



**OPCW**

**Executive Council**

Ninety-Ninth Session  
8 – 10 March 2022

EC-99/NAT.53  
8 March 2022  
ENGLISH and RUSSIAN only

**RUSSIAN FEDERATION**

**STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR A. V. SHULGIN  
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION TO  
THE OPCW AT THE NINETY NINTH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL  
UNDER AGENDA ITEM 7(C)**

Madam Chairperson,

It is with regret that we note that the issue of holding the twenty-fifth round of consultations between the Declaration Assessment Team (DAT) and the Syrian side has come to an impasse. It appears as though the statements that Damascus is blocking them from taking place are not consistent with the truth. This has nothing to do with any rejection to receive the DAT or even cooperate with it, as they are trying so often to portray it. The demonstrated desire to conduct consultations with the Syrian side through the DAT does not indicate attempts to find any potential resolution to continue the work, but rather the intent to insert a certain political context into what is currently an organisational and technical problem.

We believe that the management of the Technical Secretariat could meet Damascus halfway and demonstrate greater flexibility by substituting the staff member, and thus ensuring that the twenty-fifth round of consultations takes place as planned.

We note the unprecedented openness of the Syrian authorities and their aim to resolve as quickly as possible the unresolved issues on the agenda, as well as those for which Damascus has already provided all possible answers and explanations. During its activities, the DAT has had the opportunity to hold hundreds of meetings and conduct dozens of interviews. As we have repeatedly mentioned, the Secretariat spent 829 inspector days in the Syrian Arab Republic in 2020 alone. The results of this work are clear. Four outstanding issues were resolved, and several are still under way. The pace may not be the fastest, but considering the difficulties that Damascus is dealing with, it can hardly be said that no progress has been made.

In this context, we express our hope that an agreement will soon be reached on conducting a meeting between the Director-General of the OPCW Secretariat, Mr Arias, and Syria's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr Mekdad, in order to bring their positions closer together and resolve any outstanding issues. The arrangement thereof will serve as a solid example of the Director-General's willingness to act for the good of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), to discuss current issues on its agenda at any time, at any place. We strongly believe that this deadlock can only be overcome through professional dialogue.

We request that this statement be distributed as an official document of the Ninety-Ninth Session of the Council and published on Catalyst and the OPCW website.

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