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TURKEY

**STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF TURKEY
AT THE SEVENTY-SEVENTH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

Mr Chairperson,

I would like to thank Mr. Director-General for his comprehensive report today.

At this regular session, the Council will be discussing many subjects in relation to the implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention and functioning of the OPCW.

We are happy to note that the Budget and Programme 2015 will be considered at this session and referred to the Nineteenth Conference of States Parties for its approval.

Having said that, the complete elimination of the chemical weapons in Syria should remain a cardinal priority for the States Parties and this Organisation.

Our delegation has expressed our deep concern with respect to several aspects of this process, namely the slow pace of progress in destruction of 12 chemical weapons production facilities and serious gaps, discrepancies and inconsistencies in Syria's declaration.

Turkey expects these pending issues will be addressed effectively and without further delay. We welcome the fact that the Declaration Assessment Team provided the States Parties with a report outlining its work up until today. My capital will carefully study this report.

Above all, we, the States Parties, also need to face the reality that toxic chemicals are still being employed as a weapon of war in Syria against the Syrian civilian population.

This is a solid fact unearthed by the Fact-Finding Mission.

As we speak, the Syrian people are still dying or suffering as a result of either chemical or conventional weapons.

During her briefing to the United Nations Security Council on Syria on 30 September 2014, Deputy Secretary-General Valerie Amos mentioned, among other things, that and I quote "in its latest report, the Commission of Inquiry on Syria states that civilians and civilian infrastructure have been systematically targeted. Nine medical facilities were reportedly attacked in August alone, including three of which were hit by barrel bombs".



Unfortunately, multiple tragedies and violation of very basic norms of international law, namely unabated use of chemicals as a weapon, are taking place under the watch of this Organisation whose primary purpose is to eliminate the use and threat of use of chemical weapons in the world.

Given the grim conclusions of the second report of the Fact-Finding Mission, we believe the Council is at a critical juncture.

I would like to reiterate that the use of chemical weapons by a State Party is unacceptable. There should be consequences and any party who uses chemical weapons should be held accountable accordingly.

We firmly believe inaction is not an option. Unless there are consequences of unabated use of chemicals in Syria, the Syrian civilians will continue to suffer.

More importantly, this will also send a wrong signal to the Syrian regime that it has a free hand to continue to resort to chemical weapons in the future.

Clearly, at this critical juncture, stakes are high not just for the relevance and respectability of this very Organisation but for the regional and international security as well.

In this respect, the provisions of the Chemical Weapons Convention shall be implemented in light of the verified use of chemical weapons in Syria.

I would like to request that this statement be circulated as an official document of this session of the Executive Council and be posted on the website and the external server.

Thank you.

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