



Opening Remarks by the OPCW Deputy Director-General at the Technical Workshop on Sharing of Best Practices in the Development of a Legislative and Regulatory Framework on Chemical Security

As delivered on 24 July 2019, The Hague, Netherlands

Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and gentlemen,

On behalf of the Director-General of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, I welcome you to this Technical Workshop on Sharing of Best Practices in the Development of a Legislative and Regulatory Framework on Chemical Security. It is a pleasure to receive such a diverse group of chemical security experts and practitioners at the OPCW.

This event provides a timely opportunity to share information, experiences and best practices in the development of chemical security laws and regulations. All of you bring valuable insights into how your country's legislation and regulatory frameworks are preventing chemicals and technologies from being diverted to those who would misuse them. Your experiences will inform the sort of benchmarks we need to set – these effective methodologies are an example for other countries seeking to enhance their national legal and regulatory frameworks. The OPCW works closely with its Member States to that end.

The overarching aim of the OPCW is to achieve a world free of chemical weapons. In this context, we have been working to verify the elimination of declared chemical weapons. As we draw closer to achieving this goal, we are increasing our focus on preventing re-emergence of CW's. This is a challenging task. The threat of terrorists using chemical agents is no longer a theoretical threat, but a stark reality.

In October 2017, the Executive Council recognised this by adopting a landmark decision to address the threat of non-state actors using chemical weapons. Critically, this decision underscored the fundamental importance of national implementation of the Convention by States Parties in preventing chemical terrorism.

The Convention establishes a non-proliferation regime through its comprehensive prohibitions relating to the development, production, acquisition, stockpiling, transfer and use of chemical weapons. While it does not explicitly mention non-State actors, the Convention applies to all “natural and legal persons” on the territories of our 193 States Parties.

By adopting CWC national implementing legislation, Member States criminalize activities that are prohibited under the Convention from being conducted by anyone under any circumstances. This is why it is important that States Parties put the necessary measures in place to ensure that

toxic chemicals and their precursors do not fall into the wrong hands. This is also a driving force behind the OPCW's wide range of capacity-building activities to help States Parties better regulate dual-use chemicals. Enhancing chemical security will remain fundamental to these preventive strategies and will continue to be an important theme in these programmes.

As representatives of regulatory authorities, international organizations and industry associations, you all have a critical role to play in addressing chemical security. In the coming months, we will enhance our outreach and capacity-building activities for States Parties in the area of chemical security legislative and regulatory frameworks. Sharing best practices – as you will in this workshop – is an important first step in improving our expertise and amplifying our efforts. I hope that you will continue to collaborate and exchange information and expertise beyond this event, as we work with States Parties to raise awareness and address this issue.

I wish you have fruitful deliberations, and a successful workshop.

Thank you.
