

## TEXT OF IEPER DECLARATION

### Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW)

#### Declaration on the Occasion of the Centennial Commemoration of the First Large-Scale Use of Chemical Weapons at Ieper (*Ieper Declaration*)

The States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention met at Ieper, Belgium, on 21 April 2015 to mark the occasion of the Centennial Commemoration of the first large-scale use of chemical weapons at Ieper, and honoured the memory of and paid tribute to all victims of chemical weapons.

Bearing in mind the objectives of the Convention, the States Parties *hereby*:

*Reaffirm* their determination, for the sake of all mankind, to exclude completely the possibility of the use of chemical weapons;

*Welcome* the substantial progress that has been made towards this end since the entry into force of the Convention on 29 April 1997, as well as the international recognition of the OPCW through the awarding of the 2013 Nobel Peace Prize “for its extensive efforts to eliminate chemical weapons”, and *express* their commitment to the continuing full, effective, and non-discriminatory implementation of all provisions of the Convention;

*Reaffirm* their condemnation, in the strongest possible terms, of the use of chemical weapons anywhere, at any time, by anyone, under any circumstances and *emphasise* that any use of chemical weapons as such is totally unacceptable and would violate the legal norms and standards of the international community, and *express* their strong conviction that those responsible for the use of chemical weapons should be held accountable;

*Stress* that there is no justification for anyone to possess chemical weapons, *call upon* all States not Party to the Convention to join the Convention without further delay, and *underscore* their commitment to ensuring that non-State actors do not obtain chemical weapons or their means of delivery;

*Reaffirm* their commitment to ensuring that toxic chemicals are used only for purposes not prohibited under the Convention and *emphasise* their desire to promote free trade in chemicals, as well as international cooperation and exchange of scientific and technical information in the field of chemical activities for purposes not prohibited under the Convention, in order to enhance the economic and technological development of all States Parties; and

*Reiterate* their resolve to maintain the Convention’s role as a bulwark against chemical weapons and thereby contribute to international peace and security.

*The States Parties to the Convention are determined to continue to heed the lessons of history, to embrace what unites them, and to build on it.*

*Issued in Ieper, Belgium, on 21 April 2015*