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NOTE BY THE TECHNICAL SECRETARIAT

SUMMARY UPDATE OF THE ACTIVITIES CARRIED OUT BY THE OPCW FACT-FINDING MISSION IN SYRIA

1. UPDATE

- 1.1 This summary provides an update on the activities of the OPCW Fact-Finding Mission in Syria (FFM) since the issuance of the previous Note entitled “Summary Update of the Activities Carried Out by the OPCW Fact-Finding Mission in Syria” (S/2014/2021, dated 30 December 2021). This Note summarises the activities carried out by the FFM throughout the reporting period (up to 31 December 2022) and the next steps ahead.
- 1.2 Guided by decisions of the Executive Council EC-M-48/DEC.1 and EC-M-50/DEC.1, dated 4 February and 23 November 2015, respectively, as well as by United Nations Security Council resolution 2209 (2015), the FFM continues to study all available information relating to the allegations of use of chemical weapons in the Syrian Arab Republic.
- 1.3 During the course of the year, the FFM conducted several deployments to gather information. The deployments and movements of the FFM took place with the necessary approvals, including that of the United Nations Department of Safety and Security. The FFM also continued the analysis of all information obtained by the FFM from the Syrian Arab Republic, other States Parties, and relevant stakeholders. The Technical Secretariat (hereinafter “the Secretariat”) is maintaining its readiness and preparing for further deployments with due consideration for the prevailing security situation.
- 1.4 The FFM took part in several training activities, maintaining and upgrading the technical skills and capacity of the team. The FFM also provided support and co-organised training activities with the Inspectorate Division of the Secretariat as part of the FFM’s continued contribution to knowledge transfer activities.

Reported incidents from 2016 that are under investigation¹

- 1.5 Through Notes Verbales NV/ODG-158/21, dated 14 October 2021; NV/ODG-203/21, dated 9 December 2021; NV/ODG-212/21, dated 23 December 2021; NV/ODG-214/22, dated 7 January 2022; NV/ODG-221/22, dated 20 January 2022; and NV/ODG-292/22, dated 23 June 2022, the Secretariat coordinated, with the Syrian Arab Republic, the access to information provided by the Syrian authorities and by witnesses regarding the alleged use of toxic chemicals as a weapon in Aleppo, Syrian Arab Republic, in 2016 and in Kabanah,² Latakia, on 19 May 2019.

¹ The English spelling of the location names reported here could differ slightly due to transliteration.

² Other spellings for Kabanah include “Kabayneh”.



- 1.6 The FFM deployed to the Syrian Arab Republic from 6 to 12 November 2022 in order to gather further information and conduct interviews concerning the following reported incidents: Sheikh Maqsoud on 8 March and 7 April 2016; Zebdiyeh on 11 August 2016;³ Al Sukari on 6 September 2016; Fu'ah and Kafarya on 3 October 2016; and Al Sakhour on 20 November 2016.
- 1.7 Pursuant to Notes Verbales NV/ODG-272/22, dated 22 April 2022 and NV/ODG-293/22, dated 23 June 2022, the Secretariat kindly requested the Syrian Arab Republic to provide any information and material it may have in its possession concerning the alleged use of toxic chemicals as a weapon in Kabanah on 19 May 2019.
- 1.8 Currently, the FFM is continuing its analysis of information pertaining to reported incidents and planning further steps, and will report on the results in due course.

Incident of alleged use of toxic chemicals as a weapon in Kafr Zeita, Hama, Syrian Arab Republic, on 1 October 2016

- 1.9 Since 2 October 2016, the FFM has continuously searched for additional information regarding an incident of alleged use of toxic chemicals as a weapon in Kafr Zeita, Hama. Between 29 March and 13 April 2021, the FFM deployed to the Syrian Arab Republic to gather further information and conduct interviews.
- 1.10 Following the exchange of notes verbales between the Secretariat and the Syrian Arab Republic in 2017 and 2020 concerning additional information regarding the incident, the Secretariat sent Note Verbale NV/ODG-110/21 to the Syrian Arab Republic on 9 July 2021, asking the National Authority of the Syrian Arab Republic whether it was in a position to provide the FFM with any additional information relevant to the alleged incident and specifically relating to the industrial chlorine cylinder. Through a series of notes verbales exchanged with the Secretariat, the Syrian Arab Republic responded to the request with no new information.
- 1.11 After completing the analysis of all available and collected information, the Secretariat issued a Note entitled "Report of the OPCW Fact-Finding Mission in Syria Regarding the Incident of the Alleged Use of Chemicals as a Weapon in Kafr Zeita, Syrian Arab Republic, 1 October 2016" (S/2020/2022, dated 31 January 2022). According to the conclusions of the report, "all information obtained and analysed by the FFM provide reasonable grounds to believe that the chlorine cylinder was used as a weapon. The cylinder ruptured as a result of mechanical force and released a toxic irritant substance that affects the respiratory system and mucous membranes".

Incident of alleged use of toxic chemicals as a weapon in Marea, Aleppo, Syrian Arab Republic, on 1 and 3 September 2015

- 1.12 Since the publication of the Note by the Secretariat entitled "Report of the OPCW Fact-Finding Mission in Syria Regarding Alleged Incidents in Marea, Syrian Arab Republic, August 2015" (S/1320/2015, dated 29 October 2015),⁴ the FFM has remained active in searching for witnesses and evidence related to the incidents that took place in September 2015 in Marea, Aleppo.

³ "10 August 2016" in the Annex to this Note.

⁴ In the Note by the Secretariat S/1320/2015, incidents were reported to have occurred on 1 and 4 September 2015, based on initial testimonies.

- 1.13 Based on further inquiries, the FFM confirmed that two incidents occurred: one on 1 September 2015 and another on 3 September 2015.
- 1.14 After completing the analysis of all available and collected information, the Secretariat issued a Note entitled “Report of the OPCW Fact-Finding Mission in Syria Regarding the Incidents of the Alleged Use of Chemicals as a Weapon in Marea, Syrian Arab Republic, on 1 and 3 September 2015” (S/2017/2022*, dated 24 January 2022). According to the conclusions of the report regarding the alleged use of toxic chemicals as a weapon on 1 September 2015 in Marea, “all information obtained and analysed by the FFM provides reasonable grounds to believe that a vesicant chemical substance from 1.A.04 scheduled chemicals to the Convention was used as a weapon”.
- 1.15 With regard to the alleged use of toxic chemicals as a weapon on 3 September 2015 in Marea, the report concludes that “the affected individuals displayed signs and symptoms similar to the casualties of the incident on 1 September 2015. As the casualties from the incident on 3 September 2015 were not available to be interviewed, the results of analysis of all available data obtained up until the issuance of this report did not allow the FFM to establish whether or not the chemicals were used as a weapon in the incident that took place in Marea, the Syrian Arab Republic, on 3 September 2015”.

FFM-related matters presented at the briefing to the States Parties on the Secretariat’s implementation of activities related to the Syrian chemical weapons programme

- 1.16 On 23 February 2022, 30 June 2022, and 28 September 2022, the Secretariat briefed the States Parties on the status of the implementation of activities related to the Syrian chemical weapons programme, including the FFM activities.

Other activities

- 1.17 Pursuant to the decision adopted by the Conference of the States Parties entitled “Addressing the Threat from Chemical Weapons Use” (C-SS-4/DEC.3, dated 27 June 2018) with regard to instances in which “the OPCW Fact-Finding Mission in Syria determines or has determined that use or likely use occurred, and cases for which the OPCW-UN Joint Investigative Mechanism has not issued a report”, the FFM has continued to periodically hand material over to the Investigation and Identification Team since the issuance of its last summary update.
- 1.18 Following the finalisation in July 2020 of the pilot transfer of FFM material to the International, Impartial, and Independent Mechanism to Assist in the Investigation and Prosecution of Persons Responsible for the Most Serious Crimes under International Law Committed in the Syrian Arab Republic since March 2011 (IIIM) pursuant to paragraph 12 of C-SS-4/DEC.3, and the memorandum of understanding between the OPCW and the IIIM regarding the provision of access, storage, and handling of information and evidence, the FFM is continuing preparations for further transfers to the IIIM.
- 1.19 The FFM is currently looking into several incidents, including:
- (a) two incidents in Sheikh Maqsoud on 8 March 2016 and 7 April 2016;
 - (b) one incident in Zebdiyeh on 11⁵ August 2016;

⁵ “10 August 2016” in the Annex to this Note.

- (c) one incident in Marea on 16 August 2016;
- (d) one incident in Fu'ah and Kafarya on 3 October 2016;
- (e) one incident in Al Sakhour on 20 November 2016;
- (f) two incidents in Khirbat Masasinah on 7 July 2017 and 4 August 2017;
- (g) one incident in Qalib Al Thawr, Al Salamiyah, on 9 August 2017;
- (h) one incident in Yarmouk, Damascus on 22 October 2017;
- (i) one incident in Al-Balil, Suran, on 8 November 2017; and
- (j) one incident in Kabanah on 19 May 2019.

1.20 The FFM will report on allegations, including those indicated above, in due course.

2. NEXT STEPS

- 2.1 Since the security situation in the Syrian Arab Republic is evolving, additional information may become available and further activities to collect information may take place.
- 2.2 Since its most recent deployments, the FFM is now in the process of extracting data from interviews and analysing all information obtained.
- 2.3 The FFM will continue its analysis of information obtained and will collect further relevant information and evidence, with a view to issuing a final report or reports on allegations that have been assessed as credible (listed in the Annex hereto) but which have not yet been reported upon.
- 2.4 The FFM will continue its participation in knowledge transfer activities, such as providing support to the Inspectorate Division of the Secretariat in certain training activities.
- 2.5 The Secretariat calls upon all States Parties and other relevant stakeholders to extend their full cooperation to the FFM and to share all available information relating to the allegations of use of chemical weapons in the Syrian Arab Republic, as recalled in paragraph 6 of EC-M-48/DEC.1; paragraph 7 of EC-M-50/DEC.1; paragraph 7 of S/1255/2015*, dated 10 March 2015; and paragraph 8 of United Nations Security Council resolution 2235 (2015), dated 7 August 2015.
- 2.6 The Secretariat will keep the States Parties informed of the progress of the FFM activities.

Annex:

Allegations of the Use of Chemicals as Weapons: 1 December 2015 – 31 December 2022

Annex

**ALLEGATIONS OF THE USE OF CHEMICALS AS WEAPONS
1 DECEMBER 2015 – 31 DECEMBER 2022**

	Date	Approximate Location	Governorate
	2015		
1.	20 December	Teir Maalah	Homs
2.	22 December	Moadamiyah	Rif Dimashq
3.	27 December	Jobar	Damascus
	2016		
4.	23 January	al-Nashabiyah	Rif Dimashq
5.	27 January	Ghouta	Rif Dimashq
6.	31 January	Moadamiyah	Rif Dimashq
7.	8 March	Sheikh Maqsoud	Aleppo
8.	13 March	Sheikh Maqsoud	Aleppo
9.	3 April	Qaboun	Rif Dimashq
10.	4 April	Deir Ez-zor airbase	Deir Ez-zor
11.	7 April	Sheikh Maqsoud	Aleppo
12.	9 April	Al Tanf	Homs
13.	11 April	Al Mayadeen	Deir Ez-zor
14.	11 April (may be same as 9 April)	Al Tanf	Homs
15.	12 April	Sheikh Maqsoud	Aleppo
16.	14 April	Handarat	Aleppo
17.	16 April	Al Grindat	Aleppo
18.	16 April	Mt Dakwah	Rif Dimashq
19.	18 April	Al-Eis	Aleppo
20.	18 April	Al-Amqiyah Village	Hama
21.	24 April	Jisr al Shughur	Idlib
22.	26 April	Taqa village, near Shaddadi, ~60 km south of Hasakah city	Hasakah
23.	1 May	Al-Aqaba, Aleppo City	Aleppo
24.	2 May	North Aleppo	Aleppo
25.	22 May	Jobar	Damascus
26.	17 May	Sheikh Maqsoud	Aleppo
27.	30 May	Al-Waar	Homs
28.	End of May 2016	Karm al Qaterji	Aleppo
29.	13 June	Hawsh al Farah	Rif Dimashq
30.	15 June	East Ghouta	Rif Dimashq
31.	22 June	Near Tabqa (to the south) in western Raqqa	Raqqa
32.	23 June	Haritan	Aleppo
33.	26 June	East Ghouta	Rif Dimashq
34.	29 June	Jobar	Damascus
35.	29 June	Al-Mallah	Aleppo
36.	3 July	Karm Al-Myassar	Aleppo

	Date	Approximate Location	Governorate
37.	20 July	Kafr Hamrah	Aleppo
38.	23 July	Various, Aleppo City	Aleppo
39.	1 August	Saraqib ^{*6}	Idlib
40.	2 August	Old City in Aleppo*	Aleppo
41.	2 August	Kafr Takarem	Idlib
42.	4 August	Mashhad	Aleppo
43.	No date given	Al-Aqaba	Aleppo
44.	7 August	Ramouseh	Aleppo
45.	8 August	Khan Al-asal	Aleppo
46.	10 August	Zebdiyeh, Aleppo	Aleppo
47.	12 August	Hraytan	Aleppo
48.	16 August	Marea	Aleppo
49.	16 August	Aleppo city	Aleppo
50.	20 August	Hasakah city	Hasakah
51.	25 August	Dandaniyah, near Manbij	Aleppo
52.	28 August	Qabr al Englizi/ Qabr al Inglizi	Aleppo
53.	5 September	Marea	Aleppo
54.	6 September	Al Sukari	Aleppo
55.	6 September	Tarma/Ghouta	Damascus
56.	16 September	Um-Housh*	Aleppo
57.	28 September	Karah	Hama
58.	1 October	Locale of Kafr Zeita*	Hama
59.	3 October	Kafarya and Al Fu'ah villages	Idlib
60.	6 October	Um-Housh	Aleppo
61.	17 October	Ltamenah	Hama
62.	30 October	3000 apartments project, Hamadaniyah, Al-Assad, 1070 apartments project*	Aleppo
63.	31 October	Rashidin	Aleppo
64.	2 November	Khan Al Assal and Kafr Naha	Aleppo
65.	3 November	New Aleppo Region	Aleppo
66.	7 November	Khan Al Assal	Aleppo
67.	13 November	Nayrab (near airport)*	Aleppo
68.	18 November	Hanano	Aleppo
69.	18 & 19 November	Ard Al Hamra / Al Sakhour	Aleppo
70.	20 November	Al Sakhour	Aleppo
71.	20 November	Tariq al Bab	Aleppo
72.	21 November	Jisr Al Haj	Aleppo
73.	22 November	Qaterji district (and Dahret Awwad)	Aleppo
74.	23 November	Ard Al Hamra	Aleppo
75.	24 November	Ard Al Hamra	Aleppo
76.	26 November	Al Khaliliya	Aleppo
77.	26 November	Qabasin	Aleppo

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Incidents marked with (*) have been reported upon by the FFM.

	Date	Approximate Location	Governorate
78.	26 November	Al Bab	Aleppo
79.	28 November	Sheikh Maqsoud	Aleppo
80.	28 November	Qadi Askar	Aleppo
81.	8 December	Al Klasa	Aleppo
82.	8 December	Al Maghayer	Aleppo
83.	8 December	Firdous	Aleppo
84.	9 December	Kallaseh	Aleppo
85.	9 December	Al Qasiliah	Aleppo
86.	11 December	Uqayribat	Homs (Salamiyah)
87.	26 December	Wadi Barada	Rif Dimashq
	2017		
88.	3 January	Wadi Barada	Rif Dimashq
89.	5 January	Basima village	Rif Dimashq
90.	8 January	Wadi Barada	Rif Dimashq
91.	30 January	Al Marj	Rif Dimashq
92.	7 February	Irbin	Rif Dimashq
93.	9 February	Irbin	Rif Dimashq
94.	10 February	Irbin	Rif Dimashq
95.	21 February	Hosh ad-Dawahra	Rif Dimashq
96.	26 February	Harasta	Rif Dimashq
97.	3 March	Habit	Idlib
98.	23 March	Maarrat al-Nu'man	Idlib
99.	24 & 25 March	Ltamenah*	Hama
100.	29 March	Qaboun	Damascus
101.	30 March	Ltamenah*	Hama
102.	4 April	Khan Shaykhun*	Idlib
103.	7 April	Harasta	Damascus
104.	22 April	Zamalka and Irbin	Damascus
105.	29 April	Ltamenah	Hama
106.	22 June	Jobar	Damascus
107.	1 July	Ayn Tarma and Zamalka	Damascus
108.	6 July	Ayn Tarma/Jobar	Damascus
109.	7 July	Khirbat Masasinah	-Hama
110.	14 July	Ayn Tarma	Damascus
111.	20 July	Ayn Tarma	Damascus
112.	4 August	Khirbat Masasinah	Hama
113.	9 August	Al Salamiyah	Hama
114.	16 August	Ayn Tarma/Jobar	Damascus
115.	27 August	Ayn Tarma/Jobar	Damascus
116.	29 August	Ghanim al Ali	Al Raqqah
117.	10 September	Badia	Rif Dimashq
118.	7 October	Al Musheirfeh	Hama
119.	22 October	Yarmouk	Damascus
120.	7 November	Maqarrayn	Hama

	Date	Approximate Location	Governorate
121.	8 November	Harasta	Damascus
122.	8 November	Al-Balil, Suran	Hama
123.	15 November	Mazraat Brit Jinn, Kafr Hawar	Damascus
124.	16 November	Harasta	Damascus
125.	18 November	Harasta	Damascus
126.	16 November	Beit Jin	Damascus
127.	30 December	Al-Blaleah	Damascus
	2018		
128.	13 January	Duma/Harasta	Damascus
129.	13 January	Tall Marq	Idlib
130.	15 January	Saloumiya	Idlib
131.	22 January	Douma, Eastern Ghouta	Damascus
132.	22 January	Abu-Al-Duhur Airbase	Idlib
133.	1 February	Douma, Eastern Ghouta	Damascus
134.	4 February	Saraqib	Idlib
135.	6 February	Sheikh Kharuz, Bulbul, Afrin	Aleppo
136.	16 February	Arinde, Afrin	Aleppo
137.	25 February	Shifuniyah, Ghouta	Damascus
138.	5 March	Hamuriyah, Ghouta	Damascus
139.	7 March	Saqba and Hamuriyah	Damascus
140.	11 March	Irbin	Damascus
141.	14 March	Hamuriyah	Damascus
142.	15 March	Zamalka and Haza	Damascus
143.	18 March	Douma	Damascus
144.	7 April	Douma*	Damascus
145.	24 November	Aleppo*	Aleppo
	2019		
146.	19 May	Kabanah	Latakia