



INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIP AGAINST IMPUNITY FOR THE USE OF CHEMICAL WEAPONS



Joint statement by the Participating States 73d UNGA 2018

1. We, the participating States of the International Partnership against Impunity for the Use of Chemical Weapons, stand together to preserve the international standards and norms against the use of chemical weapons by anyone, anywhere, under any circumstances.
2. We are determined to combat the re-emergence of the use of chemical weapons, and prevent impunity for those who resort to the use of such weapons, or contribute to their development. We condemn in the strongest possible terms the repeated use of these weapons in the past months and years.
3. Our Partnership was founded on 23 January 2018 to strengthen our cooperation to protect the Chemical Weapons Convention, to help identify those responsible for chemical weapons use as a step towards bringing them to justice, and to support the work of dedicated OPCW and UN bodies working in this field. We made clear and unequivocal commitments to achieve this objective which can be found in a Declaration of principles.
4. Thirty-eight States drawn from all geographical regions and the European Union have joined the partnership to date. We welcome the growing membership of the Partnership, and encourage the countries that are not yet members but that share our concerns to join us.
5. We recall the Ministerial declarations adopted by the International Partnership against Impunity for the Use of Chemical Weapons on 23 January 2018 and 18 May 2018 in Paris.
6. In May, the members of the Partnership supported the call for the convening of a special session of the Conference of the States Parties to support the Chemical Weapons Convention, and to consider ways to strengthen its implementation, including exploring options for attributing responsibility for chemical weapons use. We therefore warmly welcome the decision adopted by the Fourth special session of the Conference of the States Parties on 27 June 2018 “Addressing the Threat from Chemical Weapons Use” which condemned in the strongest possible terms that, since 2012, chemical weapons have been used in the Syrian Arab Republic, Iraq, Malaysia, and the United Kingdom, including by State and Non-State Actors. This decision which provides for the reinforcement of the means and instruments of the OPCW in a context in which the Convention is being undermined, addresses the direct threats to the object and purpose of the Convention (C-SS-4/DEC.3).

7. We commend the determination of the States Parties in this joint effort assist the Technical Secretariat of the OPCW in its mission to put in place arrangements to identify the perpetrators of the use of chemical weapons in Syria. We also welcome the provision of decision C-SS-4/DEC.3 which enables OPCW, if requested by a State party investigating a possible chemical weapons use on its territory, to provide technical expertise to identify those who were perpetrators, organisers, sponsors or otherwise involved in the chemical weapons use.
8. We strongly believe that with its expertise and its independent and impartial nature, the OPCW technical secretariat is well prepared to perform the technical task of attribution.
9. We also welcome the provisions of the decision which provide for consideration of options for further assistance to States Parties to enable them to implement their obligations under the Convention, to enhance chemical security, and to enable international cooperation in the field of chemical activities for purposes not prohibited under the Convention, as well as proposals to enhance the OPCW's capacity and tools to strengthen implementation of the Convention verification regime.
10. We also welcome the OPCW's observation that, as directed by the decision, the Organisation is implementing the arrangement to preserve and to authorise information sharing with the International, Impartial and Independent Mechanism to Assist in the Investigation and Prosecution of Persons Responsible for the Most Serious Crimes under International Law Committed in the Syrian Arab Republic since March 2011 (IIIM) established by the United Nations General Assembly under resolution 71/248 (2016). We commend also the ongoing work of the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic, which continues to contribute substantively to work investigating the use of chemical weapons in Syria.
11. The participating States of the International Partnership against Impunity for the Use of Chemical Weapons will meet at experts level in Paris on 8 and 9 November 2018 to develop common approaches to support the implementation of the June CSP decision, ahead of the November Conference of the States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Fourth Review Conference and for a new exchange of information and experience on all chemical weapons related issues and to coordinate positions on ongoing works in the UN and the OPCW.
12. We reaffirm the importance of full respect for the 1925 Geneva Protocol for the Prohibition of the Use in War of Asphyxiating, Poisonous or other Gases, and of Bacteriological Methods of Warfare; the Geneva Conventions ; with UN Security Resolutions (UNSCRs) 2314 (2016), 2235 and 2209 (2015), 2118 (2013), 1540 (2004), and 2325 (2016). We also recall UNGA resolution A/72/43 (2017), as well as Human Rights Council (HRC) Resolution S-17/1 (2011).
13. We reiterate our strong support for the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on their Destruction, an essential pillar of the international disarmament and counter proliferation architecture and the rules based international order on which we all rely. We underline the importance of the full implementation of the Convention. We call upon the four remaining States to join the Convention without delay.

14. We believe that capacity building efforts are essential to assist States Parties in implementing their obligations under the Convention and highlighted the importance of strengthening the capacity of Participating States in our Declaration of principles. To that end, we commit to engage and identify synergies with related initiatives, including the Global Partnership against the spread of weapons and material of mass destruction.
15. We pledge again our unequivocal support to the work of the OPCW and commend the work conducted by its Declaration Assessment Team on Syria and its Fact Finding Mission (FFM) on Syria. We note with concern the findings of the FFM on chemical weapons use in Latamenah in March 2017, and at Saraqib in February 2018, as well as the interim report regarding alleged use at Douma in April 2018. We consider it highly likely that the Syrian armed forces are responsible for this attack, taking into account inter alia the previous use of chemical weapons by the Syrian armed forces. We note that the Interim Report of the Fact Finding Mission found evidence of chlorine, and look forward to its final report on the attack. We urge the Syrian Arab Republic to honour its obligations as a State Party to the Convention, and to fully cooperate with the OPCW and give full disclosure of its chemical weapons programme.
16. In this regard, we also note that the UN Commission of Inquiry found a vast body of evidence indicating that a chlorine cylinder was dropped by helicopter, resulting in at least 49 deaths.
17. We condemn the use of a nerve agent in Salisbury on 4 March 2018, and the incidental exposure in Amesbury on 30 June 2018, in the United Kingdom, which resulted in the death of an individual, left several others critically ill, and threatened the safety of the wider public. We condemn the use of this military-grade nerve agent, and commend the UK for its transparency and the progress in the investigation which we hope will soon lead to the prosecution of the perpetrators of these abhorrent acts. We share the United Kingdom's analysis that it is highly likely that Russia was responsible for the attack and that there is no plausible alternative explanation.
18. We condemn the use of false and fabricated news stories or other such tools and campaigns designed to deliberately create misinformation about chemical weapons use and to avoid attribution and accountability.
19. We also condemn the attempted cyberattack on the Headquarters of the OPCW, which was disrupted by the Dutch authorities in April 2018, thus preventing a possible interference in the work of the organisation, and its investigation mechanisms. We express serious concerns about this attempt to undermine the integrity of the OPCW.
20. We welcome the adoption on 15 October 2018 by the European Union of a new autonomous regime of restrictive measures dedicated to fighting the proliferation and use of chemical weapons and their precursors, and we look forward to early progress on the listing of relevant individuals and entities.
21. We welcome the adoption by some participating States of new national designations and assets freeze mechanisms for individuals and entities engaged in providing dual use and sensitive products and materials to the Syrian Scientific Research Centre (SSRC).
22. We call for the enlargement of the International Partnership against impunity for the use of chemical weapons and invite all UN members to join it to send a clear message on

our common refusal to accept impunity for anyone, anywhere responsible for the use of chemical weapons and on our commitment to putting an end to their use.

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