STATEMENT BY

MR. DAMIAN PRZENIOSŁO

HEAD OF THE WMD NON-PROLIFERATION AND DISARMAMENT POLICY DIVISION
MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

70TH UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY FIRST COMMITTEE

THEMATIC DISCUSSION
ON OTHER WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION

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Mr. Chairperson,

In the debate on other weapons of mass destruction Poland traditionally attaches particular attention to the implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC). In this context we welcome the fact that number of States Parties to the CWC is steadily growing, making the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons one of the most universal international organizations. We further welcome recent accession of Angola to the CWC, which has brought the total number of its States-Parties to 192.

Poland commends the OPCW and UN staff for successful completion of the Joint Mission that was tasked with removal and elimination of Syrian chemical weapons programme components. This undertaking has been perhaps the greatest challenge in the history of the OPCW, which consumed not only its financial but also human resources. We hope that last two chemical weapon production facilities in Syria will be verified as destroyed by the end of this month and elimination of remaining chemical weapons precursors that were removed from Syria – by the end of this year. We stress the importance of fully verifying that the declaration and related submissions of the Syrian Arab Republic are accurate and complete, as required by the CWC. This is of particular significance as the Chemical Weapons Convention is a regime based on mutual confidence.
At the same time Poland has to note a number of serious concerns with regard to the CWC implementation over the last year. The Fact Finding Mission, established by the Director-General of the OPCW has confirmed with a high degree of confidence that chlorine was used as a chemical weapons in some attacks in Syria. It underscores the need for UN General Assembly to consistently condemn any use of chemical weapons by anyone under any circumstances. It is of the utmost importance that the OPCW Fact Finding Mission continues its work of collecting and analyzing relevant information. At the same time Poland welcomes unanimous adoption of the United Nations Security Council resolution 2235, which established the OPCW-UN Joint Investigative Mechanism (JIM). Poland hopes that JIM will allow to identify perpetrators of chemical weapons use and we call on all UN Member States to support the activities of the investigative mechanism.

Additionally the reports about the use of toxic chemicals by non-state actors in Iraq add a sense of urgency to the transformation of the OPCW into an agency capable of decreasing chemical threat. Poland welcomes discussion on the future of the OPCW initiated by the Director-General. We hope that all States Parties to the CWC will take an active part in it. Poland believes that Articles X on assistance and protection and XI on international cooperation of the Convention should be core drivers for the OPCW transformation in the coming years. These efforts should be supplemented by enhancement of the OPCW verification mechanism to ensure non re-emergence of chemical weapons.
Mr. Chairperson,

As in previous years Poland introduces in the United Nations General Assembly Draft Resolution on the CWC Implementation. The resolution underlines the exceptional role of the CWC in the area of disarmament, preventing re-emergence of chemical weapons, international cooperation and protection against chemical weapons. However, this year again, as a sponsor of this resolution, in the course of consultations we were confronted with many divergent views from the Member States. Finding middle ground proved to be challenging but we are confident that we made all the efforts to accommodate different views to the extent possible. The text that we are presenting is in our firm belief balanced and reflects the current status of implementation of the CWC building upon discussions and agreements reached at the OPCW in The Hague.

We hope that our efforts as the sponsor will be taken into account and compromise text of the resolution will be accepted by this esteemed assembly. Delegation of Poland asks for the approval of the draft Resolution on the implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention without a vote.