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MALAYSIA

**STATEMENT BY H.E. DR FAUZIAH MOHAMAD TAIB
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF MALAYSIA TO THE OPCW
AT THE SEVENTY-SEVENTH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

Mr Chairman,
Director General
Distinguished delegates,

Last week at the Forty-Fifth Meeting of the Executive Council, more than 45 States Parties of the Chemical Weapons Convention took the floor to deliberate on the OPCW's second fact-finding report on the Syrian Arab Republic. From the statements expressed, some States Parties appeared wary of the findings. Others found the report convincing enough to point a finger at a State Party, yet still insist on asking the Technical Secretariat to provide more evidence as proof of non-compliance.

For my delegation, the report is a compelling narrative, but lacks the legs to stand on. We believe that the evidence described must be strong enough to stand in any court of law. And if we cannot convincingly point out the perpetrator, the Mission might as well turn out the lights and close the door.

In the meantime, we have recently heard reports of the use of chemical weapons by ISIS in Kobani in the north of the Syrian Arab Republic; that a chemical weapon facility in Iraq has been taken control of by them, and that chlorine gas has been used as weapon on Iraqi armed forces in the area of Saqlawiya in northern Iraq.

Will the Technical Secretariat take the bold step again to initiate a fact-finding mission based on these allegations? The Technical Secretariat must labour so that the OPCW does not become an idle name, does not become a shield for the strong and a mockery for the weak.

On the progress made by possessor States on the elimination of their chemical weapons stockpile, Malaysia acknowledges how far they have come to destroy them. We commend the rich States for spending millions of dollars to assist other possessor States and not their own in helping to destroy their chemical weapons and their facilities. Furthermore, these same States Parties have been working hard to assist one of the latest members into our fold, namely the Syrian Arab Republic - to be truly rid of its chemical weapons. Malaysia considers this act as an exemplary result of multilateral cooperation at its finest.

However, there are still six States out there that are not party to the Convention. Some of these States are reported to have chemical weapons. If we cannot win them over we will be



sitting over a volcano in which no one knows when the explosion will occur. They will sell chemical weapons to terrorist groups freely, and the OPCW will be around for another hundred years, deliberating in poor weather under a lot of clouds.

Malaysia will play its part in ensuring the universality of the Convention. Malaysia's National Authority recently assisted the Technical Secretariat in drawing up a syllabus and conducting an awareness workshop on the Chemical Weapons Convention held in Myanmar. From the feedback received we were informed that the workshop provided a positive avenue for engagement between senior officials of the OPCW and high-level decision makers from Myanmar. We hope that it will be a matter of time before we welcome them as a new member of the Convention.

This session will be the last session of the Executive Council for the year before we meet again at the Conference of the States Parties in December. While the Council remains seized of issues of current affairs relevant to the Convention, Malaysia hopes that other issues of importance to the OPCW are not completely sidelined, only to be picked up at the next Review Conference. On this point Malaysia wishes to reiterate our support for the convening of discussions on incapacitating chemical agents (ICA). We further wish to state that Malaysia does not produce, stockpile, nor use ICAs for riot control purposes.

Finally Mr Chairman, my delegation welcomes new faces to the Executive Council and hopes that States Parties that have been too long inside will give way to others to be in. The Council is in dire need of fresh ideas and we can only get them if we give others a chance. As Marcel Proust once said, "the only real voyage of discovery consists not in seeking new landscapes, but in having new eyes".

Thank you, Mr Chairman, and may I request that this statement be circulated as an official document of this session of the Executive Council.

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