



**OPCW**

**Executive Council**

Thirty-Third Meeting  
27 September and 3 October 2013

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3 October 2013  
ARABIC and ENGLISH only

**KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA**

**STATEMENT OF THE DELEGATION OF THE KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA  
AT THE THIRTY-THIRD MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

Mr Chairperson,  
Excellency, the Director-General of the OPCW,  
Excellencies, members of the Council,

I would like at the outset to express my delegation's appreciation that the august Executive Council has resumed its Thirty-Third Meeting, so that Council members can comment and interact on the decision concerning the destruction of Syrian chemical weapons, which was adopted by the Council at its meeting held on Friday, 27 September 2013, and is contained in document EC-M-33/DEC.1.

My delegation also takes this opportunity to express its appreciation for the strenuous efforts put in by the representative of the United States of America, Ambassador Robert Mikulak, the representative of the Russian Federation, Ambassador Roman Kolodkin, and their respective delegations, with a view to drafting the decision on the destruction of Syrian chemical weapons. My delegation supports this decision and stresses the need to comply with it. My delegation had the hope that this decision would be complemented with a firm and clear resolution from the Security Council under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations, to ensure compliance by the Syrian regime without delay or procrastination.

You are aware that the OPCW faces extraordinary circumstances, since it is addressing the issue of Syrian chemical weapons, which is a thorny issue of a great degree of importance and gravity. We are fully aware of the magnitude of the challenges facing our Organisation at this critical stage, and we appreciate the spirit of responsibility and cooperation displayed by everyone in dealing positively with these extraordinary circumstances, and in responding promptly to the convening of the Thirty-Third Meeting of the Council at the end of last week, passing beyond the time-limit set by the OPCW's Rules of Procedure in normal circumstances.

The Syrian issue has reached a dangerous and critical stage, one which is replete with developments and which will determine the future of Syria as well as the fate of its people, who are enduring hardship without precedent in contemporary history, with consequential implications and challenges for the region as a whole.

My country has always been at the forefront of countries calling for making the Middle East a zone free of all weapons of mass destruction, and has always associated itself with international appeals in all fora for those remaining outside the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction,



to promptly join it. It has consistently stressed that the use of chemical weapons, under any circumstances, cannot be tolerated. It is reprehensible and must be denounced and condemned in the strongest terms, for it violates the ethical and legal standards of the international community. Like every conscientious person, we have been alarmed by the use such internationally prohibited weapons, and the killing of hundreds of innocent people as a result of. We are sick at heart and surprised that the killing of more than 100,000 Syrians by a regime that uses a fierce killing machine and the displacement of hundreds of thousands of refugees to neighbouring and other countries was not enough to move the international community. Rather, the international community only moved when internationally prohibited toxic gases were used, and only then was the regime accused of committing crimes against humanity, an appalling act that took the lives of more than 1,400 victims, mostly women and children. We were hoping that the latest international action would lead to a firm international response that would deter this regime from perpetrating yet further crimes, and address the Syrian issue from a holistic perspective that would not be limited to chemical weapons.

My country has been among the first to call upon the international community and relevant institutions to promptly assume their ethical and legal responsibilities by investigating these regrettable events, taking the necessary measures to expose those behind such heinous acts, and meting out the severest punishment to them, to ensure that the tragic consequences of such acts which caused international outrage will not be repeated.

Mr Chairperson,  
Distinguished colleagues,

My delegation is fully aware of the technical nature of the work of our Organisation, as well as the limits of its mandate and the tasks and responsibilities assigned to it. Yet, it considers that the sincere efforts we have already made and those we will be making in future within the OPCW on the issue of Syrian chemical weapons should remain an indivisible part. The Syrian crisis cannot, ethically and legally, be reduced to the repercussions of the crime of the use of chemical weapons in the Syrian Arab Republic, or to the circumstances of accession by the Syrian Arab Republic to the Chemical Weapons Convention and the ensuing legal obligations imposed upon it, which we stress must be observed and complied with. My country calls for the international community, including all its institutions and legal frameworks, to assume their ethical and legal responsibilities in order to address all aspects of the Syrian crisis as quickly as needed, and hold accountable those who have committed all these horrific crimes. The decision we took at the end of last week is one of the urgent and pressing steps for ensuring disposal by the regime of such weapons, in accordance with the standards and timelines contained in the decision. The use of chemical weapons by the Syrian regime crossed all red lines and is a challenge to the will of the international community and international conventions. We hope that the impunity of the regime will not lead to doubts being raised about the relevance of the commitment to comply with the principles agreed upon at the Geneva Conference-I.

Finally, I wish that this statement be circulated as one of the official documents of the Council.

I thank you for your attention.