

**Statement by H.E. Ambassador Yeondoo Jeong  
Permanent Representative of the Republic of Korea to the OPCW  
on the Release of the First Report of the OPCW Investigation and Identification Team**

**April 17, 2020**

The Republic of Korea welcomes the publication of the first report of the Investigation and Identification Team (IIT) to the Executive Council of the OPCW on April 8. We note with grave concern the findings of the IIT, which concludes that there are reasonable grounds to believe that the Syrian Arab Air Force used sarin and chlorine as chemical weapons in Ltamenah on three different occasions on 24, 25, and 30 March 2017. We also take note of the report that military operations involving such chemical weapons only occur pursuant to orders from the highest levels of the Syrian Arab Air Force.

The Republic of Korea highly appreciates IIT coordinator Santiago Onate and other members of the IIT for fulfilling their daunting tasks in an independent, impartial and professional way. We note that the IIT employed in its investigative activities a widely shared methodology, including relying on best practices of other international fact-finding bodies and commissions of inquiry. Also, the IIT is particularly commendable for producing a report in a challenging environment that the IIT has faced in its work, including Syria's refusal to render access to information and locations relevant to the investigation.

The Republic of Korea condemns in the strongest possible terms any use of chemical weapons anywhere, at any time, by anyone under any circumstances. All those responsible for such uses of toxic chemicals must be held accountable for their heinous acts. The identified perpetrators for the three Ltamenah incidents cannot be an exception under this universally shared principle.

It is now time for the international community to take action against this clear violation of norms against use of chemical weapons. As is obliged by Article 8 of the Chemical Weapons Convention, the Executive Council must take all necessary measures to address the situation, which will help deter future chemical weapons provocations.

The Republic of Korea reiterates its full commitment to uphold the norms enshrined in the Convention. Korea will continue to work together with other nations to ensure that those responsible for chemical weapons use are held to account effectively.