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CROATIA

**STATEMENT BY H.E. VESELA MRĐEN KORAC
REPRESENTATIVE OF THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA
AT THE EIGHTEENTH 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 Eighteenth Session on behalf of the Croatian delegation.

At the outset let me say that Croatia aligns itself with the statement made by the distinguished representative of the European Union.

As highlighted by the President of Croatia H.E. Mr Ivo Josipović during his visit to the OPCW in October of this year, Croatia has been proud of its active participation in the creation of the Chemical Weapons Convention and the work of the OPCW since its first days, as well as being a member of the Executive Council during a thorough review of the past achievements and future challenges. We are also looking forward to the support of the States Parties for a forthcoming new term.

Following the conclusions of the Third Review Conference about the need to adapt to new challenges and developments in science and technology, Croatia would like to express the readiness of our universities and our National Chemical Institute to contribute to this process, sharing our research, scientific and educational knowledge and methods with the countries not only in the region, but also the ones participating in the OPCW Programme for Africa, as well as other interested parties.

We look forward to seeing the regional Centre for Security Cooperation, based in Croatia, being used also in the future for training and education, within and beyond our region, by all parties interested in sharing our expertise and know-how, and thus becoming an important element in the pool of the OPCW expertise.



This year Croatia continued to contribute to the work of the OPCW in various fields:

- (a) Hosting two very important regional events such as the Annual Meeting of National Authorities of the Eastern European Group as well as a workshop for customs officials;
- (b) Organising two conferences under the OPCW Conference Support Programme;
- (c) Continuing with the Associate Programme through which our chemical industry hosted participants from other States Parties and provided them with practical training in modern production, focusing on management and safety practices in the chemical industry.

As a part of the OPCW verification regime, a routine OPCW inspection has been successfully carried out this year, with the support from the National Authority.

The Republic of Croatia is thankful to the OPCW Technical Secretariat for its cooperation in organising joint events and for supporting relevant chemistry related conferences organised by Croatia.

As national implementation is at the core of the Chemical Weapons Convention we are particularly happy that this topic is facilitated by a representative of our Eastern European Group and we are looking forward to presenting our achievements in the national implementation of the Convention in a side event of this Conference.

Croatia is happy that a wider community has recognised the valuable work of the OPCW by awarding it with the prestigious Nobel Peace Prize, inspiring all of us for even stronger dedication to the goals of the Convention. We are equally happy to see that the community of the OPCW States Parties is growing in number with the recent accessions of Somalia and Syria.

Croatia especially welcomes the OPCW-UN Joint Mission in Syria and would like to declare its readiness to support the Mission, in practice, firmly believing that this giant step, which lies ahead of us, is bringing us closer to the ultimate goal of a world free of chemical weapons.

We would like to commend the Director-General and the Technical Secretariat for their dedicated work in fulfilling this historic task, and look forward to continuing to work closely with the Director-General in his well deserved new term.

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 statement be circulated as an official document of this session of the Conference.

Thank you.