



OPCW

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URUGUAY

**STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR ÁLVARO MOERZINGER PAGANI
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE EASTERN REPUBLIC OF URUGUAY
TO THE OPCW
AT THE SEVENTY-FOURTH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

Mr Chairman,

Uruguay, as a full member of the Executive Council of the OPCW, has joined the consensus to adopt a decision by which the chemical weapons stockpile in the Syrian Arab Republic will be subject to international control, under the United Nations supervision, and its programmed destruction will be undertaken. We consider this consensus to be an example of the endeavours of the international community to maintain peace, to protect the lives of citizens and to find a political solution to the crisis.

From now on, our Organisation will face the challenges of helping to defuse or prevent a serious regional crisis and consolidating itself as a body that has been setting parameters unmatched by any other multilateral mechanism in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

At the same time, we should make it clear that this decision of the Council cannot and should not be interpreted by any State to justify unilateral actions in violation of international law which prohibits the use or threat of use of force and calls for respect of the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of States.

While the road map has been thoroughly delineated in its various stages, it does not strictly adhere to the sequence of the relevant provisions of the Convention.

However, given that the uniqueness and urgency of the situation in Syria require the deployment of an inspection mission, in the current context the adoption of a flexible and executive approach for the implementation of such provisions could be justified; otherwise the deadlines envisaged in the decision might not be met. Such deadlines by themselves are indicative of the compelling necessity to eliminate the chemical weapons in order to achieve the imperative detente in the Syrian conflict.

It should also be emphasised that, while the success of the OPCW in achieving its core objective has been frequently recognised, the Syrian conflict has signalled the fact that this is an unfinished task, not only because in 2011 the Conference of the States Parties had to extend the deadline for the complete destruction of the declared stockpiles, but also from the



perspective that some States not Party with significant influence in the Middle East remained out of the dismantling and reconversion process.

As a State Party to the Convention, we condemn any use of chemical weapons by either side in the Syrian Arab Republic.

The provision of the maximum assurances and the highest possible level of protection to the inspectors is also a matter of concern, and therefore it should have been explicitly emphasised in the decision EC-M-33/DEC.1, adopted by this Council, given that this is an unprecedented verification mission in the history of the OPCW, to be carried out in a State Party whose Government only partially controls its territory. The decision should have also taken into consideration the exceptional conditions associated with the ongoing civil war.

We look forward to seeing the full and timely implementation of the measures and recommendations approved by this Council and reiterate Uruguay's support to the States Parties and to the Director-General so that, under his leadership, they may be successfully implemented.

I would like to request that this statement be issued as an official document of this session of the Council.

Thank you very much.

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