



**OPCW**

**Executive Council**

101st Session  
4 – 6 October 2022

EC-101/NAT.29  
4 October 2022  
ARABIC and ENGLISH only

**SYRIAN ARAB REPUBLIC**

**STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR MILAD ATIEH  
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE SYRIAN ARAB REPUBLIC TO  
THE OPCW AT THE 101ST SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

Mr Chairperson,

At the outset, allow me to wish His Excellency Ambassador Ziad Al Atiyah, Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to the OPCW, success as Chairperson of this session.

My delegation aligns itself with the statement delivered by the Representative of the Republic of Azerbaijan in this session on behalf of the Member States of the Non-Aligned Movement that are States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention and China.

Syria has always believed that the Chemical Weapons Convention is the source of ridding the world of an entire category of weapons of mass destruction under the leadership of the OPCW which has the mandate of implementing the Chemical Weapons Convention. But in practice, we find that the OPCW is being used, since 2018, as a tool to serve the political agendas of some Western States against States Parties to the Convention. The most eloquent evidence for this is the new decision-making approach adopted by the Policy-Making Organs of the Organisation. There is now serious concern for the future of this Organisation and its noble technical goals if such approach continues and because of the schism within the Organisation.

My country's delegation regrets that, once again, this technical Organisation has been dragged into regional and international geo-political and security issues, deflecting it from the objectives for which it was established. Not only did the United States of America and some Western States fabricate scenarios of use of chemical weapons or prepare for such use over the past nine years in order to accuse the Syrian Government of it, but they also repeated with the Russian Federation in Ukraine the same scenarios that they used against Syria in order to accuse the Russian forces of such use, in addition to other accusations. In this context, Syria affirms that Russia has the right to defend itself and protect its national security, in response to the hostile Western policies. Russia is not only defending itself, but also the whole world, as well as the principles of justice and humanity and the right of all to a world that rejects hegemony and unipolarism. Syria's position in support of the Russian special military operation in Ukraine has been and will remain based on firm political, moral, and legal considerations and principles.

The United States of America and some Western States have succeeded in turning this Organisation into an instrument of political manipulation, which has alienated it from its professionalism and thus its credibility. With the greatest regret, we ask the following



questions: will the Organisation be able to fulfil its mandate under the Convention? Will it be able to withstand the pressure it is facing from the United States of America and its Western allies? We are extremely concerned about the current state of affairs. It has become necessary to put an end to this continuous deterioration in the Organisation's course of action and to begin seriously and urgently correcting this course to take the Organisation back to implementing its mandate.

Syria acceded to the Chemical Weapons Convention in 2013 because it strongly believed in the rejection of the use of chemical weapons by anyone, anywhere, and under any circumstances. For eight months (from October 2013 to June 2014), Syria faithfully and credibly implemented its sovereign decision to end the Syrian chemical dossier, which was achieved in record time. Despite the very difficult and complicated circumstances it has been going through, Syria has accomplished what some other States which had acceded to the Convention many years before it did not accomplish. The Syrian Arab Republic has faced an unprecedented campaign of scepticism and false accusations of failing to cooperate with the OPCW and its Technical Secretariat. The behaviour of those States is in blatant contradiction with the provisions of the Convention, the principles of international law, and the Charter of the United Nations, and is nothing more than an attempt to use the OPCW and the remaining technical aspects of the Syrian chemical weapons dossier to serve their political purposes, namely exerting pressure on Syria. Yet, Syria has continued its full and positive cooperation with the OPCW and has committed itself to a structured dialogue with the Declaration Assessment Team through rounds of consultations, of which twenty-four have been held so far, with the aim of closing the remaining outstanding technical issues.

It was striking to find in the recent reports by the Technical Secretariat of the OPCW false, baseless accusations that Syria is obstructing the work of the Technical Secretariat and that the Syrian Arab Republic does not want to hold the twenty-fifth round of consultations between experts of the National Authority and the Declaration Assessment Team. The truth, however, is that Syria welcomed all proposals made by the Technical Secretariat, as it is fully committed to ending the dossier of outstanding issues and has expressed its willingness and serious desire to close this dossier once and for all. Syria now has the right to declare that the party obstructing the holding of the twenty-fifth round of consultations and the settlement of the outstanding issues is the Technical Secretariat of the OPCW and the States that are known for being hostile to Syria and that are dictating their policies. There is no better proof than the fact that Syria has agreed to all proposals made by the Technical Secretariat to hold this round of consultations.

On more than one occasion, the Syrian Arab Republic, along with many States, has made objective comments regarding the work of the Fact-Finding Mission (FFM). Yet, Syria cooperated with FFM teams, providing them with all the facilities required for the success of their missions. The FFM has failed more than one test, and the evidence is clear to all States Parties. The FFM has proved to be biased and unprofessional, falsifying the facts in more than one of the reports that it has issued until now. The best example is the report on the Douma incident (2018). In this context, we stress the need for the FFM to correct the flaws marring its approach and working methods, comply with the provisions of the Convention, and abide by the professional standards and Terms of Reference agreed upon with Syria.

The Syrian Arab Republic maintains its firm position regarding the Investigation and Identification Team, which is lacking legitimacy, and which was given a mandate contrary to the provisions of the Convention. Therefore, Syria, along with other States, does not recognise the legitimacy and work of this team and rejects any and all of its past and future outcomes,

proceeding from its respect for and adherence and commitment to the provisions of the Chemical Weapons Convention.

The widening scope of the threats from chemical terrorism poses a serious threat to international security and peace. No State is immune to this grave threat. In this context, the Syrian Arab Republic affirms that the conduct of certain States Parties covering up the crimes and practices of terrorist groups in Syria and ignoring the documented information it has provided in this regard has encouraged those terrorists to commit more atrocious crimes against Syrian citizens, including the use of toxic substances over the past nine years.

In this context, Syria stresses that achieving the universality of the Chemical Weapons Convention is a critical step towards ensuring an effective global regime against chemical weapons. However, this will not be achieved without compelling Israel to join the Convention and place its nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons under international control.

Syria calls for international cooperation to confront the illegitimate restrictions imposed by some known States on the transfer to developing States of scientific technology for peaceful purposes, and the imposition of illegitimate, unilateral, and coercive measures on some other States, in order to prevent them from achieving economic and scientific development for their peoples and from using chemistry for peaceful purposes, in clear violation of the provisions of the Convention and international law.

I thank you and I request that this statement be considered an official document of the 101st Session of the Executive Council and posted on the OPCW's public website and on Catalyst.

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