



OPCW

Conference of the States Parties

Twenty-Fifth Session
20 – 22 April 2021 (Part II)

C-25/NAT.101
20 April 2021
ENGLISH only

NEW ZEALAND

**STATEMENT BY MS KERRY GILLAM-O'CONNOR
DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF NEW ZEALAND TO THE OPCW
AT THE TWENTY-FIFTH SESSION
OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE STATES PARTIES
UNDER AGENDA ITEM 9(D)**

Mr Chairperson,

In addition to the joint statement of the cosponsors of the draft decision “Addressing the Possession and Use of Chemical Weapons by the Syrian Arab Republic”, which Aotearoa New Zealand associates itself with, New Zealand makes the following statement in its national capacity.

We remain gravely concerned by the repeated, confirmed use of chemical weapons by the Syrian Arab Republic. To date, there have been eight cases of confirmed chemical weapons use by the Syrian Arab Republic, and their actions represent a serious violation of the Chemical Weapons Convention (hereinafter “the Convention”).

We are equally concerned that, eight years after the Syrian Arab Republic joined the Convention and after 23 rounds of consultations with the OPCW Declaration Assessment Team, the Syrian Arab Republic’s initial declaration still cannot be considered accurate and complete, as there are significant gaps, inconsistencies and discrepancies that remain unresolved.

The Executive Council decision EC-94/DEC.2, dated 9 July 2020, provided the Syrian Arab Republic with a clear pathway back to compliance with the Convention. In the absence of a meaningful response from the Syrian Arab Republic to that Executive Council decision, it is now time for the Conference of the States Parties to act.

For these reasons, New Zealand has co-sponsored the draft decision before us. As others have said, this is a measured response to the current situation.

We have been patient and no effort has been spared in our collective goal to bring the Syrian Arab Republic into compliance with the Convention. This latest step is consistent with that goal. We call on all States Parties to uphold the Convention and support the draft decision.

Thank you.

--- 0 ---

