

**Statement by the Republic of Korea
at the 78th Session of the Executive Council
17-20 March 2015**

Mr. Chairman,

My delegation notes with deep appreciation the integrity and devotion shown by the Technical Secretariat in its efforts for the elimination of the Syrian chemical weapons program. With the complete destruction of all declared stocks of the Category 1 chemicals and only one kind of Category 2 chemicals remaining to be destroyed, the task of destroying CWPFs and establishing a monitoring system without delay will be the major future task in the activities of the OPCW in the Syrian Arab Republic.

Complete and irreversible dismantlement of its chemical weapons program should be ensured by the Syrian Government by providing accurate and complete information. However, discrepancies and inconsistencies in the information submitted to the Secretariat remain a great cause of concern for us.

The Republic of Korea strongly supports the ongoing efforts by the Secretariat to verify the Syrian declaration. There is a need for further efforts by the Syrian authorities to assure the international community that Syria has completely renounced the possession and use of undeclared chemical materials. The alleged conversion of 2000 bombs, the issue of a ricin program and the role of the Syrian Scientific Research Center have emerged as a source of particular concern to us and this should be clarified by Syria.

At the forty eighth meeting of the Executive Council, we voiced our serious concern that chlorine had been used as a weapon in Syria and agreed that those individuals responsible for the use of chemical weapons should be held accountable. An OPCW team is expected to visit the Syrian Arab Republic to ascertain the whole truth of any allegation. My delegation expects the Syrian Government to provide full cooperation and commends the courage and dedication demonstrated by the OPCW team.

Regarding the reimbursement of the costs relating to verification activities in the Syrian Arab Republic, we believe that States Parties' obligation under Articles IV and V of the Chemical Weapons Convention should be honored in full.

Mr. Chairman,

The possibility of the use of chemical weapons by non-state actors such as terrorist groups represents a serious challenge to the international community. The increasing threat by these actors and the dual nature of chemical agents mean that there is an imperative need for us to strengthen physical protection of chemical facilities and tighten export controls.

I note with deep appreciation the activities by the Technical Secretariat to address these new challenges. In this regard, there is a need for further concerted efforts by the Secretariat with other international organizations and States Parties.

In this regard, the Republic of Korea organized a workshop on the peaceful development and use of chemistry for States Parties in the Asian region in October 2014 which was attended by twenty seven participants from seventeen States Parties.

Mr. Chairman,

Achieving universal adherence to the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) is one of the greatest priorities in the endeavors to prevent the use of chemical weapons. My delegation urges all those that have not yet joined the Convention, including North Korea, to do so without any delay or precondition.

In conclusion, I would like to request this statement to be included in the official documents of the 78th Session of the Executive Council.

I thank you. /End/