



**OPCW**

**Executive Council**

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**DENMARK**

**STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR JENS-OTTO HORSLUND  
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF DENMARK TO THE OPCW  
AT THE NINETIETH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

Madam Chairperson,  
Mr Director-General,  
Ladies and gentlemen,

Let me begin by emphasising that Denmark aligns itself fully with the statement delivered by Ambassador Predescu of Romania on behalf of the European Union. I wish only to highlight a few points of particular importance to my delegation.

As we begin our deliberations today, we do so yet again with new very disturbing facts before us. We have listened carefully to the report by the Director-General and we have taken note of the recent reports of the Fact-Finding Mission (FFM) and the Declaration Assessment Team (DAT). They all add to our already grave concerns over the situation in Syria.

The FFM has documented that the available evidence provides reasonable grounds that chlorine was used as a chemical weapon in Douma, in Syria, on 7 April 2018 in yet another blatant violation of the Chemical Weapons Convention (“the Convention”). Denmark strongly believes that those responsible for these horrible crimes must be held to account. We therefore commend the establishment of the Investigation and Identification Team (IIT) and the further efforts undertaken by the Director-General to give effect to the decision of the Fourth Special Session of the Conference of States Parties. Denmark has already contributed to the voluntary part of the IIT budget and we welcome that others have done the same. Denmark remains committed to ensuring accountability for the use of chemical weapons anywhere, at any time, by anyone. We are ready to further support the IIT as required.

In light of the repeated blatant violations of the Convention, it is both disappointing and a cause for alarm that no substantive progress has been made in addressing issues relating to the Syrian declarations. In addition to the many gaps, inconsistencies, and discrepancies identified by the Declaration Assessment Team, simple logic, and the prior investigations by the OPCW-United Nations Joint Investigative mechanism that established repeated use of chemical weapons by the Syrian Regime must mean that not everything was declared. This charade must end! We urge the Syrian regime to cooperate fully with all aspects of the work of the DAT and immediately provide full disclosure in accordance with the Convention and relevant Executive Council (“the Council”) decisions.



You know better than most, that over the last years we have had many challenges to overcome in dealing with use of chemical weapons in Syria – and elsewhere. Indeed, there are those who seek to evade accountability through political shenanigans and procedural contortions. In this respect, I wish to commend your professional and sturdy stewardship of the Council and its business. Likewise, the Director-General and his staff deserve our highest praise for their integrity, impartiality and perseverance. Not least, the FFM and the DAT have had to work under very difficult circumstances, which we fully appreciate. We highly value their efforts. In this respect, Denmark firmly rejects recent attempts to discredit and undermine the Technical Secretariat and its work. Such attempts will not succeed and serves merely to cast further suspicion on those behind them.

In conclusion, let me thank you – and the vice chairs – for the tireless efforts in guiding our Council sessions. While it is premature to rule out any further Council meetings during your tenure, I wish for now to put our gratitude on the record.

I kindly request that this statement be circulated as an official document of this session and posted on the website.

I thank you.

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