

Statement by Ambassador Sanja Štiglic

Permanent Representative of the Republic of Slovenia to the OPCW

At the 58th Meeting of the Executive Council

16 April 2018

Mr. Chairperson, Mr. Director-General, distinguished colleagues,

I would like to thank you for convening this meeting. I would also like to thank the Director General for his update on the deployment of the OPCW Fact Finding Mission to Douma. Slovenia fully aligns itself with the statement, delivered on behalf of the European Union by the Permanent Representative of Bulgaria.

Slovenia expresses its support for the activities directed against military targets and intended to prevent Syrian authorities to use chemical weapons. Slovenia considers the military operation by the three allies – USA, France and United Kingdom – as an effort aimed at destroying the remaining Syrian Army capacities for the use of chemical weapons.

Any use of chemical weapons represents a breach of the Chemical Weapons Convention and a violation of civilized norms, the international humanitarian law and UN Security Council resolutions. It is utterly unacceptable that chemical weapons were used several times during the conflict in Syria, in most cases against civilian population.

Several reports indicate that chemical agents were used in the last week's attack in Douma. Slovenia fully supports the work of the OPCW Fact Finding Mission. It regrets that the UN Security Council, with whom lies the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, was not able to reach an agreement on the establishment of an independent investigation mechanism that would be able to identify the perpetrators on the basis of independent and verified information.

Slovenia is fully committed to finding a peaceful and political solution as the only option for sustainable peace and stability in Syria and in the wider region. At the same time, all the efforts should be made to prevent violence and ensure the protection of the civilian population – the biggest victim of armed conflicts in the last decades. Slovenia expects the Security Council to act in accordance with its mandate, in accordance with the UN Charter, and reach an agreement on effective measures aimed at a political solution of the war in Syria, as quickly as possible.

I ask that this statement be issued as an official document of this meeting and published on the OPCW public website.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.