74th United Nations General Assembly
First Committee

Other Weapons of Mass Destruction
(for interpretation purposes)

AUSTRIA

delivered by
H.E. Thomas Hajnoczi
Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs, Vienna

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Check against delivery
Mr Chair,

Austria fully aligns itself with the Statement delivered by the European Union. In our national capacity, we wish to add some remarks of particular importance to my country.

Austria fully supports a world free from all weapons of mass destruction. We call on all states to join and strictly implement all relevant treaties. Austria strongly condemns any use of weapons of mass destruction, nuclear, biological or chemical weapons.

The Chemical Weapons Convention is an important component of the international disarmament and non-proliferation regime. The appalling use of chemical weapon in recent years is unacceptable. It contravenes international standards and norms against such use. It is an affront to the international rules-based system on which we all depend for our security. Austria therefore reaffirms its condemnation in the strongest possible terms of any use of chemical weapons by anyone, at any time and under any circumstances. There cannot be impunity on the use of these abhorrent weapons. We therefore commend efforts seeking to bring to account those responsible. Austria is a member of the International Partnership against Impunity for the Use of Chemical Weapons and fully supports the partnership’s efforts and mechanisms, which complement international mechanisms to combat the proliferation of chemical weapons. Austria wishes to put on record its full trust in the professional, impartial and objective work of the OPCW Fact Finding Mission (FFM), the Declaration Assessment Team (DAT) and the Investigation and Identification Team (IIT).

Mr. Chair,

We live in a world of rapid scientific progress. The Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention was the first Convention banning an entire class of weapons of mass destruction. It is the security interest of all of us to make sure that our international treaty regime keeps up to speed. In this context, we welcome the experts meetings of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention, which allow for in-depth exchanges on matters of utmost relevance to the implementation of the Convention. Allowing space to discuss and
exchange views and best practices is an important confidence building measure. We are looking forward to continuing these expert level discussions.

I thank you.