STATEMENT BY

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TO THE OPCW

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Mr. Chairman, Distinguished Delegates,

Poland fully associates itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the European Union. Let me highlight some issues in national capacity.

Firstly, I would like to reiterate hope that the situation would allow to conduct the NPT Review Conference at the earliest possible date. NPT constitutes the cornerstone of the global regime for nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament and remains the essential part of the modern collective security system. Facing current global and regional challenges, we are obliged – as the international community – to do our utmost to strengthen, universalize and implement the provisions of the Treaty. This determines Poland’s efforts as the member of the NPT Bureau and Chair of the Main Committee Two with a view to achieve the successful outcome of the Conference. As demonstrated by Poland’s membership in the IAEA Board of Governors this stands also behind Polish support for the efforts of the IAEA.

Poland remains concerned about state of the arms control global system. Today, the New START Treaty remains the only non-conventional arms control mechanism in place after the demise of the INF due to its long-lasting non-compliance by the Russian Federation. Through this prism we regard the extension of the New START Treaty as a positive step. It shall contribute to maintaining strategic stability between the United States and the Russian Federation and should lead to a broader follow-on agreement covering all nuclear weapons, including non-strategic ones, and their new types as well as – to increased effectiveness of the verification mechanisms. The ongoing bilateral US-
Russia Strategic Stability Dialogue should lay the ground for future talks in this regard. We are in favor of extending the dialogue to include China.

Furthermore, the international community has been still facing security threats evolving in many regions of the worlds. Complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearization of Democratic People's Republic of Korea remains an absolute imperative and priority. We are convinced that a lasting peace on the Korean peninsula can only be achieved through peaceful means. Therefore, we call upon DPRK to engage in denuclearization talks, to abandon its nuclear and ballistic missile programmes, to immediately cease all related activities, to comply fully with all UN Security Council’s resolution, to return to full compliance with the NPT, including IAEA Safeguards system, and to sign and ratify the CTBT and CWC without further delay.

On another regional issue of the global security range, we note with concern steps taken by Iran violating its obligations under the JCPOA, highlighted by the IAEA reports. Exceeding uranium enrichment and stocks significantly above JCPOA limits and producing uranium metal make it impossible to be assured about the exclusively peaceful nature of Iranian nuclear programme. Likewise the European Union, Poland supports the JCOPA perceiving it as an important agreement in the sphere of curbing the nuclear proliferation. We hope Iran will return to JCPOA negotiations in Vienna without any further delay and that parties will finally reach consensus on the JCPOA reactivation.

In the debate on other weapons of mass destruction Poland traditionally attaches great attention to the issues related to the implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC).
Poland is deeply concerned that despite prohibition, well rooted in international law, chemical weapons have been used many times in recent years: in Iraq, Malaysia, Syria, Russia and on the territory of the United Kingdom. Representing Poland as the current member of the OPCW Executive Council I persistently repeat – any use of chemical weapons must be properly investigated and the perpetrators must be held accountable. Currently, it is a clear obligation for the whole international community to convey a strong and unambiguous message of support for the CWC, the OPCW’s leading role and the Director-General efforts.

This year’s draft resolution on the CWC Implementation, Poland is traditionally introducing in this Committee, offers an opportunity to do that.

Poland has been conducting an open, inclusive and transparent process with regard to the resolution, starting with the early informal consultations in The Hague and follow-up discussions in New York. Let me express our gratitude to all the Distinguished Delegations for participation in these discussions. This year Poland was confronted again with fundamentally divergent views of the Member States that were contradictive and mutually excluding. Poland, as a sole sponsor, has been doing its utmost to provide both factual and actual text. Building upon the ongoing works at the OPCW, including the relevant EC and CSP decisions, we reflected in a balanced manner issues critical for the CWC implementation. Let me hope our efforts will be taken into account and text of the resolution will be accepted by this esteemed Assembly.

Poland attaches great importance to the work conducted within the framework of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW). We believe that the CCW remains the most relevant international forum, combining diplomatic, legal and military expertise and involving industry and civil society to examine new
developments in weapons technologies. Its efficiency relies on financial stability and in this regard, Poland appeals to all State Parties to pay their mandatory contributions on time and in full. This issue is especially relevant in view of the upcoming Sixth Review Conference of the CCW to take place in December 2021. In spite of ongoing COVID-19 disruptions, we count on the Group of Governmental Experts on Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems (LAWS) ability to agree on consensual recommendations regarding the normative and operational framework on emerging technologies in the area of LAWS to the Sixth Review Conference.

We continue to promote responsible policies towards small arms and light weapons (SALW), including their transfers, as well as enhancing physical security and stockpile management. Another field of our continuous commitment and engagement is the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention. Poland perceives the Convention as an important instrument of International Humanitarian Law. In addition, Poland will be again facilitating the adoption, on behalf of the European Union, this year’s draft resolution on Assistance in mine action.

To conclude, let me reiterate that our agenda related to four thematic clusters remains comprehensive, challenging but still – of utmost importance. I am looking forward, therefore, to further discussions and substantial outcomes.

*Thank you, Mr. Chairman.*