



OPCW

Executive Council

101st Session
4 – 6 October 2022

EC-101/NAT.32
5 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
IN EXERCISE OF THE RIGHT OF REPLY UNDER AGENDA ITEM 6(G)**

We are discussing the report by the Director-General on the implementation and implications of a decision that was issued in June 2018. I listened to the statements of the delegates of the United States of America, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and France. They levelled false accusations against my country, Syria, as well as against Russia. They have even gone so far as to accuse us of undermining the work of the Organisation and preventing the Secretariat from carrying out its responsibilities. Some have asked Syria again to declare its chemical weapons. Others have asked why we are here, reminding us of the basic principles and that we should uphold the Convention, and that the governments of States Parties have decided to establish an investigation team for accountability purposes and for the deterrence of chemical weapons use. They expressed their surprise at what they called “the doubts” cast on the mandate of the team. We do uphold the basic principles and the Convention. Therefore, let us agree on the following:

1. It is true that a decision was issued during a special session of the Conference of the States Parties. Must we not correct the error? We are discussing an important legal and statutory issue: is the mandate of the team consistent with the provisions of the Convention or not? We affirm that the team’s mandate is illegal and inconsistent with the Convention. This is neither questioning nor an attempt to undermine the Convention or the OPCW’s work, conceal chemical weapons, or ward off the accusation. We have never used chemical weapons, not only because we do not possess them, but also because of our ethical principles.
2. Syria does not fear any investigation team, if that team is legitimate and working impartially, without any pressure and politicisation. Why? Because Syria no longer possesses any chemical weapons since 2014 and has never used chemical weapons, neither before nor after that date. The Syrian Army is capable of carrying out its constitutional duty of protecting the people by traditional defence means.
3. The Organisation’s work is being undermined and its future is being jeopardised by those who are dragging it and the Technical Secretariat into illegitimate acts and mandate, and by those who have planned the scheme of issuing a decision, granting it an illegitimate mandate, and establishing an illegitimate team, in order to issue reports serving their political agendas against my country, Syria, and against Russia.



4. Several States have expressed their refusal of that decision during the discussions over its draft. This is their right and we must hear their points of view and respect their constructive and correct position.

Finally, what is astonishing is that the delegates of these States talked about international humanitarian law and human rights.

These three States should be the last to speak about those rights. As documented, who killed 90,000 civilians in the city of Ieper in Belgium by using sulphur mustard during World War I? Who committed crimes of genocide and crimes against humanity that affected tens of thousands of innocent people? Who killed 112 million American Indians, 16 million Filipinos, 20 million Germans and 67 million Aborigines in Australia? Who used nuclear weapons in Hiroshima and Nagasaki? Who used biological and toxin weapons in the Korean war? And who used African States as an experimental field for aboveground and underground nuclear tests? I recall here the French Morin law.

Also, in contemporary history, who used Agent Orange in Vietnam? Who exterminated millions of Iraqi people with weapons of mass destruction, namely the internationally banned depleted uranium, and white phosphorus in some Syrian cities?

Finally, I would like to address the following questions to the delegate of the United States of America: why are you occupying Syrian territories and stealing Syrian oil and riches in plain sight? Is it for the purpose of fighting Daesh? You, along with the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, France, and other States, are supporting terrorism and fighting the Syrian Army, which is combating terrorism. Are you doing this to fight terrorism and Daesh, as you pretend? You pretend to protect the victims of chemical weapons used by the Syrian government. What about the rights of millions of Syrians whom you helped kill, directly and indirectly, namely by supporting terrorism, starving them with your economic sanctions and your blockade, and by stealing their riches?

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 Catalyst.

- - - 0 - - -