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ARABIC and ENGLISH only

SYRIAN ARAB REPUBLIC

**STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR MILAD ATIEH
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE SYRIAN ARAB REPUBLIC TO THE
OPCW AT THE TWENTY-SEVENTH SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE
STATES PARTIES IN EXERCISE OF THE RIGHT OF REPLY TO A JOINT
STATEMENT BY FRANCE AND A STATEMENT BY THE EUROPEAN UNION**

My country's delegation expresses regret over the joint statement delivered by the representative of France and the statement of the European Union. Both statements are part of a campaign of scepticism and false accusations that is unprecedented in the history of this Organisation, and that is waged by the United States and Western States against Syria.

Western States continue to pursue an approach that is undermining the work of the OPCW. The decisions referred to in the two statements entailed grave and documented violations of the provisions of the Convention and contributed to unprecedented divisions within the OPCW, by resorting to voting in order to impose decisions, away from consensus.

It does not come as a surprise that France is leading this campaign along with some Western States, especially those that have waged repeated aggressions on Syrian territories in 2017 and 2018, under the pretext that the Syrian Government has used chemical weapons, even before the incidents in question were investigated. Those States have turned the Organisation into a tool for political manipulation, deflecting it from its technical and professional nature, and thus from its credibility.

Syria has not failed to destroy its chemical arsenal. Some of the States that signed the statement, including some States of the European Union, are fully aware that the essential part of the Syrian chemical arsenal was destroyed by them. The rest has been confirmed as destroyed under the control of the OPCW, as acknowledged by the Organisation, since 2013.

Both statements demand that we cooperate with the Technical Secretariat. Syria has never ceased to cooperate fully with the OPCW and its Technical Secretariat and teams in implementation of its obligations. We have explained in detail how Syria has responded to all proposals made by the Technical Secretariat regarding the Declaration Assessment Team and Syria's cooperation and keenness to hold the twenty-fifth round of consultations. The party that is hampering the holding of this round is the Technical Secretariat of the OPCW, not Syria. Whoever says otherwise is certainly mistaken or has a hostile political agenda against my country. The latter is more likely, in our opinion.

All the decisions made by the OPCW Policy-Making Organs since 2018 have been built on baseless allegations and fabrications, with the aim of continuing the multifaceted war against my country, after those States failed to bring down the Syrian State through direct and indirect



war, despite using all inhumane and immoral ways and means, including economic terrorism and the unilateral coercive measures imposed on my country. Consequently, the OPCW is riven by unprecedented division and polarisation, putting its future at risk.

The statement demands that we implement the decision adopted at the Ninety-Fourth Session of the Executive Council. Can the requirements imposed by this decision be implemented? They were formulated in such a way as to make it impossible for Syria to implement them, because Syria does not possess any chemical weapons whatsoever.

We have repeatedly said and asked those who are levelling accusations and sponsoring the fabrication of scenarios of chemical weapons use: what interest does Syria have in using toxic substances or, for example, chlorine that would cause breathing difficulty to some individuals, whereas it can use conventional defence weapons in its war against the terrorists that are backed by the United States of America and Western and other States in the region, foremost among which are those States that have prepared the two statements? Is the Syrian Government so naïve as to perpetrate such an act? This question is addressed to all.

The question is: on what information are the States that signed this statement or the European Union statement relying? Everything said is nothing but false and baseless accusations. It seems that these States are not reading the documented information that we have included in our statements to this Session of the Conference, particularly the general statement and the statement under the general debate item. There is indisputable information, documented by date, content, and specific data about our relationship and communication with the Technical Secretariat. Or maybe they do read but they insist on continuing to exercise their hostile role and approach towards Syria.

I thank you and I request that this statement be considered a document of the Twenty-Seventh Session of the Conference and posted on the OPCW's external website and on Catalyst.

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