



OPCW

Executive Council

Forty-Second Meeting
17 June 2014

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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-SECOND 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, Montenegro, Serbia, the countries of the Stabilization and Association Process and potential candidates the Republic of Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina as well as Andorra, Georgia, the Principality of Monaco, the Republic of Moldova, Norway, the Republic of San Marino and Ukraine align themselves with this statement.

I would like to thank the Director-General for his briefing today. I would also like to express our appreciation to the Special-Coordinator and thank her for briefing the Council today. I seize this opportunity to reiterate our appreciation and support to him, the OPCW Technical Secretariat and the OPCW-UN Joint Mission staff and the Special-Coordinator, for their relentless efforts in bringing forward the important tasks entrusted to them, under very difficult and challenging circumstances, as the recent incident against the Fact-Finding Mission staff has clearly shown.

The European Union recalls that the Syrian Arab Republic acceded to the Convention in wholly exceptional circumstances, following confirmation of the use of chemical weapons, that it has been necessary to agree special and urgent procedures for the destruction of its chemical weapons programme, and that this issue cannot be treated as “business as usual” for the Organisation and should be addressed by the Executive Council accordingly.

The European Union greatly regrets to note that the deadline agreed by the Executive Council Decisions and the United Nations Security Council resolution 2118 (2013) of 30 June, for complete destruction of the Syrian chemical weapons programme will be missed. The responsibility for this failure clearly rests with the Syrian Arab Republic. The Executive Council must formally review the implementation of its decisions during the Seventy-Sixth Session of the Executive Council in July.

The international community has, in an unprecedented mobilisation in the history of the OPCW, provided all required equipment, maritime transport and financial means for fulfilling the goals of the aforementioned decisions and resolution. The Syrian Arab Republic



however has consistently failed to meet all agreed or self-imposed timelines for the destruction of the chemical stockpiles and the production/storage facilities. The European Union stresses the gravity of the situation and the severe consequences the ongoing delays have on the destruction process. Such delays continue to add to the already heavy financial burden on the countries contributing to the operation, in particular those providing commercial vessels and the maritime escort.

Notwithstanding the security situation, the European Union urges the Syrian Arab Republic to take all possible measures for completing the removal of the remaining chemicals immediately and without further delay, and in any case no later than 30 June.

In parallel, the Syrian Arab Republic should take immediate steps to physically destroy the remaining twelve chemical weapons production facilities, starting with the aircraft hangars, on which agreement seems closer, in accordance to the provisions of the Convention and the established past practice. The European Union takes note of the discussions with the Technical Secretariat and expects an early reply from the Syrian authorities enabling the Council to adopt the necessary decisions at the earliest date.

The European Union also supports the work that the Director-General and his staff are doing to help streamline and complete the data in the Syrian Arab Republic's declarations to the OPCW, so as to ensure the accuracy and completeness of those declarations. But until the Syrian Arab Republic accounts for all gaps and discrepancies, the international community will not have full confidence that the Syrian Arab Republic is in full compliance with its international obligations under the Chemical Weapons Convention and United Nations Security Council resolution 2118 (2013). The Syrian Arab Republic's full cooperation is expected in this regard. The European Union is looking forward to the report of the OPCW Assessment Team on this issue.

The European Union strongly condemns the attack on the 27 May against the OPCW Fact-Finding Mission, while the mission was carrying out its work concerning the alleged use of chlorine in the Syrian Arab Republic. The European Union reiterates its full support to the Mission and its mandate of establishing the facts surrounding those allegations and is looking forward to its report. The European Union also 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 firm will that the above concerns be duly reflected in the report of the Forty-Second Meeting of the Executive Council.

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

Thank you Mr Chairperson

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