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REPUBLIC OF CROATIA

**STATEMENT BY H.E. VESELA MRĐEN KORAĆ
HEAD OF THE CROATIAN DELEGATION AT THE
SIXTEENTH SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE STATES PARTIES**

Mr Chairperson,
Mr Director-General,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and gentlemen,

It is my great pleasure to address this Conference during its Sixteenth Session on behalf of the Croatian delegation.

The Republic of Croatia is honoured to participate in the Executive Council of the OPCW especially in times of the great importance for the future of the Organisation and is pleased that a decision was reached last week to make a recommendation to this Conference on the final extended deadline for the destruction of chemical weapons.

The Croatian delegation would also like to underline the necessity of reaching a political agreement on that issue at this session, based on a constructive, pragmatic and consensual approach, which is customary for this Organisation.

The Croatian delegation appreciates the efforts of the possessor States achieved thus far and is convinced that the respective States will continue with the destruction in the most efficient and transparent manner.

The Croatian delegation would like to declare its readiness to support in practice the United Nations Security Council Resolution 2017 with regard to securing and destroying chemical weapons stockpiles in Libya, and is ready to work with Libyan counterparts and OPCW experts in order to find areas in which Croatia can contribute in the most effective manner.

Generally, the role of Croatia in the OPCW is perhaps best reflected through fostering of international cooperation for peaceful purposes in the field of chemical activities.

Together with the OPCW, the eighth seminar on the Chemical Weapons Convention was organised in February this year, by the Centre for Security Cooperation, a centre that was previously known as the Regional Arms Control Verification and Implementation Assistance Centre (RACVIAC) and to which Croatia is a host country. The seminar gathered representatives of the countries of South East Europe and provided opportunity for sharing



their experiences and gaining more knowledge about the tasks and possibilities for cooperation under the Convention.

Here we would like to stress the importance of the Centre and its seminars as Croatia hopes the Centre will continue to be used in future for training and educational purposes, not only as a regional centre, but also for all of the countries interested in sharing our expertise and our know-how.

Also in April this year, a bi-annual International Congress on the Chemical, Biological, Nuclear and Radiological Threat and Terrorism was organised in Dubrovnik together with a workshop on the Chemical Weapons Convention. The Congress and the workshop provided an opportunity for participants from different countries and continents to share their experiences in national implementations of the provisions of the Convention in relation to chemical and biological safety and security.

The Republic of Croatia is thankful to the OPCW for its strong support in organising these events, additionally for donating one spectrometer under the Equipment-Exchange Programme, as well as for sponsoring participants of the Twenty-Second Croatian Meeting of Chemists and Chemical Engineers held in Zagreb, this year.

The OPCW seminars organised for the members of the National Authorities are also much appreciated as they have proven to be very useful for those who ensure that the Convention is implemented in the most adequate manner.

As Croatia is a country devoted to the goals of the Convention, the Croatian delegation would like to stress that the universality of the Convention, as well as complete destruction of chemical weapons, remains of the utmost importance. However, we have to promote further the principle of inclusiveness of all stakeholders responsible for the production, development and transfer of chemicals in the Convention implementation. The state itself cannot be a sufficient guardian of legitimate activities with chemicals, if support is not shared by a broader number of relevant subjects. Particular responsibility is on the industry and its verification system. Therefore we strongly support programmes on security and safety of the toxic chemical industry.

Furthermore on the OPCW Associate Programme, Croatia is offering an industrial experience to the participants at the biggest Croatian chemical industry, with the objective of facilitating industry-related national implementation of the Convention and enhancing national capacities in States Parties, in the areas related to chemistry and chemical engineering. Here, we would like to express our appreciation for the initial visit from the OPCW Technical Secretariat this summer.

In general, Croatian universities together with the Croatian National Chemical Institute, that carries the name of our world renowned scientist Ruđer Bošković, would be open to share their research, scientific and educational knowledge and methods with the countries not only in the region, but also the ones from the OPCW Programme for Africa, as well as other interested parties.

Mr Chairperson,

Please allow me to conclude by highlighting Croatia's commitment, within its capacity and capability, to continue to provide full support to the multilateral activities and programmes of the OPCW.

I would like to request that this document is issued as an official document of the Sixteenth Session of the Conference.

Thank you.

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