September had reached 93.31% of the declared Category 1 chemical weapons. As at the same date, the Russian Federation had destroyed 38,092 metric tonnes (MTs), or 95.31% of its declared Category 1 stockpile.
15. As regards destruction activities in the United States of America, the Pueblo Chemical Agent-Destruction Pilot Plant (PCAPP) started destruction operations in early September, and construction and systemisation of the destruction facility at the Blue Grass Chemical Agent-Destruction Pilot Plant (BGCAPP) are under way. Despite a delay in the scheduled commencement date for operations at Pueblo, the United States of America has provided assurances that this will not affect the planned completion date for destruction operations in 2023.
16. Activities also continue regarding the excavation, recovery, and destruction of chemical weapons abandoned by Japan on the territory of China. During the intersessional period, the Secretariat carried out one destruction and storage verification mission at Shijiazhuang and one excavation and recovery inspection at Hunchun. The Secretariat continues to work closely with the Chinese and the Japanese authorities on the excavation, recovery, and destruction of abandoned chemical weapons in China. A tripartite meeting is scheduled to be held in Beijing on 8 and 9 December.
17. The Open-Ended Working Group on the Future Priorities of the OPCW, which was established by the Council at its Eighty-Second Session, held its first meeting at the end of September under the able guidance of its two co-Chairpersons, Ambassador Nölke of Canada and Ambassador Koloane of South Africa, who will report to you later in this session of the Council.
18. I encourage all States Parties to actively participate in this Working Group. The establishment of this forum signals the general recognition that our Organisation needs to be ready for future challenges. The Working Group's report could make a contribution towards the preparations for the Fourth Review Conference in 2018; the Secretariat stands ready to provide its full support to this important endeavour.
19. The Open-Ended Working Group on Terrorism met yesterday for its third meeting this year. A representative from the Expert Group that assists the 1540 Committee addressed the Working Group. The meeting covered a number of issues, including progress of the 2016 Comprehensive Review of the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004). The last such review was held in 2009. The importance of building on the long-standing cooperation between the OPCW and the 1540 Committee in areas of common interest was highlighted. In his capacity as Chairperson of the Working

Group, Ambassador Aidoo of Ghana will make a presentation under the relevant agenda item.

20. In the context of the Sub-Working Group on Non-State Actors, facilitated by H.E. María Teresa Infante, Permanent Representative of Chile, States Parties had the opportunity to exchange their views on the draft decision “Addressing the Threat Posed by the Use of Chemical Weapons by Non-State Actors” (EC-82/DEC/CRP.4/Rev.1, dated 14 July 2016). I would also like to draw attention to Ambassador Infante’s report on the intersessional efforts by the Sub-Working Group (EC-83/WP.1, dated 7 October 2016) which contains a number of suggestions for its deliberations between now and the Council's first session of next year, in March 2017.
21. Earlier this year, the Secretariat announced the establishment of a Rapid Response and Assistance Mission (RRAM) to respond to a request from a State Party for emergency measures of assistance in case of the use of chemical weapons. A draft Secretariat Note containing procedures for a request for assistance was presented to States Parties for comment at the Sub-Working Group meeting held on 6 September 2016. The final version of this Note will be circulated soon. The Secretariat has also continued to pursue options for ensuring air transportation for the RRAM. The Secretariat would welcome the support of any State Party interested in supporting the RRAM with offers of air transportation.
22. As part of our efforts to provide more efficient services to States Parties, the Secretariat increasingly utilises the Secure Information Exchange (SIX) system to transmit classified information. Of the 17 States Parties that have authorised the Secretariat to transmit information via the system, 16 received letters regarding their Article VI declarations in August of this year. I encourage other States Parties to consider using this system.
23. Following completion of the 39th proficiency test for environmental analysis and the first proficiency test for biomedical analysis, a robust network of designated laboratories has now been established. Nineteen laboratories from 15 States Parties have been designated for environmental analysis and 17 laboratories from 14 States Parties have been designated for biomedical analysis. Out of 23 laboratories, 10 laboratories from eight States Parties have not yet entered into a technical agreement for the off-site analysis of samples. I encourage these States Parties to assist their laboratories in completing such an agreement.
24. A group of 27 new inspectors arrived yesterday. Upon completion of their 10-week training programme, these inspectors will be deployed on missions starting from January 2017.
25. The Advisory Board on Education and Outreach (ABEO) met for the second time last week. A report on the outcomes of that meeting will be circulated in the coming days, and the Chairperson of the Board, Dr Jean-Pascal Zanders, will provide a briefing on the Board’s work later on in this session. The ABEO’s work has gained considerable momentum through the coordinated participation of its members in regional meetings of National Authorities. Such activities will add an important practical element to

shaping the Board's recommendations on devising more effective strategies in this area, which will increasingly become a critical part of our mission.

26. The Organisation's partnership with the International Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry (IUPAC) has further expanded in recent years, with IUPAC obtaining permanent observer status at sessions of the ABEO and an OPCW representative serving as an *ex-officio* member of IUPAC's Committee on Chemistry Education. With a view to further deepening this important partnership, and in order to ensure its continued strength and longevity, I intend to sign a memorandum of understanding with IUPAC in the near future.
27. The Scientific Advisory Board (SAB) will meet for its second session this year from 25 to 28 October; I encourage delegations to attend the Board's briefing to States Parties, which will be held during the course of that week. I take this opportunity to thank the members of the SAB who will be concluding their terms in 2016, and to extend a warm welcome to the new members.
28. Preparations for the twentieth anniversary of the OPCW next year are well under way. To mark the occasion, a solemn ceremony will be held in the "Hall of Knights" in the Houses of Parliament of the Netherlands in The Hague on 26 April 2017. The programme of this event will be shared with delegations once it is ready.
29. The celebration of this important anniversary will provide a platform to convey our message on global chemical security to a wider audience. This will not only be a suitable moment to reflect on the achievements of chemical weapons disarmament, but also to highlight the continued relevance of the Convention and its essential contribution to global peace and security. I invite States Parties to organise both international and national events throughout the year to raise awareness about the goals of the Convention and to strengthen outreach to a broad range of stakeholders. The Secretariat remains ready to assist States Parties in such undertakings.
30. I would also like to mention the OPCW History Project that the Secretariat has embarked upon. In line with the proposals put forward for the Programme and Budget for 2016 (C-20/DEC.6, dated 3 December 2015), an external author, Professor Marie Chevrier of Rutgers University in the United States of America, has been commissioned to write a book-length history of our Organisation. The publication is expected to be available in time for the twentieth anniversary.
31. Nominations for the OPCW-The Hague Award closed on 30 September and the selection panel will soon commence its deliberations. As on the two previous occasions, the award ceremony will take place during the regular session of the Conference of the States Parties.
32. On Sunday, 25 September, the OPCW participated in the International Open Day facilitated by the Municipality of The Hague. Over 600 people visited OPCW Headquarters, making the event the largest public engagement for the Organisation. The visitors showed a keen interest in the various activities and briefings that had been organised. With support provided by the European Union, the Open Day included, for the first-time, a mini-film festival featuring the four films produced as part of the OPCW's series of short documentaries, FIRES.

33. The Chemical Industry Coordination Group (CICG), comprising representatives of the International Council of Chemical Associations (ICCA) and the Technical Secretariat, held its third meeting on 25 August. The CICG agreed on cross-participation in events organised by the OPCW and the ICCA and discussed ways to advance a number of project proposals that had been approved by the OPCW-ICCA Joint Steering Committee in April. On 26 September, the European Chemical Industry Council (Cefic) hosted a meeting on transfer discrepancies aimed at providing the Secretariat with an overview of the datasets, methods, and tools used in industry to monitor the trade in chemicals.
34. In the intersessional period, the Technical Secretariat delivered 21 capacity-building activities, including courses, seminars, and workshops, for a total of 401 participants from States Parties in the various regions, and supported 30 fellowship and research projects regarding the implementation of Articles VII, X, and XI of the Convention.
35. On 30 September, the seventeenth edition of the Associate Programme was successfully completed. Thirty-one participants from 31 States Parties, including, for the first time, representatives from the Maldives and Somalia, attended the programme. I wish to thank all States Parties and institutions that contributed to the 2016 edition of this programme. The Associate Programme has trained 424 experts from 118 States Parties since its inception. The alumni of the programme provide strong support for the national implementation of the Convention in their home countries.
36. Under the OPCW Programme to Strengthen Cooperation with Africa on the Chemical Weapons Convention (the “Africa Programme”), the Secretariat continues to implement a wide range of capacity-building activities tailored to the needs of the African States Parties. The current phase of the Africa Programme will end this year. The Secretariat has submitted a report (EC-83/DG.15 C-21/DG.13, dated 15 September 2016) providing an overview of programme activities carried out over the past three years and stating the intention to continue the programme with a fourth phase, from 2017 to 2019.
37. From 26 to 28 July, the Technical Secretariat, in cooperation with the World Customs Organization (WCO), organised a training-of-trainers course at OPCW Headquarters for representatives of customs training institutions on the technical aspects of the transfers regime. This course was a pilot initiative, aimed at strengthening ownership and enhancing sustainability regarding the training of States Parties’ customs officers on the enforcement of the transfers regime relating to scheduled chemicals. For the first time, this customs course targeted the representatives of the customs training institutions rather than front-line customs officers.
38. As regards the enterprise-resource-planning (ERP) project, the Organisation has signed a contract for the software licensing, support, and hosting of the core solution for the project. The additional components outside the core solution have been identified and the procurement process for these components has been initiated. The selection process for an implementation partner has commenced, and is anticipated to be completed by the end of the year. The implementation phase of the project started with the design of the solution, and its implementation is planned to begin during the first quarter of next year.

39. The Draft Programme and Budget for 2017 is EUR 67,798,200. This amount provides sufficient resources for the Secretariat to implement its operational and support programmes. The assessed annual contributions by States Parties amount to EUR 65,529,600, and are unchanged from 2016. Since its approval by the Conference at its Twentieth Session, the Programme and Budget for 2016 has continued to be impacted by the appreciation of the United States dollar against the euro, which has had a negative impact on staff costs, notably those associated with staff turnover. I would like to thank our budget facilitators, Mr Gerhard Eisl of the delegation of Austria and Mr Bahram Jamali of the delegation of the Islamic Republic of Iran, for their important efforts. Mr Eisl and Mr Jamali will provide a briefing to the Council on the outcomes of this process during this session.
40. As at 30 September 2016, the collection rate for the 2016 assessed annual contributions stood at 80.7%, which is lower than 91.4%, the level on the same date in 2015. In addition, there is still a shortfall of EUR 2.8 million in contributions to the 2015 budget, and a further EUR 5.0 million in Article IV and V verification costs remain unreimbursed, covering missions in 2014, 2015, and 2016.
41. While the Secretariat will continue to closely monitor the situation and take steps to address the financial issues, I urge States Parties to settle their dues early and in full.
42. I am pleased to welcome the new Legal Adviser, Mr Trevor Michael Rajah of Zimbabwe, who joined the Secretariat last week. I am confident that, given his qualifications and experience, he will make a positive contribution to our work.

Madam Chairperson,

43. My report to the Council at its Eighty-Third Session is detailed. The full text of my statement will be circulated as an official document of this session. I thank you for your attention.

Chemical demilitarisation and verification

44. As at 30 September, the Secretariat had verified the destruction by the possessor States Parties of 65,780 MTs, or 93.31% of all declared Category 1 chemical weapons.

Russian Federation

45. The Russian Federation had destroyed 38,092 MTs, or 95.31% of its declared Category 1 stockpile as at 30 September 2016. At the facility at Kizner, 3,870 MTs, or 67.37% of chemical warfare agent, have been destroyed. The facility has continued to destroy soman-filled 122 mm warheads. Work remains ongoing to build the last train (Building 1041A) for the destruction of chemical weapons filled with lewisite. The Russian Federation submitted the detailed facility information for this new building to the Secretariat in July, and the final engineering review is planned to take place in mid-2017. Destruction operations at this facility are scheduled to continue until December 2020.

United States of America

46. As at 30 September 2016, the Secretariat had verified the destruction by the United States of America of 24,930 MTs, or 89.8% of its declared Category 1 chemical weapons.
47. The United States of America has successfully completed the systemisation at the PCAPP, which commenced destruction operations on 7 September 2016; verification activities had already started in August 2016. The BGCAPP has completed 100% of construction work and systemisation is currently at 57%. Similarly to Pueblo, the United States of America will supplement destruction efforts by the use of the static detonation chamber (SDC) to destroy chemical munitions considered unsafe for destruction at the BGCAPP facility. Construction work and systemisation for the SDC now stand at 86% and 55% of completion, respectively. The initial visit to the SDC is planned to take place at the end of October 2016, and the start of destruction operations is scheduled for 2017.
48. During the reporting period, the United States of America has destroyed 4.434 MTs of sulfur mustard at the PCAPP (between 7 and 30 September). An amount of 0.574 MTs of unknown agent was destroyed at the Recovered CWDF¹ Tooele Army Depot – South Area (TEAD-S) in Tooele, Utah and 0.013 MTs of unknown agent at the Recovered CWDF Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, New Jersey.

Libya

49. I would like to commend States Parties for their considerable support to the recent mission in Libya. Denmark provided an in-kind contribution, the vessel Ark Futura, to transport the chemicals from the Libyan port of Misrata to Bremen, Germany. Denmark, Spain, and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland contributed vessels to escort the Ark Futura on this important mission, with Italy and Malta providing assistance for the transfer of the samples. Belgium, France, Italy, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland also contributed to the sample transfer by providing clearance for the overflight of their countries for these hazardous chemicals. I appreciate the significant contribution made by Germany, which offered to destroy the chemicals at a facility in Munster, and provided both financial and in-kind support. Finally, I would like to express my gratitude to Canada, Finland, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and the United States of America for their substantial financial support.
50. Prior to the removal of the chemicals, Libya amended its declaration, showing a decrease of 220 MTs. The Secretariat has combined all of the assets of the Organisation to review this situation. During the classified session of the Council, an outline of the results of this review will be provided.
51. As I reported in the “Status of Implementation of the Plan for the Destruction of Libya’s Remaining Category 2 Chemical Weapons Outside the Territory of Libya” (EC-83/DG.19, dated 26 September 2016), one tank experienced an exothermic

¹ CWDF = chemical weapons destruction facility.

reaction during decanting operations. A sample of the resulting material has been received by the OPCW Laboratory in Rijswijk and is currently undergoing analysis. Due to the polymerised nature of the material, analysis is taking longer than expected. It is clear from the initial analysis that this material no longer presents a proliferation threat. I hope to be able to report further regarding this tank during the next status update report, scheduled for 26 October 2016.

Iraq

52. In response to a request made by Iraq, the Secretariat has procured training courses in medical response, safety, decontamination, detection, and handling of chemically contaminated items for Iraqi workers assigned to destruction sites. This training will assist Iraq in its preparations for the destruction of remnants of chemical weapons stored at Al-Muthanna. I would like to thank Canada for its financial support of this effort.

Declarations

53. Only one State Party has yet to submit its initial declaration to the Technical Secretariat under both Article III and Article VI. The Secretariat will continue to work with this State Party and stands ready to provide assistance regarding the submission of the outstanding initial declaration.
54. The Secretariat maintains its cooperation with States Parties in respect of declarations of riot control agents, approximately 10% of which continue to require clarification. Article III of the Convention requires such declarations to be updated within 30 days after any changes have been made, and I continue to encourage all States Parties to revise their statements on possession of riot control agents and to update their declarations accordingly.
55. As at 19 September, eight States Parties had already submitted their annual declarations on anticipated activities (ADAA) for 2017 regarding Schedule 1 facilities, and two States Parties had submitted their ADAA regarding Schedule 2 and 3 plant sites. The deadlines for ADAA submissions for 2017 are 2 October 2016 for Schedule 1 facilities, and 1 November 2016 for Schedule 2 and 3 plant sites, respectively. I encourage States Parties to continue to provide timely and accurate declarations to the Secretariat.

Status of implementation of decision C-14/DEC.4 (dated 2 December 2009)

56. The decision of the Conference of the States Parties at its Fourteenth Session (C-14/DEC.4, dated 2 December 2009) on guidelines regarding concentration limits for mixtures containing Schedule 2A and Schedule 2A* chemicals required States Parties to implement the guidelines as soon as practicable.
57. As at 19 September, 59 States Parties had informed the Secretariat of their status of implementation of the decision by responding to at least one of the five surveys conducted since 2011. Of these, 39 States Parties had implemented, and 20 States Parties had not yet implemented, the decision.

58. I encourage all States Parties that have not previously informed the Secretariat of the status of implementation of the decision, to complete the sixth survey, which was released in September 2016 (S/1420/2016, dated 13 September 2016), by the deadline of 31 December 2016.

Supplement to the 2015 Verification Implementation Report

59. A supplement to the Verification Implementation Report (VIR) for 2015 was issued on 24 August (EC-83/HP/DG.1, dated 24 August 2016). As reported in the supplement, the issue of transfer discrepancies remains outstanding. The Secretariat will continue to work on resolving transfer discrepancies with the States Parties concerned.
60. In September, the Secretariat issued transfer discrepancy letters for the 2015 annual declarations on past activities. I invite States Parties involved in transfer discrepancies to work with the Secretariat to reconcile them.

Electronic declarations tool for National Authorities

61. The Secretariat continues to provide improvements for the electronic declarations tool for National Authorities (EDNA), and has addressed software issues reported by States Parties. The latest version (3.3) was released in July of this year.

Laboratories

62. In order to further enhance our off-site analytical capability, we encourage States Parties to participate in an exercise on the analysis of ricin, notification of which was given to States Parties in a Note by the Secretariat (S/1422/2016, dated 16 September 2016) and which is planned to be conducted by the OPCW Laboratory in the first quarter of 2017.

Article VI inspections

63. In the first nine months of 2016, 173 Article VI inspections were carried out. This figure includes nine inspections at Schedule 1 facilities, 31 at Schedule 2 plant sites, 11 at Schedule 3 plant sites, and 122 at other chemical production facilities (OCPFs). This represents 72% of the 241 inspections provided for in the Programme and Budget for 2016.
64. In order to maintain our regular inspection schedule, despite significant additional activities related to the Organisation's activities in Libya and the Syrian Arab Republic during the same time period, the Secretariat adopted a number of measures aimed at enhancing the efficiency of inspections. These measures included carrying out sequential inspections, further optimisation of planning and reporting, and optimising the number of inspectors participating in different types of mission.
65. In 2016, the use of sampling and analysis (S&A) during Article VI inspections continued as a routine measure in Schedule 2 inspections and on a trial basis in OCPF inspections. Thus far, a total of nine inspections involving S&A have been conducted in nine different countries, including one carried out at an OCPF. The use of regular analytical methods and equipment was supplemented by the use of the First Defender

(known as the “Raman method”), which had been selected as a potential method for field testing for routine use in future missions to identify scheduled chemicals.

66. During the Industry Cluster meeting held last week, consultations addressed recommendations put forward by the SAB as well as topics relevant for Article VI verification activities, such as additions to the OPCW Central Analytical Database (OCAD) and production by synthesis via bio-mediated processes, as well as the current capabilities of the Technical Secretariat to assist States Parties in identifying declarable plant sites.

Inspectorate training

67. During the reporting period, the Capacity-Building and Contingency-Planning Cell of the Inspectorate Division provided 10 individual training courses comprising 184 inspector days and 87 instructor days to a total of 115 participants.
68. In light of the forthcoming departure of a large group of inspectors in January 2017, handover and knowledge transfer activities have been carried out within the Inspectorate Division.
69. In addition to the scheduled regular training courses mandated by the Technical Secretariat’s Quality Management System, Non-Destructive Evaluation (NDE) theory Level I courses were provided, with a view to enhancing participating inspectors’ technical knowledge. Furthermore, the Capacity-Building and Contingency-Planning Cell conducted the mandatory inspector refresher training.
70. The United States of America also provided the refresher course sessions on Hazardous Waste Operations and Emergency Response (HAZWOPER), as mandated by domestic regulations, for individuals working at CWDFs in the United States of America.
71. Italy hosted the NDE work permit practical Level II course for NDE-certified OPCW staff members in order to maintain their certification and improve their knowledge and skills in respect of OPCW-approved NDE methods.
72. The Capacity-Building and Contingency-Planning Cell also provided support to the implementation of the fifth OPCW assistance and protection course for instructors, as well as the seventh annual Summer Programme on Disarmament and Non-Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction in a Changing World, provided by the Asser Institute in collaboration with the OPCW.
73. Prior to their first team leader mission deployments, the Inspectorate Division conducted several induction, safety, and pre-deployment courses to recently promoted inspectors.
74. I would like to thank Italy, the Netherlands, and the United States of America for the technical and in-kind support provided to the inspector training programme.

Safety and Analytical Chemistry Cell

75. The Secretariat is committed to further developing its scientific and technical capabilities in the context of inspections. The Safety and Analytical Chemistry Cell of the Inspectorate Division has developed a methodology to resolve ambiguous identifications during S&A inspections from first principles, minimising dependence on commercial databases. A course on the technique, aimed at further consolidating specialised scientific expertise available within the Secretariat, will be delivered in December.
76. Plans are in place to continuously improve the procedures regarding S&A activities, and challenges encountered in the context of Schedule 3 and OCPF inspections, which are limited to 24 hours, are currently being addressed. Inspections involving S&A have proven to be an important tool in further developing the Secretariat's logistical, scientific, and technical skills base, and have contributed to the Organisation's preparedness as regards challenge inspections or investigations of alleged use.

Scientific Advisory Board

77. In 2016, two workshops were held to review developments in science and technology relevant to the Convention. The most recent workshop, held in Paris in September, focused on the subjects of toxicity, emergency response, and medical countermeasures; the report of this workshop will be made available on the OPCW website.
78. As I have mentioned earlier in my statement, I have appointed the following new members to the SAB: Dr Pål Aas of Norway, Dr Renate Becker-Arnold of Germany, Dr Evandro de Souza Nogueira of Brazil, and Professor Ahmed Elsadig Mohammed Saeed of Sudan. I extend a warm welcome to the new members of the Board, whose appointments will take effect from 1 January 2017.

Science and technology

79. An understanding of the rapid developments in science and technology, and sound scientific advice, continue to be important to the effective implementation of the Convention. In regard to science advice for policy makers, the "Science for Diplomats" briefing—to be held during this session of the Council—will review the SAB's report on chemical weapons sample stability and storage. I encourage all delegations to attend this lunchtime side event on Wednesday, 12 October, in the Ooms Room.
80. The Technical Secretariat will organise a side event addressing science advice in chemical disarmament at the Eighth Review Conference of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention in November of this year.
81. Since the last session of the Council, the Secretariat has continued to engage with the broader scientific community to keep abreast of developments in science and technology and to raise awareness of the Convention. At the 2016 meeting of the Federation of European Toxicologists and European Societies of Toxicology (EUROTOX), and the 24th International Conference on Chemistry Education of

IUPAC, the Secretariat organised symposia presenting themes and keynote presentations related to the Convention.

82. Since the entry into force of the Convention, IUPAC has made a valuable contribution to the work of the OPCW: collaborating with the SAB to organise workshops on science and engineering advances that may have an impact on the implementation of the Convention; liaising with the broader chemistry and engineering communities; participating in the development of The Hague Ethical Guidelines; and co-sponsoring activities contributing to the implementation of programmes beneficial to both IUPAC and the OPCW.

Education and outreach

83. The ABEO held its second meeting at OPCW Headquarters last week. A report on the outcomes of that meeting will be circulated in the coming days, and the Chairperson of the Board, Dr Jean Pascal Zanders, will provide a briefing on the Board's work later during this session. Recent developments concerning the OPCW and the Chemical Weapons Convention further underscore the growing importance of reaching out to a broader group of stakeholders in support of our collective mission. I take this opportunity to remind delegations that the Advisory Board is not only mandated to advise the Technical Secretariat on education and outreach, but that its resources and advice are also available to States Parties as regards their national efforts. I encourage you to engage with the Board in this regard, and to share experiences, initiatives, and activities carried out at the national level.

International cooperation and assistance

Implementation support

84. During the intersessional period, the Secretariat organised nine capacity-building activities, benefiting 132 participants, in the area of implementation support under Article VII; these activities were aimed at training personnel of National Authorities, representatives of customs training institutions, and legal officers responsible for drafting the text of national legislation implementing the Convention.
85. As in previous years, new personnel of National Authorities were offered the opportunity to attend a basic training course at OPCW Headquarters from 18 to 22 July, which was offered in English with simultaneous translation into Spanish. Course modules provided an overview of the Convention, the mandate of the OPCW, and details of its *modus operandi*; training on declaration submission; rules of import and export of scheduled chemicals; National Authorities' functions and responsibilities during OPCW inspections; and the role of National Authorities in education and outreach. The course also included a visit to the OPCW Laboratory and Equipment Store. This yearly training course has been useful to enhance the knowledge and understanding of personnel of National Authorities as regards the effective implementation of the Convention.
86. The aforementioned training-of-trainers course held from 26 to 28 July in cooperation with the WCO at OPCW Headquarters for representatives of customs training institutions on the technical aspects of the transfers regime, which covered key subjects such as the identification of scheduled chemicals and common problems in

import and export reporting, comprised three practical exercises and two group discussions. Participants included representatives of selected States Parties from all OPCW regions, and representatives of National Authorities were invited, along with representatives of their customs training institutions, to reinforce their partnership with customs authorities as one of the key stakeholders in the implementation of the Convention. The participants developed follow-up plans outlining steps to be taken for incorporation of the transfers regime into their national training programmes and an expectation to follow up, at the national level, on the introduction of modules on the Convention in the curricula of their respective institutions. The Technical Secretariat will continue to follow up, assess developments, and provide support.

87. The Secretariat has continued enhancing national capacity on technical aspects of the transfers regime of the Convention. A regional customs training course for States Parties in Eastern Europe was organised in Krakow, Poland, from 27 to 30 September, and was attended by customs officials from 20 States Parties from the region.
88. The Secretariat organised two sessions, in August and October of this year, of the Internship Programme for Legal Drafters and Representatives of National Authorities as regards support for the drafting of legislation. Representatives of Guyana, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malawi, and Vanuatu were trained in this context. At the request of one State Party, the Secretariat also reviewed and provided comments on draft legislation. During the fourth quarter of this year, the Secretariat intends to organise another session of the Internship Programme, as well as two events for States Parties in Africa that have yet to adopt national implementing legislation on the Convention.
89. On 16 September, the Technical Secretariat issued the annual reports by the Director-General on the status of implementation of Article VII of the Convention (EC-83/DG.8 C-21/DG.9, EC-83/DG.9 C-21/DG.10, and EC-83/DG.11 C-21/DG.11, all dated 16 September 2016). The reports present an overview of the status and progress regarding legislative and administrative measures adopted by States Parties to implement their obligations under Article VII of the Convention. The Technical Secretariat received inputs from 89 States Parties in response to its note verbale dated 16 February requesting updates on the status of implementation of Article VII. As at 31 July 2016—the cut-off date of the report—118 States Parties had legislation in place covering all initial measures, 32 States Parties had legislation covering some of the initial measures, and 42 States Parties had yet to adopt legislation.
90. In the context of the Mentorship/Partnership Programme for National Authorities, a return visit took place in August between Switzerland and Namibia, and another four partnerships—involving Brazil and Angola, Peru and El Salvador, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and Malawi, and India and Nepal—have recently been formed and launched.

Assistance and protection

91. The Secretariat organised six capacity-building activities on assistance and protection for 123 participants and continued to provide expert advice to States Parties to assist them in improving their protective capabilities against chemical weapons and other incidents involving toxic chemicals.

92. With the support of the Government of Switzerland, a basic assistance and protection course providing training to 23 first responders from all geographical regions took place from 18 to 22 July in Stans.
93. A workshop targeted at Member States of the Economic Community of Western African States was conducted in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, on 25 and 26 July. The 20 participants performed an assessment of national protective capabilities and emergency response preparedness of the States Parties in the subregion.
94. The fifth training-of-trainers in assistance and protection for African States Parties was co-organised with the Government of South Africa from 15 to 26 August at the Ditholo facility of the South African Defence Force. This two-week intensive training course was attended by 27 experts from 17 States Parties from the region, and prepared the participants to provide chemical emergency response training to responders in their countries of origin.
95. The fifth edition of the OPCW training course for instructors took place in The Hague and Vught, the Netherlands, from 31 August to 7 September. Nineteen experts from all geographical regions received training as instructors; the course forms part of the OPCW's efforts to increase sustainability of capacity building in subjects related to chemical emergency response and Article X implementation.
96. States Parties are also encouraged to carry out national emergency response training. In this context, the Technical Secretariat provided support to Sudan in the conduct of a national basic course on chemical emergency response for first responders, which took place in Khartoum from 18 to 22 September 2016.
97. To continue strengthening its capacity to respond to a request for assistance under Article X, the Secretariat participated in TRIPLEX 2016—an international inter-agency coordination exercise organised by the International Humanitarian Partnership from 24 to 30 September. The Assistance Coordination and Assessment Team (ACAT) deployed by the Secretariat joined teams from various other participating organisations, including the United Nations Office for the Co-ordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the United Nations Disaster Assessment and Co-ordination Team, the World Health Organization, and EU Civil Protection. The ACAT had the opportunity to extensively practise inter-agency coordination for assistance delivery in field conditions.
98. From 3 to 7 October, a laboratory course on the analysis of chemical warfare agent samples was conducted in Rijswijk, the Netherlands, for nine experts from all geographical regions. This introductory course, focusing on the S&A aspect of a response, was held for the first time at the OPCW Laboratory.
99. With regard to information on States Parties' national programmes relating to protective purposes in line with paragraph 4 of Article X, a total of 65 submissions have been received to date. I would like to encourage those States Parties that have yet to fulfil this obligation, to provide their submissions as soon as possible.

International cooperation

100. Since the last session of the Council, the Secretariat has organised six capacity-building activities and supported 30 fellowship and research projects in the area of international cooperation under Article XI for 146 participants.
101. As regards the 2016 edition of the Associate Programme, which has recently been completed, I would like to acknowledge those companies that hosted the industry segment in Argentina and Indonesia—Solvay Indupa and PT Chandra Asri Petrochemical—for enabling these two States Parties to host industry attachments for the first time this year.
102. The Associate Programme has trained 424 experts from 118 Member States since its inception. The programme alumni provide strong support for the national implementation of the Convention in their home countries, and contribute effectively to raising awareness, promoting education and outreach related to eliminating chemical weapons, and ensuring the use of chemistry exclusively for peaceful purposes. In this context, the Alumni Association of the programme has held three virtual meetings in the past years through its Facebook page.
103. I would like to express my appreciation for the continued support provided to the programme by various partners, including the WCO, Cefic, the European Association of Chemical Distributors, the European Chemicals Agency, the customs authorities of the Netherlands, the City and the Port of Rotterdam, the University of Surrey in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and the Technical University of Delft. The support of these institutions and others continues to be instrumental in the success of this OPCW flagship international cooperation programme.
104. The University of Surrey, which has provided the university segment for the Associate Programme since 2000, expressed its readiness to bring its cooperation with the OPCW to a new level. Specifically, its Department of Chemical and Process Engineering expressed its intention to apply for the Global Challenges Research Fund announced by the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, in order to establish a centre to support research and capacity building in developing countries, in partnership with the OPCW and in line with its mission to promote the peaceful uses of chemistry.
105. Chemical safety and security remains an important aspect of integrated chemicals management and the Secretariat has continued to carry out its capacity-building programme in this field, in collaboration with States Parties. The Government of Kenya hosted a chemical safety and security programme in Nairobi for African Member States, from 5 to 7 September. Participants included 36 experts from 16 Member States, comprising government officials responsible for regulating chemical industry, chemical industry representatives, academics, and chemists.
106. Under the Africa Programme, a workshop on the All African Nanoscience-Nanotechnology Initiative was conducted at the Department of Chemical Sciences, the University of the Western Cape, Cape Town, South Africa, from 20 to 22 September. Twenty participants from 17 Member States attended this event.

107. The Technical Secretariat has continued to work with the National Authorities to explore non-toxic chemical substitutes, including green chemistry, to reduce the risks associated with toxic chemicals. It organised a special session at the 6th International IUPAC Conference on Green Chemistry, held in Venice, Italy, from 4 to 8 September, sharing the OPCW's green chemistry initiative to promote non-toxic substitutes and raising awareness of how, in line with The Hague Ethical Guidelines, green chemistry can support the aims of the Convention by helping to reduce, or even fully eliminate, the use of toxic chemicals.
108. The Secretariat and the Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (UTM) organised the fifth Natural Products Chemistry Training and Development Programme at the Institute of Bio-product Development, UTM, from 25 July to 10 August. The course, which hosted 16 participants from 16 Member States, was designed to provide training on the various toxic properties of natural products, as well as on methods of extraction, separation, and purification.
109. As part of its efforts to enhance laboratory capabilities in States Parties, the Technical Secretariat issued an invitation to invite expressions of interest to join the Laboratory Twinning Initiative. This initiative is aimed at improving the technical competence of laboratories in Member States whose economies are either developing or in transition, and intends to improve their performance in the OPCW proficiency tests, with a view to achieving OPCW designated status. The Secretariat has received a number of requests, and endeavours to facilitate more twinning of laboratories in order to strengthen the national capacities of States Parties.
110. In collaboration with the Swedish Defense Research Institute (FOI), the Secretariat organised an analytical skills development course in Umeå, Sweden, from 22 August to 2 September, training 20 qualified analytical chemists from 20 Member States.
111. The Secretariat organised a course, jointly with the Finnish Institute for the Verification of the Chemical Weapons Convention (VERIFIN), on the enhancement of laboratory skills in laboratory quality management, which was held on VERIFIN premises from 5 to 16 September. The course hosted six participants from six Member States.
112. In the framework of the Programme for Support of Research Projects, the Secretariat continued to provide support to 23 projects in various fields relating to peaceful applications of chemistry. The Secretariat also launched a special invitation to submit proposals for research projects in the field of green chemistry in the context of the Convention. In addition, the Secretariat provided support to seven researchers from Lesotho, Romania, the Russian Federation, South Africa, Ukraine, Uruguay, and Zambia, through the Fellowship Programme.
113. The Technical Secretariat has continued to provide support for scientists to participate in scientific events related to the peaceful uses of chemistry. Since the last session of the Council, a total of 24 participants have been sponsored, under the Conference Support Programme, to attend five conferences on the following topics: "International Conference on Pure and Applied Chemistry (ICPAC 2016) – Emerging Trends in Chemical Sciences", held in Port Louis, Mauritius, from 18 to 22 July; "6th International IUPAC Conference on Green Chemistry (IUPAC ICGC-6)", held

in Venice, Italy, from 4 to 8 September; “Study of Liquids and Supercritical Fluids – From Simple to Complex Systems (EMLG/JMLG-2016)”, held in Chania, Crete, Greece, from 11 to 16 September; “24th Congress of Chemists and Technologists of Macedonia”, held in Ohrid, Macedonia, from 11 to 14 September; and the “National Workshop on Separation Techniques in Natural Product Research”, held in Kandy, Sri Lanka, from 19 to 23 September.

114. As part of its efforts to facilitate States Parties’ participation in the fullest possible exchange of chemicals, equipment, and scientific and technical information relating to the development and application of chemistry, the Secretariat has continued to provide support to States Parties’ informal consultations mechanism. It also adopted a more proactive approach to encouraging relevant Member States to make donations to the Equipment Exchange Programme. The Secretariat, furthermore, undertook substantial efforts to reach out to States Parties that are under-represented in international cooperation programmes, and encouraged them to take part in and benefit from the programmes. Special attention was given to formalising and further strengthening the alumni networks of these programmes, which made it possible to follow up on and support initiatives to disseminate the knowledge and experience gained during the various programmes.
115. During the reporting period the Secretariat conducted a needs assessment in the area of chemical safety and security, using the survey methodology.
116. I would like to seize this opportunity to thank donor, hosting, and participating States Parties for their valuable contributions to our cooperation and assistance programmes and for their continued commitment towards the implementation of the provisions of Articles VII, X, and XI of the Convention.

External relations

117. During the intersessional period, we have welcomed nine new Permanent Representatives to the OPCW, from Bulgaria, Greece, Guatemala, Hungary, Kazakhstan, Namibia, Pakistan, Romania, and Singapore.
118. In early September, I hosted Dr Patricia Flor, Federal Government Commissioner for Disarmament and Arms Control of Germany, at OPCW Headquarters.
119. Since the last session of the Council, I held a speech at the Annual Retreat of the Max Planck Institute for Heart and Lung Research in Bad Nauheim, Germany, in July. I opened the Spiez CONVERGENCE Conference in early September and, during the same month, paid a visit to the Republic of Korea, where I delivered a keynote speech at the fifth Seoul Defence Dialogue and made statements at the Hankuk University of Foreign Studies and the Korean National Diplomatic Academy. On this occasion, I also met with the Minister of National Defence, Mr Han Minkoo; Unification Minister, Mr Hong Yongpyo; First Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr Lim Sungnam, and the Vice Minister of National Defence, Mr Hwang Inmoo.
120. In August, the Deputy Director-General received a delegation of the Parliamentary Select Committee on Foreign Affairs of Ghana and addressed the Asser Institute’s annual Summer Programme on Disarmament and Non-Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction in a Changing World.

121. On 5 September, the OPCW hosted the United Nations Disarmament Fellowship Programme for a day of briefings and a visit to the Equipment Store and Laboratory in Rijswijk. This year, the programme was attended by 28 fellows, including one representative from Egypt.
122. On 28 September, the 16th induction workshop for diplomatic personnel was held at the OPCW. The workshop was attended by 60 representatives of 51 countries, including seven Ambassadors, two representatives of Israel, and one representative of South Sudan.
123. Technical Secretariat officials have had further contact with representatives of South Sudan over recent weeks to advance options for that country to join the Convention.
124. Through a concerted strategy to use social media, tens of thousands of people were reached online. Over 3,300 people viewed an impromptu Facebook Live video featuring a “sneak peek” tour inside the OPCW; over 4,000 people were reached through individual Facebook posts; and nearly 70,000 people were reached overall through 25 OPCW tweets on Twitter. This is a meaningful example of how OPCW in-person events can extend their reach when coupled with effective social media and online strategies.
125. The official OPCW website overhaul is under way and key stakeholder consultations are ongoing. A stakeholder survey reflecting inputs from the ABEO will be sent to States Parties, Technical Secretariat staff, industry partners, and civil society organisations in due course. The website is expected to be launched in the second quarter of 2017.
126. Capacity in digital communications has increased in the intersessional period with meaningful updates to both the website and social media activities. Microsites that have been updated and flexible design templates have been used to feature the OPCW-The Hague Award and the Twenty-First Session of the Conference of the States Parties. Microsites help bridge the transition from the current website to the new one. Several social media campaigns that target the general public have been launched, such as #ThrowbackThursday and #FilmFriday, highlighting the achievements of the OPCW and helping to lay the foundation for the twentieth anniversary messages and activities. As an example of effective outreach to target audiences, a Facebook campaign featuring participants’ experiences from this year’s Associate Programme received excellent feedback and engagement metrics. Engagement on social media raises the OPCW’s profile and extends its reach to a range of audiences. I encourage all stakeholders, including States Parties, to share and engage with our social media channels.
127. The OPCW’s media monitoring ability has improved since the last session of the Council. New digital tools are being implemented to monitor specific issues across traditional and social media and quickly create situation reports on urgent topics. This capacity will be further developed in the coming months to include the identification of online influencer networks.
128. The Asser Institute’s week-long annual Summer Programme on Disarmament and Non-Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction in a Changing World took place from 4 to 9 September. Twenty-three participants, comprising diplomats, scientists,

researchers and representatives of non-governmental organisations benefitted from this training course, which is implemented with the support of the OPCW. States Parties are encouraged to register new delegation members for the next edition in 2017.

Administrative and financial matters

129. The Draft Programme and Budget for 2017 stands at EUR 67,798,200. This amount provides sufficient resources for the Secretariat to implement its operational and support programmes. The assessed annual contributions by States Parties total EUR 65,529,600, unchanged from 2016.
130. As you are aware, the approved Programme and Budget for 2016 totals EUR 67.1 million, comprising EUR 29.7 million for Chapter One activities and EUR 37.4 million for Chapter Two activities. Since its approval by the Conference at its Twentieth Session, the Programme and Budget for 2016 has continued to be affected by the appreciation of the United States dollar against the euro, which had a negative impact on staff costs, notably those associated with staff turnover. In this regard, staff costs within the Inspections Programme have been affected by the repatriation costs of inspectors who separated from the Organisation in the first quarter of 2016 and will be further impacted by the on-boarding costs of new inspectors this month.
131. Our ability to meet core objectives continues to depend on the receipt of assessed contributions from States Parties. As at 30 September, 95.8% of annual contributions had been collected for 2015, compared to 94.8% as at 31 December 2015. Thirty-two States Parties that have not been paying their assessed contributions lost their voting rights on 1 January 2016. The Secretariat stands ready to provide these States Parties with a multi-year payment plan should they wish to settle their outstanding balances in instalments.
132. The Secretariat is currently implementing a series of measures aimed at mitigating the risk of a budget deficit. These include the application of a contingency margin. However, there may be a requirement for the Secretariat to transfer resources from a number of programmes, including Chapter Two programmes, should an Inspections Programme funding shortfall materialise. To this end, and together with our regular Note on the transfer of funds in 2016, I may once again request the Executive Council to retrospectively approve an inter-chapter transfer of funds at its next regular session. The Secretariat will continue to carefully monitor its financial situation, with a view to reducing the risk of a 2016 budget deficit.
133. With an increase in unreimbursed Article IV and V verification costs and a considerable level of implementation activities in 2015, the Secretariat has borrowed EUR 7.1 million from the Working Capital Fund and a special ERP fund, of which EUR 4 million has been repaid to the Working Capital Fund in 2016, in line with the Financial Rules and Regulations.
134. As at 30 September 2016, the collection rate for the 2016 assessed annual contributions stood at 80.7%, which is lower than 91.4% on the same date in 2015. In addition, there is still a EUR 2.8 million shortfall in contributions to the 2015 budget,

and a further EUR 5.0 million of Article IV and V verification costs remain unreimbursed, covering missions in 2014, 2015, and 2016.

135. These discrepancies continue to create financial challenges. As you will note from the monthly financial situation report (S/1425/2016, dated 10 October 2016), which was circulated this week, the Secretariat may need to withdraw an additional EUR 2.7 million from the Working Capital Fund before the end of 2016, unless all outstanding contributions are made by States Parties. The Secretariat is taking measures to address the financial situation. These include reminding States Parties of their financial obligations; closely monitoring the implementation of the 2016 Programme and Budget; requesting the augmentation of the Working Capital Fund; and using trust fund resources where available. Such measures are supported by the External Auditor in his report on the 2015 Financial Statements (EC-83/DG.1, C-21/DG.5, dated 8 August 2016).
136. The Secretariat proposes to extend the special fund for OPCW special missions for one further year, without replenishment, as set out in the draft decision on this subject (EC-83/DEC/CRP.3, dated 22 September 2016) currently before the Council.
137. Madam Chairperson, this concludes my statement. Thank you for your attention.

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