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**SYRIAN ARAB REPUBLIC**

**STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR BASSAM SABBAGH  
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE SYRIAN ARAB REPUBLIC TO THE  
OPCW AT THE TWENTY-FOURTH SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE  
STATES PARTIES**

**EXPLANATION OF VOTE UNDER AGENDA ITEM 14  
(PROGRAMME AND BUDGET OF THE OPCW FOR 2020)**

Mr Chairperson,

Syria has voted against the adoption of the Programme and Budget of the OPCW for 2020 as it rejects the political blackmail exercised by the United States of America and its Western allies. The OPCW has usually adopted the decision on its annual budget by consensus. However, the insistence of certain States on funding the illegitimate “Investigation and Identification Team” from the regular budget has made the States Parties which had voted against the establishment of this team unable to support this draft decision on the Programme and Budget of the OPCW for 2020. This is in addition to the insistence on denying States Parties the right to recover the 2017 cash surplus, as stipulated by the Convention.

This morning the representative of the United States of America stated, and I quote: “Responsible States in this Organisation have taken the decision to establish the Investigation and Identification Team”. This means that he considers the 82 States that voted in favour of the decision to be the only responsible States in this Organisation, and accuses over 110 States Parties, which did not support the establishment of the team, of being irresponsible in this Organisation. It is this unacceptable discourse that has caused a severe divergence of opinions among Member States.

Everyone knows that the contentious items in the draft decision on the 2020 budget are limited to the two issues relating to the funding of the Investigation and Identification Team from the regular budget, and the utilisation of the 2017 cash surplus. That is why a practical proposal was made to segregate these two contentious items in order for the budget to be adopted by consensus. It was obvious, however, that certain Western delegations wanted to impose their will on the States Parties by forcing a vote. In fact, they resorted to such a method because of their deep realisation of their need to give the Investigation and Identification team the legitimacy it lacks.

Listening to the statements of some Western States clearly indicate that they have started to blackmail and bully States Parties into voting in favour of decisions serving their interests, turning a deaf ear to the views of other States that disagree with them or endeavour to restore



consensus. My delegation is of the view that the hegemony approach followed by Western States will exacerbate schism and polarisation within the Organisation and will impact negatively on its work and the achievement of the objectives of the Convention. We are indeed witnessing increasing manipulation of the provisions of the Convention according to the desires and designs of those States.

I request that this statement be considered an official document of the Twenty-Fourth Session of the Conference of the States Parties.

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