



OPCW

Conference of the States Parties

Twenty-Fourth Session
25 – 29 November 2019

C-24/NAT.42
29 November 2019
ARABIC and ENGLISH only

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 UNDER AGENDA ITEM 24 (ANY OTHER BUSINESS)**

Mr Chairperson,
Ladies and gentlemen,

Shortly before the start of this session of the Conference of the States Parties, a document leaked by WikiLeaks has been circulating in world media outlets. The document contains an electronic mail addressed by a Fact-Finding Mission inspector to the Office of the Director-General of the OPCW concerning the Mission's report on the Douma incident.

The leaked letter raises many concerns, some of which relate to the violation of the confidentiality and security of OPCW documents, as this is not the first case of OPCW document leakage. Other documents had been leaked in the past, which puts the confidentiality of OPCW correspondence and documents in serious jeopardy. Also, the leaked letter raises other concerns relating to the credibility of the report and the Mission's findings concerning the Douma incident, which was published by the Technical Secretariat in March of last year. The letter clearly indicates the manipulation of the content of the report and the shock at the distortion of its facts.

It is surprising that Technical Secretariat has totally ignored both cases as if nothing had happened. We were expecting the Technical Secretariat to state that it would, on the one hand, open an investigation into the leakage incident and reconsider the findings of the report on the Douma incident, on the other. This is not only because of the leaked letter of an FFM inspector, but also due to the previously leaked report of inspector Ian Henderson, the former FFM member. The report raised crucial questions that put the credibility of the report and the FFM report at stake; not to mention all the criticism and comments addressed by a number of States Parties, as well as numerous international analysts and experts concerning this report and its inaccurate findings, which erodes its credibility.

The alleged use of chemical weapons in Douma resulted in the waging by three Western States, namely the United States of America, France and the United Kingdom, of an outrageous military aggression against the sovereignty of the Syrian territory in a blatant violation of the United Nations Charter. Therefore, the FFM investigations are of particular importance for Syria, and the report's findings are extremely sensitive and have serious repercussions, which is why these States are trying to exert pressure in order to obscure the



content of the leaked documents and are fierce in defending the credibility of the report and justifying their aggression.

In view of the need for the Technical Secretariat to be extremely transparent and neutral towards the States Parties and to maintain the credibility of its work and its teams' reports, my delegation requests that a briefing be held with all FFM members who took part in the investigations into the Douma incident in order for the States Parties to listen to and discuss all views which agree or disagree with the content of the report, as stipulated in paragraph 62 of Part II of the Verification Annex to the Convention. My delegation affirms clearly that whoever will hinder the holding of such a briefing is afraid of its outcome and the exposure of the distortion and fraud practices involved in the report on the Douma incident.

The Technical Secretariat's repetition of the same expressions stressing the importance of the professional and neutral findings of the FFM is no longer convincing. And the continued use by the FFM of the wrong working methods can no longer be tolerated. Therefore, it is necessary that the Technical Secretariat take the required measures to correct the course.

I thank you and I request that this statement be considered an official document of the Twenty-Fourth Session of the Conference of the States Parties and posted on the OPCW website.

--- 0 ---