



**OPCW**

**Executive Council**

Fifty-Seventh Meeting  
4 April 2018

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ENGLISH only

**GERMANY**

**STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR CHRISTINE WEIL  
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY TO  
THE OPCW AT THE FIFTY-SEVENTH MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

Mr Chairperson, Mr Director-General, distinguished colleagues,

Germany fully aligns itself with the statement of the European Union presented by the delegation of Bulgaria.

Today, 4 April, marks the first anniversary of the use of sarin in Khan Shaykhun, the Syrian Arab Republic. The Syrian armed forces are responsible for this brutal attack, as the Joint Investigative Mechanism has stated in its seventh report. We, the States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention, have not yet been able to provide an appropriate answer to that attack that claimed the lives of so many, so that this never happens again. On this day, 4 April, we should commemorate the many victims and promise to seek justice and that the perpetrators will be held accountable. That is what we do today.

We have expressed our strong condemnation of the vicious attack with a military-grade nerve agent in Salisbury, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland in the last session of the Executive Council (on 13 March 2018). We reiterate our condemnation in the strongest possible terms of this dreadful use of a military-grade nerve agent in the public sphere.

We stand in unqualified solidarity with the United Kingdom and the British Government. In great unity, the European Council has expressed its deepest sympathies to all whose lives have been threatened. It has agreed with the British Government's assessment that it is highly likely that the Russian Federation is responsible and that there is no plausible alternative explanation.

The United Kingdom has informed the OPCW continuously. We commend the United Kingdom's close cooperation with the OPCW. The British Government has taken up the investigation in full compliance with the Chemical Weapons Convention (Article VII of the Convention). It is the right and the duty of each party to the Convention to investigate chemical weapons use on its territory.

We respect the British Government's request to the OPCW for technical assistance (Article VIII, subparagraph 38(e) of the Convention). We commend the Director-General Üzümcü for the assistance that the OPCW has extended in response to the United Kingdom's request.



The OPCW technical assistance is still ongoing. We expect the investigation to come to an end in the near future.

Meanwhile, no other party should interfere with this process of investigation. Any interference could undermine the OPCW's ongoing assistance. We should therefore discuss this case when the assistance has come to an end.

Thank you.

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