



الجمهورية العربية السورية

Syrian Arab Republic

**Statement by Ambassador
Milad Atieh
Permanent Representative of the
Syrian Arab Republic to the Organization for the
Prohibition of Chemical Weapons
For the Ninety-Ninth Session of the Executive Council**

The Hague, 8-11 March 2022

Courtesy Translation

Madame Chairperson,

Allow me at the outset to extend to Her Excellency Dr. Eniola Ulaitan Ajayi, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Republic of Nigeria to the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, my congratulations on her assumption of the presidency of the Ninety-Ninth Session of the Executive Council. I wish her success in managing the work of this session. I would also like to take this opportunity to extend my heartfelt thanks to His Excellency Ambassador Abdelwahab Al-Balooqi, for his successful management of the Sessions of the Council during the period from May 2021 until the end of last year.

My delegation associates itself with the statement made by the representative of the Republic of Azerbaijan on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and China parties (NAM +China) to the Convention.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

My delegation regrets that this technical Organization is once again being involved in what are purely political and security issues. Yesterday it was Syria, and today it is Russia. We affirm that it is the legitimate right of the Russian Federation to defend its national security

and keep threats away from its people and citizens, based on the principles of justice and humanity. In this regard, we support Russia, based on our own conviction of the correctness of its position, having continued to present practical proposals and having exercised the highest forms of restraint towards all of the escalation attempts by the Western countries. The responsibility for the chaos and bloodshed falls on the Western countries as a result of their policies aimed at controlling other peoples in Ukraine and in different parts of the world and breaking the stability of the world, and the continuation of those countries to impose immoral unilateral coercive measures, and sending all kinds of weapons and mercenaries, including terrorists from Syria, into Ukraine without any accountability.

The United States and its Western allies should be the last to talk about interference in the internal affairs of nations. Modern and contemporary history bears witness to the acts of aggression, invasion and intervention that they carried out, resulting in the displacement and death of millions of innocent victims in many countries around the world. Let us not forget what they have done in Syria; the thousands of victims, the destruction of infrastructure, their support for terrorism, and the imposing of economic terrorism since 2011 until now.

As for what some countries have raised about chemical scenarios in order to accuse Russia, this behavior is now very well known in the archives of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, just like these very same countries have continuously created false flag scenarios on the use of chemical weapons to accuse the Syrian government, they are repeating this today with Russia, by making false and baseless accusations during the special operation that Russia is currently conducting in Ukraine in defense of its security and citizens.

Madame Chairperson,

Achieving the universality of the Chemical Weapons Convention is a very important step in ensuring an effective global regime against chemical weapons. However, this matter cannot be achieved without obligating Israel to join the Convention on the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, and the rest of the international agreements related to preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. It is unfortunate, that countries claiming to be keen on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons obstruct any effort to establish a zone free of weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East, in order to protect Israel and keep it outside any international jurisdiction over its nuclear, chemical and biological facilities.

Madame Chairperson,

The expansion of chemical terrorist threats poses a serious challenge to international peace and security, and no country is immune from this danger. In this context, the Syrian Arab Republic affirms that the behavior of some State Parties, in covering up the crimes and practices of terrorist groups inside of Syria, has encouraged those terrorists to commit more heinous crimes against Syrian citizens, including the use of toxic materials over the past eight years. Syria has been informing you about the continuation of various terrorist groups as well as the "White Helmets" terrorist group, in preparing scenarios for the use of chemical weapons, especially in the rural areas of Idlib, Aleppo, Hama and Latakia, in order to accuse the Syrian government.

Madame Chairperson,

Syria acceded voluntarily to the Chemical Weapons Convention in 2013, and in good faith, out of its belief in the rejection of the use of chemical weapons by anyone, anywhere, and under any circumstances. Syria faithfully and credibly implemented its sovereign decision to conclude the Syrian chemical file, and this was actually done in record time, accomplishing that much quicker than some of the countries which have acceded to the Convention years before, despite the very difficult and complex circumstances that Syria underwent, but we regret to say,

that what Syria has experienced in the past years within the Organization, has raised a serious question to us about the Organization's ability to carry out its mandate under the Convention, and questions to the extent of its ability to withstand the pressures it is exposed to by the United States of America and its Western allies. This serious challenge does not only concern Syria, but is part of a broader global problem of a systemic nature, because the Organization has turned into a tool for political manipulation that has distanced it from its professionalism and thus its credibility, especially by allowing for the approach taken by Western countries to pass decisions in the bodies of the Organization through voting in the absence of consensus, disregarding and disrespecting the views of other countries. In light of this, we are very concerned about the current state of affairs, where it is required to put a stop to this continuous decline in the course of the Organization's work, and to begin seriously and urgently to correct it so that it can return to the implementation of the mandate entrusted to it, as it is considered the basic and neutral pillar of the chemical weapons non-proliferation regime. Despite all this, Syria renews its keenness to pursue positive and constructive cooperation with the Technical Secretariat. As evidence of this seriousness, Syria welcomes the convening of a meeting between H.E. Dr. Faisal Al-Miqdad, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates, with the Director General of the Organization, as soon as

possible, to discuss the latest developments related to the Syrian chemical file, and preparations are now underway to hold this meeting. Despite the difficult conditions that the Syrian Arab Republic is going through as a result of the economic war waged by the United States of America and some Western countries, exemplified by the illegal unilateral coercive measures imposed on it, which have had a significant impact on the economic and social conditions of Syrian citizens, in addition to the outbreak of the epidemic. “Covid-19”, Syria has not stopped fully cooperating with the Organization, the Technical Secretariat and its teams within the framework of implementing its commitments.

Madame Chairperson,

The Syrian Arab Republic has faced a historically unprecedented campaign of skepticism and false accusations of not cooperating with the Organization and its Technical Secretariat, as some countries pre-empted the results of the technical consultations that are still ongoing between the Syrian National Authority and the Declarations Assessment Team (DAT), taking advantage of what was stated in some reports related to the “Syrian Declaration” and other reports issued by the Organization in this regard; Despite Syria's assertion that some of the technical issues discussed between the Syrian National Authority and the

DAT are related to different scientific interpretations, and therefore it is a process that cannot be resolved in a distorted and selective manner. Accordingly, no one has the right to jump to accusations directly on issues that are still being discussed and researched. The behavior of these countries blatantly contradicts the provisions of the Convention, the principles of international law and the Charter of the United Nations, and is nothing but an attempt to use the Organization and the remaining technical aspects of the Syrian chemical file to serve its political purposes, which is to exert pressure on Syria. Despite all this, Syria continued its full and positive cooperation with the Organization, and committed itself to a structured dialogue with the DAT throughout the Twenty-Four rounds of consultations held, with the aim of closing the remaining outstanding technical issues.

Some Western countries have recently taken positions and launched false accusations based on incorrect information contained in some fabricated reports, suggesting that the Syrian Arab Republic does not want to hold the 25th round of consultations between the experts of the National Authority and the DAT, while the truth is that Syria welcomed the holding of this round and informed the Technical Secretariat of the Organization of its readiness to receive the DAT,

based on its firm keenness to end the file of outstanding issues, and expressed its serious desire to close this file forever.

Madame Chairperson,

The Syrian Arab Republic, along with many other countries, has on more than one occasion, expressed some objective observations regarding the work of the Fact-Finding Mission's Team (FFM), and despite all this, Syria has cooperated with the teams of this Mission and provided it with all the facilitations required for the success of its work. This Team has failed in more than one test. Evidence for this is clear to all State Parties, and their bias, unprofessionalism and falsification of facts have been proven in more than one report which they issued, for example, the Khan Sheikhoun Incident (2017), Aleppo Incident (2018), Saraqib Incident (2018), and Douma Incident (2018), and most recently, the Kafr Zita incident report (2016). This approach will not lead to fair and objective results and conclusions. In this context, we stress the need for the FFM to overcome the flaws related to its approach and methods of work, respect the provisions of the CWC, and abide by its professional standards and the document of Terms of Reference that was agreed upon with Syria. My country's government considers that, after all these professional scandals, it has become unacceptable to remain silent about the continuation of the FFM to work according to those

faulty methods. The exaggerated praise of the reports of this Mission, its professionalism and its integrity, is in line with the aim to use its reports to put more pressure on Syria and cover up the crimes of terrorists and their affiliate, the "White Helmets" group, in this regard.

Madame Chairperson,

The Syrian Arab Republic still maintains its firm position on the "Investigation and Identification Team" (IIT), which lacks legitimacy. Therefore, Syria, along with other countries, does not recognize this team and its work and rejects any outputs issued or those that will be issued by it in the future, based on Syria's respect, adherence to, and commitment to the provisions of the Chemical Weapons Convention.

Madame Chairperson,

Finally, Syria calls for international cooperation to confront the illegal restrictions imposed by some well-known countries on the transfer of scientific technology for peaceful purposes to developing countries, Subjecting it to illegal unilateral and coercive measures, with the aim of preventing it from achieving economic and scientific development for its peoples, and preventing it from using chemistry for peaceful purposes in clear violation of the provisions of the Convention and International law.

I thank you, and ask that you please consider this Statement as an Official document of the Ninety-Ninth Session of the Executive Council, and publish it on the public website and Catalyst Internal database.