



IRELAND

Statement by

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Other Weapons of Mass Destruction**

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Mr Chairman

Ireland aligns itself with the Statement delivered by the European Union. I would like to add the following remarks in our national capacity.

My Delegation shares the view of many States here today that weapons of mass destruction have no place anywhere in our world. Their toxic presence lends nothing to already fragile, tense and complex regional relationships. We regard the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention, the Chemical Weapons Convention, and the newly adopted Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, as key instruments in the international community's efforts to achieve a world free of all weapons of mass destruction. We call strongly on those remaining States who have not yet joined these international instruments to accede to them and complete their universalisation at the nearest opportunity.

We would like to voice our support for the work of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) in this, the 20th year since its establishment and the entry into force of the Chemical Weapons Convention. We join other States in expressing our condemnation at the confirmed use of chemical weapons by the Syrian Armed Forces and non-state actors in Syria, as confirmed by the OPCW UN Joint Investigative Mechanism (JIM). We highlight in particular our support for the Joint Investigative Mission, the Fact Finding Mission and the Declaration Assessment Team (DAT), and stress the importance of full compliance with the CWC and its declaration and verification regime.

The development and use of chemical weapons, long prohibited by international law, goes against the very purpose of peace that this United Nations was founded upon. Indeed, the development and use of chemical weapons, including the use of any toxic chemicals as weapons, by anyone, anywhere, anytime, and under any circumstances is absolutely unacceptable, we underline that any weakening of this norm is dangerous.

My Delegation is of the firm belief that the widespread condemnation of those who breach their obligations under the Chemical Weapons Convention must be matched by action, and that to safeguard against impunity those responsible for these war crimes and crimes against humanity must be referred to the International Criminal Court to face the appropriate consequences.

On a positive note we welcome the recent announcement by the Russian Federation of the verified destruction of their remaining chemical weapons, a development which brings us closer to the goal of a world free of weapons of mass destruction.

Mr Chairman,

Ireland is committed in our support for the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention. A critical step in this regard is its full and effective implementation, including addressing the use and threat of use of biological or toxin weapons.

While regretting the outcome of last year's Review Conference, it serves to fuel our resolve to reaffirm and strengthen our commitment to the Convention, and

to reach agreement at the upcoming Meeting of States Parties on both the substantive and procedural aspects of a new programme of work.

We look forward to engaging with experts, civil society and scientists at the upcoming Meeting and are also committed to ensuring the widest representation possible, in regards to both gender and geography. We have provided sponsorship funding to enable a diversity of voices and value added contributions at these official meetings. In addition to this work, we must do all that we can, as global partners, to ensure effective disease monitoring, detection, control and prevention in a world where advances in science and technology move at a rapid pace.

Mr Chairman,

A further compelling reason for working to strengthen and reinforce our WMD Conventions are the well-substantiated reports that some Non-State Actor groups are seeking to acquire and use weapons of mass destruction. My Delegation fully supported the comprehensive review of UNSCR 1540 that took place last year which served to further underline its significance, and we welcome the subsequent adoption of UNSCR 2325.

As part of our practical contribution to countering WMD, the Irish Defence Forces, in collaboration with the ICRC has delivered training for aid workers in surviving the effects of a chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear attack. We hope to continue with the delivery of similar training courses in the future.

Mr Chairman,

Given the interconnected nature of the world we live in today, multilateral tools and regimes assume critical importance, especially as our work in non-proliferation also seeks to address the means of delivery of the weapon. In this regard we are deeply concerned about the illegal and dangerous ballistic and nuclear testing by the DPRK, which Ireland's Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade has condemned unreservedly. While we also call on Iran to implement strictly all provisions of UNSC resolution 2231 and refrain from any activity related to ballistic missiles designed to be capable of carrying nuclear weapons, we take this opportunity to underline our support for the JCPOA. We regard the nuclear deal with Iran as a key achievement for non-proliferation and an example of what can be achieved through careful diplomacy and negotiation.

Strengthening the non-proliferation regime is a key priority for Ireland and this week, we are pleased to become Co-Chairs of the Missile Technology Control Regime together with Iceland. The MTCR constitutes a key instrument in international efforts to prevent missile proliferation. This year marks 30 years since its establishment and since that time, through information sharing, export controls, awareness raising and international cooperation, the MTCR has significantly reduced the ability of proliferators to acquire the technology, information and means to develop WMD missile deliver systems.

As one of the Co-Chairs of the MTCR, my Delegation has actively engaged in outreach and consultation to ensure that we can work to expand and deepen the influence of this important export control regime. We look forward to further strengthening the regime, including through enlargement to applicant

members who meet its criteria. My Delegation firmly believes that the membership of all EU States would greatly contribute to the further effectiveness of the regime.

We are also a strong supporter of the Hague Code of Conduct which has many synergies with the MTCR and is celebrating its 15th year anniversary. It has delivered concrete results as the only multilateral transparency and confidence-building instrument in this arena. We welcome recent adherents to the Code and call on all non-subscribing states to adhere to it without further delay.

Mr Chairman,

Ireland continues to support the important goal of achieving a Middle East Zone free of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction. We are keen for work on this to develop and grow, with the involvement of all stakeholders from the region. We therefore look forward to playing what role we can, together with others, in making renewed progress on Zone.

We have been pleased to support a Civil Society event this First Committee with BASIC and civil society actors from the region and we look forward to continuing our engagement on this question, which is so important for a productive outcome to the 2020 NPT Review Cycle. We would also welcome hearing from the Co-Convenors their plans for regaining momentum on this essential aspect of the NPT as we move towards the 2020 Review Conference.

While we regret that progress on this crucial issue has stalled, we want to take this opportunity to call upon all parties to work together towards full

implementation of the 1995 resolution on the Middle East, to achieve what is a common commitment and common goal, contributing to peace and stability for future generations, so they can live in a world that is free from weapons of mass destruction.

Thank you.