

**Statement by H.E. Mr. Roman Bužek, Permanent Representative of the Slovak Republic to the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons at the 59<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the OPCW Executive Council, April 18, 2018**

Mr. Chairperson,

Slovakia fully supports and aligns itself with the statement on behalf of the European Union delivered by Ambassador Kostov of Bulgaria. Slovakia expresses the full support to the Government of the United Kingdom of the Great Britain and Northern Ireland in investigating the horrible use of nerve agent in Salisbury on March 4, 2018. Slovakia highly commends the transparent approach of the United Kingdom reconfirmed by its commitment to keep the Executive Council informed of all significant developments in the investigation.

Slovakia fully supports and commends the expeditious, professional and impartial proceedings of the Technical Secretariat in investigating the Salisbury attack which we see as carried out in full compliance with the CWC and OPCW-agreed standards. Slovakia highly commends the engagement of the OPCW Director – General Ambassador Ahmet Üzümcü

Slovakia highly commends the decision of the United Kingdom to immediately circulate the Technical Secretariat's report on the Salisbury incident to all State Parties as another proof of its transparent approach when investigating this deplorable attack. Slovakia strongly appeals to all countries to follow that pattern and fulfil all their obligations from the Convention.

We take it very seriously that the results of the analysis done by the Technical Secretariat confirm the findings of the investigation undertaken by the United Kingdom. Slovakia joins other countries in their call towards the Russian Federation to answer the questions raised by the United Kingdom and the international community and to provide immediate, full and complete disclosure of its “Novichok” programme to the OPCW.

Violations of the Convention are unacceptable and the full compliance of all State Parties with the CWC must be restored without any delay to avoid further threats to our collective security. Strict implementation of the Convention by all State Parties is the only way to answer the challenges of the current complex situation and to stop the threat of the erosion of the chemical weapons prohibition regime.

Slovakia reiterates that any use of chemical weapons or toxic chemicals as weapon by anybody, anywhere and under any circumstances is absolutely unacceptable and is a violation of international law and has to be condemned in the strongest terms possible by all. Those responsible - be it state or non-state actors - must be held accountable and brought to justice.

I request the Technical Secretariat to distribute my statement as an official document of the 59<sup>th</sup> EC Meeting on OPCW both internal and external server.

Thank you.