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Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons**

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Mr. Chairperson, Mr. Director-General, Distinguished Delegates, CWC Coalition Colleagues, Ladies and Gentlemen,

My name is Luigi Antonio Poggi, presently serving as the Executive Director of the “Health Safety Environmental Research Association Rome” - HESAR. The HESAR association is promoted by the “International Master Courses in Protection against CBRNe Events” of the University of Rome Tor Vergata. HESAR promotes multidisciplinary scientific research devoted to enhancing the protection of the public and the environment from threats that may harm its health, safety and security, and other initiatives able to increase the awareness and spread the culture of safety and prevention of all risks, providing training, updating, and stimulating innovation and youth self-employment. HESAR is a young association composed by young researchers, professionals, and academics.

On behalf of my association, I would like to express my appreciation to the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and the Chemical Weapon Convention Coalition for the opportunity to speak for the first time at the plenary meeting at the Twenty-First Conference of State Parties.

We appreciate the work already done by the OPCW in promoting public awareness of the CWC and facilitating the involvement of civil society, including industry, experts, academics, and non-governmental organizations in the CWC. It is an honor and a privilege to be invited to participate on behalf of the HESAR association in this productive network of people and entities gathered together by the OPCW.

The pursuit of the universal membership and the steady progressing destruction of chemical weapons stockpiles are crucial tasks currently addressed by the OPCW, an organization that has been awarded the 2013 Nobel Peace Prize due to its extraordinary accomplishments. However, the intensification of terrorist activities in various parts of the world including non-State actors,

and the novel emerging terrorist methodologies, call the attention on the necessity to prevent the re-emergence of chemical weapons.

Therefore, I want to underline the importance of education and outreach tools to enhance the participation and support of all international stakeholders as the basis of the OPCW increasing expertise in order to keep up with the pace of the terrorist developments. We support the attention to be paid to education, focusing on new scientific technological developments. In fact, HESAR on its own behalf and on behalf of third parties, carries out studies and aims to define the methods and the most appropriate solutions in the field.

Our main goal is to bring these issues into the public domain to raise awareness and to initiate a dialogue among various stakeholders, starting from the scientific community and involving all the industry and the civil society, by means of scientific initiatives like workshops, meetings, round-tables and, in the near future, scientific conferences and training activities.

One of our future activities deserves a special mention in this context. It is a great honor for me to announce that HESAR is collaborating with the “International Master Courses in Protection against CBRNe Events” to organize a scientific international conference jointly with the OPCW, in the framework of the activities of the 20th anniversary of the OPCW’s establishment, thanks to the Master’s collaboration with the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation. This “1st Scientific International Conference on CBRNe” – SICC 2017 ([www.sicc2017.com](http://www.sicc2017.com)) will be held in Rome from the 22<sup>nd</sup> to the 24<sup>th</sup> of May 2017. The second day will be entirely dedicated to the OPCW both in plenary sessions dedicated to the event celebration and in scientific sessions dedicated to several chemical safety and security issues and to the Chemical Weapons Convention.

SICC 2017 Conference primary objective is to internationally promote the dissemination of the culture on the prevention and mitigation of Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear and explosives events. In the common struggle for safety & security, SICC 2017 is devoted to highlight the state-of-the-art and the future needs of the different methodologies, techniques, theories, instruments, strategies, procedures, technologies and best practices on the prevention and mitigation of CBRNe risks, particularly in the spirit of collaboration and integration among States. The world of CBRNe today mainly concerns the military experts, the specialized operators, and the industry. However, the HESAR association vision is also to promote the spread of education on CBRNe beyond its traditional boundaries. The experience we have gained so far has led us to an ambitious vision: the CBRNe should become an academic scientific discipline, with the final aim to increase and spread the information and awareness of the risks and therefore to increase national and international preparedness and resiliency.

I thank you all for your kind attention and I ask that this statement be considered an official document of this Conference and posted on the external server and website.