STATEMENT
by
His Excellency
Ambassador Michal Mlynár
Permanent Representative of the Slovak Republic
to the United Nations in New York
at the Thematic Discussion on Other Weapons of Mass Destruction
of the First Committee of the 74th Session
of the General Assembly of the United Nations

New York, 22 October 2019
- Check against delivery -
Mr. Chairman,

Slovakia associates itself with the statement delivered by the European Union. Nevertheless, I would like to stress the following points from my national perspective.

Mr. Chairman,

This year’s session of the 1st Committee is taking place in very challenging times as we witness a substantive deterioration of the global security environment. The proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and their means of delivery remains a major challenge for the international community and is a threat to international peace and security.

At the same time, the international disarmament and non-proliferation architecture, the goal of which is to prevent proliferation of these inhuman weapons, is under increasing threat of erosion. I am sure that we will all agree that reversing these negative and dangerous trends is in the interest of all of us.

Mr. Chairman,

As a strong supporter of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), Slovakia is deeply concerned in particular by the repeated use of chemical weapons. We are also deeply concerned by efforts to undermine the impartial and highly professional work of the OPCW and its Technical Secretariat, including by disinformation and cyber-attacks.

In this respect, Slovakia’s position remains clear and firm: any use of chemical weapons by anybody, anywhere, and under any circumstances is unacceptable. Such use is a violation of international law, and has to be condemned by all in the strongest possible terms. Those responsible - be it state or non-state actors - must be held accountable and brought to justice.

We reiterate our strong support for the Convention and underline the importance of its full implementation by all parties. And we call upon the remaining States to join the Convention to make the ban on chemical weapons truly global.

Slovakia welcomes the establishment of the Investigation and Identification Team (IIT), which strengthens the role of the OPCW in overseeing the implementation of the ban on chemical weapons. We fully support the ongoing work of the IIT and call on Syria to cooperate fully with the Team.

Slovakia also continues to fulfil its commitments to the OPCW also through tangible contributions in the form of training courses for inspectors of the Technical Secretariat and national experts from OPCW member states held at the Slovak national CBRN Training Center in Zemianske Kostolany. We are also pleased that we could contribute 30,000 euro towards OPCW’s new laboratory.

To reinforce the ban on chemical weapons, and to supplement OPCW’s work, Slovakia also takes part and supports the efforts of the International Partnership Against Impunity for the Use of Chemical Weapons.
Mr. Chairman,

Slovakia considers the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC) as an important pillar of the disarmament and non-proliferation architecture. In this connection, we are concerned by the continuation of financial problems in the BTWC due to the accumulation of arrears and late payments of assessed contributions by several States Parties. We urge all States, which have not yet done so, to honour their financial obligations without delay.

Mr. Chairman,

Slovakia supports the international community’s efforts to prevent terrorists and other non-state actors from acquiring WMDs. Since the adoption of UN Security Council Resolution 1540, Slovakia has been supporting ongoing efforts to enhance its functioning and full implementation of this Resolution, which establish legally binding obligations for all States to prevent and deter non-State actors from obtaining access to weapons of mass destruction, their means of delivery and related materials.

To conclude, let me express my hope that this thematic session will be successful in searching for solutions that will serve the needs of the international community in the field of WMD disarmament and non-proliferation. To this end, Slovakia is committed and stands ready to cooperate with other delegations.

Thank you.