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Letter dated 29 March 2017 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to convey herewith a report of the Director General of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) on the status of the implementation of the plan for the destruction of Libya's remaining category 2 chemical weapons outside the territory of Libya (see annex). The report, dated 23 March 2017, covers the period from 23 February to 22 March 2017.

The report was prepared in accordance with the relevant provisions of OPCW Executive Council decision EC-M-52/DEC.1 of 20 July 2016 and Security Council resolution 2298 (2016) of 22 July 2016, for transmission to the Security Council.

I should be grateful if the present letter and its annex could be brought to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) António **Guterres**

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Annex

[Original: Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish]

I have the honour to transmit to you my report entitled “Status of the implementation of the plan for the destruction of Libya’s remaining category 2 chemical weapons outside the territory of Libya”, prepared in accordance with the relevant provisions of OPCW Executive Council decision EC-M-52/DEC.1, dated 20 July 2016, and United Nations Security Council resolution 2298 (2016), dated 22 July 2016, for transmission to the Security Council (see enclosure). My report covers the period from 23 February to 22 March 2017 and also covers the reporting requirements of Executive Council decisions EC-M-52/DEC.2, dated 27 July 2016, and EC-M-53/DEC.1, dated 26 August 2016.

(*Signed*) Ahmet **Üzümcü**

Enclosure

[Original: Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish]

Report by the Director General of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons

Status of the implementation of the plan for the destruction of Libya's remaining category 2 chemical weapons outside the territory of Libya

1. At its Fifty-Second Meeting, the Executive Council (hereinafter "the Council") adopted a decision on the "Destruction of Libya's Remaining Chemical Weapons" (EC-M-52/DEC.1, dated 20 July 2016) and requested the Director-General to assist Libya in developing a modified plan of destruction of Libya's Category 2 chemical weapons. On 22 July 2016, the United Nations Security Council adopted resolution 2298 (2016), welcoming and endorsing the decision by the Council and requesting the Director-General, through the Secretary-General, to report to the Security Council on a regular basis until the destruction is complete and verified.

2. At the conclusion of its Fifty-Second Meeting, the Council adopted a decision entitled "Detailed Requirements for the Destruction of Libya's Remaining Category 2 Chemical Weapons" (EC-M-52/DEC.2, dated 27 July 2016). In operative paragraph 17 of that decision, the Council requested the Director-General to report to the Council on a monthly basis on the implementation of the decision. This seventh monthly report covers the period from 23 February to 22 March 2017.

Progress in the elimination of Libyan chemical weapons by the State Party hosting destruction activities

3. Gesellschaft zur Entsorgung von chemischen Kampfstoffen und Rüstungsaltlasten mbH (GEKA mbH), the designated destruction facility at Munster, Germany, completed the destruction of the 2-chloroethanol and tributylamine on 17 December 2016 and 20 January 2017 respectively. The destruction of phosphorous trichloride, which as at 20 March 2017 stood at 3.2 metric tonnes, or 2.8%, was suspended, and the decision was made to begin with the destruction of the thionylchloride (see paragraph 5 below).

4. Technical Secretariat (hereinafter "the Secretariat") teams continue to inspect GEKA mbH every two months, with the last such inspection having been conducted from 23 to 27 January 2017. No issues were encountered with the destruction process.

5. GEKA mbH informed the Secretariat that, due to delays in obtaining the final approvals for the neutralisation system, destruction had begun on the phosphorous trichloride using the incinerator at Incinerator Plant 1 ("Munster-1"). The first tank processed contained a mixture of PCl_3 and $POCl_3$, as determined during initial sampling. This tank presented fewer hazards due to the combination of chemicals. The contents were fed slowly into the incinerator to prevent damage to the system as a result of the highly corrosive nature of the material. However, according to the results of a regular inspection performed at Munster-1, the decision was made to

suspend the destruction of phosphorous trichloride and to begin with the destruction of the thionylchloride. The replacement of the chemical is a necessary precaution in order to prevent the refractory coating from severe damage. GEKA mbH will also continue to pursue the required permits and will change over to neutralisation upon receipt of the approvals.

6. Secretariat personnel will travel to Germany to conduct an inspection at GEKA mbH from 27 to 30 March 2017, and will be accompanied by two observers from the Libyan National Authority. Observations from the inspection of the destruction activities will continue to be included in the monthly updates.

Activities carried out by the Secretariat with respect to Libya

7. The Secretariat inspected the destruction operations at GEKA mbH between 23 and 27 January 2017. The Secretariat inspection team confirmed that all monitoring equipment in place for the purposes of verification is functioning as intended.

8. The Secretariat will continue to discuss with GEKA mbH the timelines for the incineration and neutralisation of the remaining chemicals during the forthcoming inspection.

9. As previously reported, the Secretariat was informed that during decanting operations at the Ruwagha storage facility, one container experienced an exothermic reaction, causing the material inside to polymerise. The OPCW Laboratory has completed an analysis of the sample received from Libya, which was taken from the tank in question. In addition to determining the composition of the sample, the Laboratory was requested to ascertain whether the contents of the tank could be regarded as destroyed, or if residual declared chemicals were still present in amounts that would require the waste to be further chemically treated, as well as if the tank contents presented a proliferation risk.

10. Using gas chromatography-mass spectrometry analysis, both PCl_3 and $POCl_3$ were detected in the sample, in the region of 5% by weight. Observations made during the analysis of the sample indicate a potential means of destruction. The highly viscous mass found in the tank is dissolvable in water, and the chemicals requiring destruction (PCl_3 and $POCl_3$) will hydrolyse to harmless, non-scheduled chemicals.

11. Owing to the levels of the Category 2 chemicals remaining in the container (approximately 5%), the viscous nature of the remnants, and the limited ability to recover any useable material, the Secretariat is in a position to affirm that the material no longer presents a proliferation threat.

12. The Secretariat, in accordance with the report of the Council at its Eighty-Third Session (paragraph 6.12 of EC-83/5, dated 11 November 2016), continues to consult with the United Nations Office of Safety and Security (UNDSS) as to the possibility of Secretariat personnel travelling to Ruwagha to obtain soil samples. The UNDSS is currently advising against such travel. The Secretariat will continue to monitor the situation.

Overall costs and status of the trust fund

13. On 1 August 2016, the Secretariat issued a Note calling for voluntary contributions to the new trust fund for support to Libya (S/1400/2016, dated 1 August 2016). As at 31 December 2016, the trust fund had received over EUR 1.2 million, with contributions having been received from Canada, Cyprus, Finland, New Zealand, and the United States of America. As at 21 March 2017, EUR 498,710 had been disbursed from the trust fund for activities related to the destruction of Libya's Category 2 chemical weapons. These funds continue to be used to fund destruction and verification activities related to Libya's Category 2 chemical weapons.

14. The Secretariat has concluded an agreement with Canada on funding the services of an expert company to work with Libya on the preparation of a budget for the work related to the disposal of the contents of the remaining tank and clean-up of the decanted tanks at Ruwagha. The European Union has expressed an interest in contributing to this effort. The Director-General would once again like to express his appreciation to those States Parties that have already made or have committed to making voluntary contributions to the trust fund.