

**25<sup>th</sup> Session of the Conference of the States Parties of the CWC**

**World Forum, The Hague, The Netherlands**

***One Percent Down, One Percent to Go:  
Remaining Chemical Weapons Constitute a Cause for Concern***

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Mr. Chairman, Director-General, Distinguished Delegates, CWC Coalition Colleagues, Ladies and Gentlemen:

It is a great honor for me to have my voice heard at the 25<sup>th</sup> session of the Conference of States Parties, on behalf of the Center for International Security Studies and Strategic Research at MEF University in Istanbul.

I am pleased to see on the website of the OPCW that out of the 72,304 metric tons of the total declared stockpiles of chemical agents in the world, by September 2020, 71,092 metric tons have been destroyed.

This figure represents 98.32 percent of the world's total stockpile of chemical agents, with an additional one percent from last year's figure, which was 70,372 metric tons that constituted the 97.33 percent of the total stockpiles.

This figure also means that there exist 1,212 metric tons of declared stockpiles of chemical agents yet to be destroyed.

On this particular account, I would like to refer to the Report of the Director-General, Mr. Ambassador Fernando Arias, to the Executive Council on the "Progress in the Elimination of the Syrian Chemical Weapons Programme", dated 26 October 2020.

On the one hand, it is relieving to know, as stated in paragraph 8 of the Report, "*...all of the chemicals declared by the Syrian Arab Republic that were removed from its territory in 2014 have been destroyed.*"

But, on the other hand, as stated in paragraph 12 of the Report, "*...considering the identified gaps, inconsistencies, and discrepancies that remain unresolved, the Secretariat assesses that the declaration submitted by the Syrian Arab Republic still cannot be considered accurate and complete in accordance with the Chemical Weapons Convention, Council decision EC-M-33/DEC.1, and United Nations Security Council resolution 2118 (2013)*", the remaining small percentage still remains to be a serious cause for concern.

Because, in addition to brutal regimes who have been found responsible for using chemical weapons towards their citizens, there are also reasons to believe that terrorist groups may have access to chemical weapons and/or chemical agents that could be weaponized, and use them against unprotected people.

Hence, it is time for the members of the civilized world to get together more urgently than ever in order to prevent such contingencies by supporting the goal of universalization of the WMD nonproliferation regimes, and stop brutal regimes holding on to WMD capabilities.

Thank you for your attention, and I wish for this statement to be made part of the final CSP record and posted on the external server and website.