

2017 EAST ASIA SUMMIT LEADERS' STATEMENT ON CHEMICAL WEAPONS

Adopted in Manila, Philippines on 14 November 2017

WE, the Heads of State and Government of the Member States of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), Australia, People's Republic of China, Republic of India, Japan, Republic of Korea, New Zealand, Russian Federation, and the United States of America on the occasion of the 12th East Asia Summit (EAS) in Manila, Philippines, on 14 November 2017;

REAFFIRMING that the EAS, with ASEAN as the driving force, will continue to be a Leaders-led forum for dialogue on broad strategic, political and economic issues of common interest and concern with the aim of promoting peace, stability and economic prosperity in East Asia;

STRESSING that the EAS will actively contribute to a rules-based approach in managing inter-state relations in the region; promote strategic trust; and help ensure transparent and predictable behaviour;

REALISING the increasing range of challenges facing the world and the need for concerted regional and global efforts to respond to these challenges;

EMPHASISING the common aspiration to ensure regional and global security and safety, not only for this generation but for generations to come;

WELCOMING the ASEAN Statement Commemorating the 20th Anniversary of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) on 26 April 2017;

RECOGNISING the work of bodies working to permanently eliminate the threat posed by chemical weapons, including the OPCW, United Nations Security Council (UNSC), the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) and the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs;

EMPHASISING the importance of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction (CWC) and the OPCW as its implementing body and the relevant UNSC resolutions;

RECALLING that the CWC prohibits the use, development, production, acquisition, stockpiling, retention and transfer of chemical weapons;

RECOGNISING that the OPCW has verified the destruction of more than 96 percent of all chemical weapon stockpiles declared by Possessor States and further recognizing the obligation of the States Parties to complete the destruction of all categories of chemical weapons in the shortest time possible;

WELCOMING that the Russian Federation has recently completed destruction of all its declared chemical weapon stockpiles as verified by the OPCW;

ACKNOWLEDGING that the universalisation of the CWC, more effective multilateral coordination, as well as improving national implementation of the CWC are important in meeting ongoing challenges posed by chemical weapons, including the specter of chemical terrorism, and the misuse of toxic materials as weapons by State and non-State actors;

DO HEREBY DECIDE TO:

1. Reaffirm our commitment to the principles of: destruction of chemical weapons; nonproliferation of chemical weapons; assistance and protection of states threatened by the use of, or attacked by, chemical weapons; and the pursuit of chemistry for peaceful purposes;
2. Reaffirm that the use of chemical weapons and toxic chemicals as weapons anywhere by anyone under any circumstances as prohibited by the CWC is reprehensible and further reaffirm that those who use chemical weapons and toxic chemicals as weapons should be held accountable;
3. Call on all State Parties to comply with the destruction of their chemical weapons stockpiles, and also express determination that the destruction of all categories of chemical weapons should be completed in the shortest time possible in accordance with the provisions of the Convention and the Verification Annex, and with the full application of the relevant decisions that have been taken;
4. Determine for the sake of all humankind, to work with the international community to exclude completely the possibility of the use, development, production, acquisition, stockpiling, retention, and transfer of chemical weapons through the implementation of the CWC and relevant UNSC Resolutions (UNSCRs);
5. Reaffirm the EAS participating countries' commitment to full implementation of UNSCR 1540 (2004) to prevent any form of support to non-State actors that attempt to develop, acquire, manufacture, possess, transport, transfer or use chemical weapons and their means of delivery;
6. Recognise the need to address ongoing chemical weapons challenges, to speak with one voice against the use of chemical weapons anywhere, by anyone, and under any circumstances and to develop a state of readiness to provide timely, adequate and effective assistance to respond, when an incident occurs;
7. Reaffirm our commitment to implement national measures in criminalising all acts carried out by natural and legal persons, including non-State Actors, that are contrary to the CWC, and assure effective legal cooperation in ensuring that those responsible for such acts can be brought to justice;
8. Support the OPCW's continuing efforts in promoting chemistry as a peaceful tool for national development and prosperity, as well as in educating, training and providing opportunities for strengthening the capacities of Member States in the implementation of the CWC and in preventing non-State actors from gaining access to materials and equipment that could be used for the production of chemical weapons;
9. Condemn the chemical weapons attacks in Syria, including the most recent chemical weapon attack with the nerve agent sarin on April 4, 2017;
10. Call upon all States that have yet to accede to or ratify the CWC to do so without further delay, as the universality of the CWC is crucial to its success;
11. Note the grave concern expressed by the Executive Council of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons in its decision EC-84/DEC.8 of 8 March 2017 on the chemical weapon incident according to the statements of the Government of Malaysia;
12. Underscore the importance of all States complying with the restrictions on the transfer of dual-use items, materials, equipment, goods, and technology established in relevant UNSCRs, including 1718 and 2270;

13. Encourage international cooperation among the EAS participating countries on chemical weapons counter-proliferation, including to implement the provisions of the CWC in a manner which avoids hampering the economic or technological development of State Parties, the development and improvement of laboratory capacity, safe chemical management, and training and capacity building to facilitate effective national implementation of the CWC;
14. Strengthen health systems to be resilient in preparedness for effective response to health-related hazards, including biological, chemical, radiological-nuclear hazards and emerging threats;
15. Intensify information sharing on terrorist and transnational crime organisations, including operational methods, movements, terrorism financing and other relevant illicit activities such as smuggling and misuse of weapons and explosives, as well as Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear and Explosive (CBRNE) materials;
16. Encourage further engagement between policymakers and key partners in science, academia and industry in the EAS participating countries in furtherance of the objectives of the CWC, while further promoting international cooperation for peaceful purposes in the field of chemical activities for the benefit of development and trade; and
17. Encourage direct involvement of the EAS participating countries to promote a level playing field in global chemical trade to garner facilitation of exchange of chemicals technologies, expertise, scientific, and technological information for the purposes not prohibited under the CWC, aimed to foster economic development.