

## The Russian Federation

### Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons Executive Council (OPCW Executive Council)

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#### **I. Preventing the Re-emergence of Chemical Weapons in Modern Warfare**

The Russian Federation understands well the importance of preventing the re-emergence of chemical weapons in modern warfare. As an active Member State of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), the Russian Federation has been hard at work accomplishing the first step in preventing the re-emergence of chemical weapons: their destruction.<sup>1</sup> While under the government of the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic, forty thousand tonnes of the chemical weapons were produced.<sup>2</sup> The CWC requires the disarmament or destruction of all forty thousand tonnes of chemical weapons.<sup>3</sup> Destroying the world's largest supply of chemical weapons was difficult, but through the employment of seven chemical weapon destruction facilities, aid from other Member States of both the CWC and the OPCW, and much effort from our own people in March of 2017, the Russian Federation finished dismantling all of our chemical weapons, which was officially verified by the OPCW later that year.<sup>4 5</sup>

The Russian Federation is a strong opponent of the re-emergence of chemical weapons not only domestically, but in our international policy as well. In 2004, the United Nation (UN) Security Council voted unanimously in favor of Resolution 1540.<sup>6</sup> This UN Resolution notes how dangerous it would be if weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons as well as certain missiles fell into the hands of terrorist organizations or other non-state actors. In accordance with this Resolution, the Russian Federation enacted laws that prohibit private companies from performing military or security functions, as well as prohibiting the export of military services that would be opposed to the Russian Federation. In 2016 and 2018, the Russia Federation hosted a Resolution 1540 Points of Contact Training Course for Member States of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE).<sup>7</sup> This training course went over Member State's obligations to Resolution 1540, as well as issues that relate to proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.<sup>8</sup> We believe these types of agreements and training exercises are the best way forward in preventing chemical weapons from falling into the hands of terrorist organizations.

The Russian Federation has worked with many Member States in the past to ensure the swift destruction of its own chemical weapons, this is why we are proposing the usage of similar agreements to the Cooperative Threat Reduction Program (CTR) to aid Member States that may not have destroyed their chemical weapons caches yet in doing so. We also propose for continuation and expansion of similar training courses as the ones that the Russian Federation held in 2016 and 2018. Preventing chemical weapons from falling into the hands of terrorist groups is the best first step toward the complete destruction and prohibition of chemical weapons. Iran recommends that task forces be created to ensure the outcome as described above. The Russian Federation is looking forward to working

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<sup>1</sup> John Pike, "Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD)," Chemical Weapons, accessed October 31, 2019, <https://www.globalsecurity.org/wmd/world/russia/cw.htm>.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> "Chemical Weapons Convention," OPCW, accessed October 31, 2019, <https://www.opcw.org/chemical-weapons-convention>.

<sup>4</sup> John Pike, "Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD)," Chemical Weapons, accessed October 31, 2019, <https://www.globalsecurity.org/wmd/world/russia/cw.htm>.

<sup>5</sup> "Arms Control Today," Russia Destroys Last Chemical Weapons | Arms Control Association, accessed October 31, 2019, <https://www.armscontrol.org/act/2017-11/news/russia-destroys-last-chemical-weapons>.

<sup>6</sup> "1540 Compass," 1540 Compass, no. 11 (2016), <https://s3.amazonaws.com/unoda-web/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/compass-11-winter-2016.pdf>.

<sup>7</sup> "Security Council Committee on Resolution 1540 (2004) Points-of-Contact Training Course for States of Organization for Security and Co-Operation in Europe | Meetings Coverage and Press Releases," United Nations (United Nations), accessed October 31, 2019, <https://www.un.org/press/en/2018/sc13515.doc.htm>.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

with other Member States to create sustainable, long-term solutions in preventing the re-emergence of chemical weapons.

## **II. Ensuring the Destruction of Abandoned Chemical Weapons in Post-Conflict Environments**

The Russian Federation is very aware of the necessary destruction of chemical weapons in post-conflict situations. During the reign of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), our predecessors produced over forty-thousand tonnes of chemical weapons including nerve, blister, and choking agents, making it the largest stockpile of chemical weapons of any Member State.<sup>9</sup> The Russian Federation recognizes that there is no place in the current international system for chemical weapons, and we have worked hard to implement new policies to eliminate these weapons. In the early years of the Russian Federation, we entered into the Cooperative Threat Reduction Program with the United States.<sup>10</sup> This program provided monetary support for the destruction of chemical weapons created by the USSR, and is responsible for the creation of the chemical weapons destruction facility in Shchuchye. This facility has destroyed over two million chemical weapons shells, making it the largest chemical weapons destruction facility in the world.<sup>11</sup> In 2002, Russia established our first chemical-weapon destruction facility in Gorny, Saratov.<sup>12</sup> We have continued the establishment of multiple destruction facilities throughout the 2000s in seven different locations within our Member State's borders, which worked adamantly to destroy the forty thousand tonnes of chemical weapons produced by the USSR.<sup>13</sup> The Russian Federation has been a proud member of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) since our ratification of the CWC in 1997.<sup>14</sup> In September 2017, we completed the destruction of our chemical weapon stockpiles, as confirmed by the OPCW.<sup>15</sup> We believe that our destruction of these chemical weapons should be viewed by other Member States as a firm example of what is expected by Member States in the CWC.

The monetary burden of the destruction of such a large stockpile chemical weapons was great, even for a Member State as prosperous as the Russian Federation.<sup>16</sup> We spent the equivalent of over five billion US Dollars (USDs) on the destruction and neutralization of these chemical weapons.<sup>17</sup> However, achieving our goal of total neutralization could not have been possible alone.<sup>18</sup> Many Member States of the OPCW provided monetary assistance for our mission, including the United States, United Kingdom, Italy, and France.<sup>19</sup> For this the Russian

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<sup>9</sup> John Pike, "Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD)," Chemical Weapons, accessed October 31, 2019, <https://www.globalsecurity.org/wmd/world/russia/cw.htm>.

<sup>10</sup> By, "Fact Sheet: The Nunn-Lugar Cooperative Threat Reduction Program," Center for Arms Control and Non-Proliferation, May 1, 2015, <https://armscontrolcenter.org/fact-sheet-the-nunn-lugar-cooperative-threat-reduction-program/>.

<sup>11</sup> U.S. Senator Dick Lugar, accessed October 31, 2019, <http://web.archive.org/web/20121212035025/http://www.lugar.senate.gov/news/record.cfm?id=313692>.

<sup>12</sup> "Arms Control Today," Russia Destroys Last Chemical Weapons | Arms Control Association, accessed October 31, 2019, <https://www.armscontrol.org/act/2017-11/news/russia-destroys-last-chemical-weapons>.

<sup>13</sup> John Pike, "Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD)," Chemical Weapons, accessed October 31, 2019, <https://www.globalsecurity.org/wmd/world/russia/cw.htm>.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> "OPCW Marks Completion of Destruction of Russian Chemical Weapons Stockpile," OPCW, accessed October 31, 2019, <https://www.opcw.org/media-centre/news/2017/10/opcw-marks-completion-destruction-russian-chemical-weapons-stockpile>.

<sup>16</sup> "Arms Control Today," Russia Destroys Last Chemical Weapons | Arms Control Association, accessed October 31, 2019, <https://www.armscontrol.org/act/2017-11/news/russia-destroys-last-chemical-weapons>.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

Federation is grateful, and hopes that this collaboration can be the basis of a bond of unity for all Member States to work together for the destruction of chemical weapons throughout the world, as it was in the Russian Federation.

Another problem Member States wishing to dismantle their chemical weapons face is the creation of chemical waste. The current Russian plan to deal with this hazardous waste is to store it in large steel drums and hide it in a concrete bunker in order to prevent environmental contamination. We look forward to hearing the solutions of other Member States on this issue. The Russian Federation has high hopes for what this committee can accomplish. We believe firmly in the missions laid out by the OPCW and the CWC. Seeing the incredible effects of international programs and spending, the Russian Federation believes this committee should adapt and apply programs such as the Cooperative Threat Reduction Program, as well as encourage the loaning of money and resources for the purposes of destroying chemical weapons, especially to the few remaining Member States of the CWC that have not fully dismantled their chemical weapons arsenal.