

**PORTUGAL****STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR ROSA BATORÉU
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF PORTUGAL TO THE OPCW
AT THE FIFTY-EIGHTH MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

Portugal is fully aligned with the statement delivered by the distinguished Ambassador of Bulgaria on behalf of the European Union. However, I would like to offer a few additional comments in my national capacity.

Portugal would like to start by expressing its appreciation to the President of the Executive Council and to the Director General of the OPCW for convening this meeting.

I would like to commend the Director General and the Technical Secretariat for their expeditious and decided response to the reported use of chemical weapons in Douma, in particular for their readiness in gathering all available information, analysing it and making arrangements for the deployment of a Fact-Finding Mission (FFM) team to the Syrian Arab Republic.

News about yet another chemical attack in the Syrian Arab Republic, this time in Douma, which follows a long string of other alleged or confirmed instances of the use of chemical arms in the Syrian Arab Republic are appalling and demand a full investigation of the facts. It is equally important that those responsible for these acts, in full violation of the international norm, are identified and held accountable.

Portugal strongly supports the deployment of the FFM team to the Syrian Arab Republic. We fully trust the professionalism, technical capacity and impartiality of the Technical Secretariat and we look forward to its final report. At the same time, Portugal urges all parties in the field to create the necessary conditions for the full conduct of this mission.

Portugal understands the reasons and the opportunity for the military action carried out by three friendly countries and allies—the United States of America, the French Republic and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland—last Saturday.

It was a circumscribed military operation whose purpose was to degrade the production capacity of a type of weapons that is prohibited by international law, including the Convention on the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons.

The Syrian regime must fully assume its responsibilities. It is unacceptable to resort to means and forms of war that mankind cannot tolerate. The use of chemical weapons anywhere, by anyone or under any circumstances is simply not acceptable.



Both the European Union and the Secretary General of the United Nations, António Guterres, have repeatedly insisted that all parties must show openness to independent investigations. Putting an end to impunity is of the utmost urgency and importance.

Last but not least, I would like to reiterate that Portugal is fully committed to a negotiated and peaceful political solution to the conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic, which represents a very serious threat to peace and security in the region. Portugal reaffirms the need to avoid any escalation in the Syrian conflict leading to even more insecurity, instability and suffering.

I would like to request that this statement be circulated as an official document of this meeting of the council and published on its website.

Thank you

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