

**NATIONAL STATEMENT OF TURKEY
DELIVERED BY MR ALPER YÜKSEL MINISTER-COUNSELLOR OF THE
PERMANENT REPRESENTATION OF TURKEY TO THE OPCW
AT THE 93rd SESSION OF THE OPCW EXECUTIVE COUNCIL
(The Hague, 10 – 13 March 2020)**

Mr Chairperson,
Mr Director-General,
Distinguished Delegates,

Turkey associates herself with the EU Statement delivered by the Croatian Ambassador. I would like to make a few additional remarks.

At the outset, I would like to thank the Chairperson for his able leadership and guidance of the Council proceedings and commend the Director- General for his informative report.

Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) and the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) are crucial pillars of the global WMD disarmament and non-proliferation regime.

It is important to keep the Organization robust and fully equipped against the rapidly changing global security environment.

With this understanding, Turkey made a modest contribution to the Trust Fund for the ChemTech project and we encourage all States Parties to lend their financial and political support to the Project which is to the benefit of all.

Mr Chair,

We appreciate the efforts of the OPCW missions dealing with different aspects of the Syrian chemical dossier.

Regular reports of the OPCW Declaration Assessment Team (DAT), including the latest one, once again point to the gaps, inconsistencies and discrepancies which persist, even after more than six years of Syria's accession to the Chemical Weapons Convention.

While the establishment purpose of the DAT is to resolve and eliminate the outstanding issues arising from Syria's chemical weapons declaration, the number of outstanding issues are increasing.

This situation clearly demonstrates a lack of cooperation by the party involved and remains a matter of serious concern.

We welcome the progress by Investigation and Identification Team (IIT) in its investigations and we are looking forward to the first report of the IIT.

We believe that the work of the IIT will be an important step for holding the perpetrators of chemical weapons accountable.

The Syrian regime's refusal to cooperate with the IIT constitutes another breach of the Chemical Weapons Convention. We would like to underline that it is incumbent on all States Parties, under Article VII of the Convention, to cooperate with the OPCW in the exercise of all its functions.

I would like to once again reiterate Turkey's full support to the Organization in its fulfilment of the tasks conferred. Turkey has full confidence in the professionalism and impartiality of the OPCW and its Syria missions.

On a final note, Turkey supports the draft decision entitled "Understanding Regarding the Aerosolized Use of Central Nervous System-Acting Chemicals for Law Enforcement Purposes".

We encourage constructive discussions among States Parties on the draft submitted.

I kindly request that this statement be considered as an official document and posted on the OPCW public website.

Thank you.