



OPCW

Executive Council

Forty-First Meeting
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GREECE

**STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE EUROPEAN UNION DELIVERED BY
H.E. TERESA ANGELATOU PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF GREECE
TO THE OPCW AT THE FORTY-FIRST MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

Mr Chairperson,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union.

The candidate countries, the Republic of Turkey, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Iceland the Republic of Serbia, the countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidates, the Republic of Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina as well as the Principality of Andorra, the Republic of Georgia, the Republic of Moldova, Norway, the Republic of San Marino and Ukraine align themselves with this statement.

Since this is the first Executive Council meeting under its new composition, I wish to congratulate the Chair H.E. Ambassador Álvaro Marcelo Moerzinger of Uruguay and the Vice-Chairs and to assure them of our continuous support in their endeavours aiming at the successful outcome of the Executive Council activities.

I would also like to thank the Director-General for his briefing today. We will never be tired of expressing our appreciation and continuous support for his relentless efforts, as well as those of the OPCW staff and of the OPCW-UN Joint Mission, in taking forward the important tasks entrusted to them, under very difficult and challenging circumstances.

The European Union regrets to note that it has been nearly a month since the last operation to remove chemicals from Syria on 24 April. The EU notes that Syria has now started preparations for the removal of the last remaining chemicals and has destroyed the remaining declared quantities of isopropanol. The EU expects this final transshipment to be completed at the earliest practicable date. However, the EU must also note that all the agreed, or self-imposed timelines for the removal of both Priority 1 and Priority 2 chemicals from Syria have long been missed. We therefore greatly regret, but foresee that the deadline agreed by the Executive Council Decisions and the United Nations Security Council resolution 2118 (2013) of 30 June, now looks impossible to meet. The responsibility for this situation clearly rests with Syria.

The European Union reiterates its serious concern regarding the negative impact of the ongoing delays on the destruction process and on the ever increasing financial burden on



being placed on the countries contributing to the operation, particularly those providing commercial vessels and the maritime escort.

Notwithstanding the security situation, Syria should immediately proceed to the removal of the remaining chemicals. In parallel, Syria should take immediate steps to physically destroy the remaining twelve chemical weapons production facilities, starting with the aircraft hangars, on which agreement seems within reach, according to the provisions of the Convention and past practice.

The EU also supports the work that the Director-General and his staff are doing to streamline and complete the data in Syria's declarations to the OPCW, so as to ensure the accuracy and completeness of those declarations and to resolve any and all discrepancies. Syria's full cooperation is expected in this regard.

The EU reiterates its serious concern regarding the allegations of recent use of chemicals in Syria and expresses support to the Fact-Finding Mission set up by OPCW to establish the facts surrounding these allegations and is looking forward to its report. The EU condemns unequivocally any use of these horrific weapons. Anyone found to have used chemical weapons must be held fully accountable for their crimes.

The European Union expresses its wish that the above concerns be duly reflected in the report of the Forty-First Meeting of the Executive Council.

In closing, Mr Chairperson, may I request that this statement be circulated as an official document of the Forty-First Meeting of the Executive Council.

Thank you Mr Chairperson.

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