



OPCW

Executive Council

Seventy-Sixth Session
8 – 11 July 2014

EC-76/NAT.18
9 July 2014
ENGLISH and SPANISH only

GUATEMALA

**STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR JORGE ALFREDO LEMCKE ARÉVALO
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF GUATEMALA TO THE OPCW AT THE
SEVENTY-SIXTH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

Mr Chairman,

Your Excellency, Ambassador Álvaro Moerzinger, I should like to start by recognising on behalf of Guatemala and my delegation the efforts which, through your coordination, are being made to achieve the objectives of this session of the Executive Council; we are sure that you, with your experience, capacity and professional excellence, will bring us to a successful conclusion.

I am grateful for the reports made by the Vice-Chairpersons of the Executive Council, and thank also the facilitators for their reports on various informal consultations in the different clusters during the intersessional period.

My gratitude goes also to the Director-General, Ambassador Ahmed Üzümcü, for his report, which covers the various items on the agenda before us, and which will guide the work of this session.

Moreover, my particular thanks go to the Director-General, Ambassador Ahmed Üzümcü and the staff in his charge, as well as to the Special Coordinator, Ms Sigrid Kaag and the staff of the OPCW-UN Joint Mission, for the sustained efforts they are making under difficult, dangerous circumstances.

My delegation attaches importance to the search for effective methods of achieving progress in the implementation of the Convention as a whole, but with special attention to Articles VI, VII, X and XI thereof.

As regards the situation in the Syrian Arab Republic, we congratulate the government of that State, and the States Parties cooperating in the activities to eliminate the chemical weapons and agents declared, on having completed the stage of internal transport and destruction, and trust that the States Parties which are contributing in the next stage – marine transport and destruction – are able to complete the same without setbacks.

However, we note with concern that the process of reaching agreements in relation to the destruction of the 12 chemical weapons production and storage facilities has stalled for a number of reasons, which hinders the completion of this significant stage in the total elimination of chemical weapons and of production and storage facilities on Syrian territory.



We request and urge the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic and the States Parties participating directly and actively in this process, to seek a solution that will wind this significant stage up successfully. The foregoing would be widely appreciated and would receive gratitude throughout the whole world, but above all from the civilian population of the Syrian Arab Republic, and from the region.

Having said the foregoing, we are extremely concerned to note that complete clarification has not yet been made of all the discrepancies and doubts which have arisen with respect to the declaration made by the Syrian Government, in both the original declaration and in the amendments thereto, and we urge the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic to provide all the information and clarifications necessary to dispel any doubt in the declared quantities as to the existence of chemical weapons and agents.

As regards the Fact-Finding Mission on the use of chlorine gas against the civilian population of the Syrian Arab Republic, we repeat our condemnation of the use of toxic chemicals, as well as of the attack on the Fact-Finding Mission last May; we express our solidarity with the members of the mission, who are working to establish the facts. We trust that, if it is confirmed that chlorine gas has been used, it will be possible to identify those responsible, and to bring them to justice in accordance with the international laws on crimes against humanity.

In conclusion, I request that this statement be published and considered an official document of this Seventy-Sixth Session of the Executive Council.

Many thanks.

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