



الجمهورية العربية السورية

Syrian Arab Republic

National Statement

Delivered by Ambassador Milad Atieh

Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic

**To the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical
Weapons**

105th Session of the Executive Council

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Mr. Chairperson,

At the outset, I extend to His Excellency Ambassador Lucian Vatu, Permanent Representative of Romania to the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, my best wishes for his success in managing the work of this session.

My delegation joins the statement of the Non-Aligned Movement and China Parties to the Convention, which was submitted to this session.

Mr. Chairperson,

The Syrian Arab Republic has exerted its utmost effort, worked with diligence, commitment, credibility and transparency, and implemented all its obligations pursuant to its accession to the Convention. During the past ten years, Syria has cooperated fully with the Organization's Technical Secretariat and its teams. On the other hand, the United States of America and its allies worked to use this Organization to implement their aggressive political agendas against Syria. The Syrian Arab Republic has faced a historically unprecedented campaign of skepticism and false accusations of not cooperating with the Organization and its Technical Secretariat, and of hiding chemical weapons. Syria has cooperated with the Technical Secretariat of the Organization and provided all the needed

facilitations to its teams. The best example of this is the cooperation with the Declarations Assessment Team(DAT) during the 25th and 26th rounds of consultations, which have resulted in resolving three outstanding issues in the Syrian initial declaration. This cooperation and what resulted from consultations between the two sides proves with conclusive evidence how Western countries have constantly worked to prejudge the results of those ongoing consultations, and how they have leveled false politicized accusations against Syria.

Mr. Chairperson,

The elimination of an entire category of weapons of mass destruction, including chemical weapons, was the primary motivation for so many countries to join the Chemical Weapons Convention, and the majority of countries have long called on this Organization, as the implementing body of the Convention, to faithfully and impartially implement what the Convention stipulates. The experiences of Syria and later Russia, and before that what happened to Jose Boustani, has become conclusive evidence of how some Western countries worked to politicize the work of this Organization and divert it from the goals for which it was established. There is not enough space here to mention all the evidence of this in this statement. The adoption and passing of the decision of the Fourth Special

Session of the Conference of States Parties in June, 2018, which resulted the establishment of an illegal team that violates the provisions of the Convention, constituted a turning point in the history of the OPCW. Some Western countries have become accustomed to imposing their wills on other countries, refusing to listen to any opinion that does not align with their motives and does not serve their political agendas, even if that should translate into direct aggression against the sovereignty of other countries, in a manner that violates international law, the Charter of the United Nations and the provisions of the CWC. An example of that is the American-British-French aggression against my country in April 2018. In the same context, the Syrian Arab Republic repeats what it has been demanding on more than one occasion, that the Technical Secretariat fulfills the mandate assigned to it under the Convention, and adheres to what it stipulates. In Paragraph 46 of Article Eight, it is stated that the Organization must deal professionally and fairly, away from pressure. What has happened during the “Classified Briefing Session” on February 29th, for the second time, in preventing the Syrian delegation from speaking and explaining its point of view in a session dedicated to its chemical file, confirms that some employees of the Technical Secretariat are part of the Western countries’ aggressive campaign against my country, Syria.

The United States of America and some Western countries have turned the OPCW into an arena for settling their aggressive, colonialist geopolitical scores. The

independence of this Organization is at stake, and we say very clearly that the OPCW is no longer qualified to achieve its purpose in light of this reality, and it has become difficult to restore its credibility and to accomplish the tasks assigned to it. As a result of political interference by Western countries, the Organization is currently facing a crisis of credibility, disagreements, polarization, and divisions within it. Western countries continue this approach by adopting politicized resolutions targeting states that are parties to the Convention by resorting to voting. The best example of this is the politicized decision that was adopted by voting in the 28th Session of the Conference of States Parties against Syria. This very controversial decision, which does not reflect the will of the States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention, but rather reflects the will of only 69 States out of 193. This decision, which contradicts with the Organization's mandate, was built on unsubstantiated fabrications, lies, deception, opinions and false accusations. It is completely baseless, and it represents another dangerous step towards this Organization losing its credibility, and aims to achieve goals that do not align with the purpose of the Organisation. This voting result indicates that more than two-thirds of the States Parties to the Convention reject this destructive Western approach and behavior. What is happening in the OPCW is part of a pattern of geopolitically motivated deception operations that were carried out three decades ago in Iraq and other places in the world, and there is much evidence of this.

Another example of this hegemony inside of the Organisation is how Western countries have worked to exclude the Russian Federation from membership in the Executive Council, in violation of what the Convention stipulates in subparagraph (c) 23 of Article Eight.

Mr Chairperson,

In light of the genocide, and crimes against humanity being committed in Palestine, and the continuation of these crimes and this war of extermination despite the martyrdom of more than 31 Thousand people, the majority of whom are women and children in Gaza and the West Bank, and the practice of the war of starvation and the demolition of more than 80% of Gaza's homes, and the very public threat to of the Zionist entity to use nuclear weapons against the people of Gaza, as well as the use of toxic substances against Palestinian citizens, we affirm our support for the request of the State of Palestine to investigate incidents of the use of chemical weapons in Gaza against the Palestinian people who are suffering under the Israeli occupation. We call on the Technical Secretariat to move and to carry out its tasks in accordance with its mandate, as the Technical Secretariat has moved in other places. The excuse that there is no evidence and that the security situation does not allow for investigation is unacceptable and demonstrates a

double standard. In that regards, our question is this: Did the investigation teams of the Technical Secretariat visit the sites of the alleged incidents in Syria? The answer is no. Just for your information, in all the reports issued by the Organization regarding alleged incidents in Syria, the Organization's teams never actually visited the sites of those incidents.

Mr. Chairperson,

Some reports of the Organization's investigation teams cite what Syria and other countries have already confirmed, and that is the terrorist groups, especially ISIL and “Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham” (formerly the Al-Nusra Front), have used chemical weapons against Syrian citizens in more than one incident, proving the validity of these conclusions. This is what was stated in the report of the Illegal Investigation and Identification Team (IIT) issued on February 22nd 2024, regarding the “Mare'a” incident in 2015.

At the same time, the Organization's Technical Secretariat has stated in a Note issued on September 27th 2023, that Syria provided it with more than 200 Notes Verbales about the attempt of terrorist groups preparations to fabricate incidents of the use of toxic substances as weapons in order to accuse the Syrian Government of them. The secretariat adds in its Note that such a connection has

never appeared between the content of these Syrian Notes and the Secretariat's investigations. This contradiction and duplicity calls for astonishment and disapproval, as the Technical Secretariat deliberately ignored all the information and evidence that Syria provided in those Notes, while simultaneously citing what Syria and other countries have stated about terrorists in Syria possessing chemical weapons and using them.

In a related context, the Technical Secretariat of the OPCW, as an international organization, ignores all international reports issued by the United Nations, and those submitted by committees and specialized teams to the Security Council, confirming that the groups included on the Security Council's lists as terrorist entities, such as the organization of "Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham" (HTS). Al-Nusra Front (formerly) and the so-called Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) have been able to possess advanced weapons and air systems that have been used by terrorists on multiple occasions, including chemical weapons. These groups have been organizing and encouraging the use of chemical weapons.

These terrorist entities have the capability to manufacture and produce chemical rockets and mortars, in addition to developing, testing, arming and deploying a range of chemical agents.

In this context, the Syrian Arab Republic confirms that the approach followed by Western countries is nothing but an attempt to remove any accusation or suspicion from terrorists in Syria of the possibility of possessing and/or using chemical weapons, to cover up the crimes of terrorists in Syria, and to prove the false accusations against Syria of using chemical weapons. This in itself is a clear violation of the provisions of the Convention, the decision of the 86th Session of the Executive Council, and what is stipulated in Paragraph 18 of Security Council Resolution 2118, which affirmed that “all Member States must refrain from providing any form of support to non-state parties that attempts to develop nuclear, chemical or biological weapons and their means of delivery, or to acquire, manufacture, possess, transfer, or use such weapons and means, and calls on all Member States, in particular Member States neighboring the Syrian Arab Republic, to immediately inform the Security Council of any violation of this Paragraph”. These Western countries have provided all kinds of facilitation, support and cover to terrorist groups in Syria, and are still playing this role until now, in clear violation of all Security Council resolutions related to combating terrorism, and Security Council Resolution No. 2118. We point out in this regard that the remaining strongholds of international terrorism on Syrian territory, are spread in areas under the control of the American and Turkish occupations in northeastern, northwestern and southeastern Syria.

Mr. Chairperson,

The Syrian Arab Republic affirms that the professionalism, integrity and credibility of the Organization's teams is contingent on them overcoming the defects associated with the approach and methods of their work, respecting the provisions of the Convention, adhering to professional standards, and proving their impartiality in the reports they will issue. How can the reports of these teams be credible when they violate the procedures and provisions contained in the Convention? On this occasion, the Syrian Arab Republic reaffirms its firm position on the Illegal Investigation and Identification Team (IIT) that it is lacking in legitimacy, and that it was given a mandate that contradicts the provisions of the Convention. Therefore, Syria, along with other countries, does not recognize the legitimacy of this team and its work and rejects any outputs issued or those that will be issued in the future, based on its respect, adherence and commitment to the provisions of the Chemical Weapons Convention.

Mr. Chairperson,

Achieving the universality of the Chemical Weapons Convention represents a very important step in ensuring the establishment of an effective global regime

against chemical weapons. However, this will not be achieved without obligating Israel to join the CWC and the rest of the international conventions related to preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. In this regard, we point out that in light of the brutal massacres and war of extermination committed by the Zionist entity against the Palestinian people, the Minister of Heritage in the current government of this entity stated a short time ago that one of the Israeli options is to strike the people of Gaza with nuclear weapons. This statement confirms what Israel has been hiding about the fact that it possesses these weapons outside of international control systems, with the support of its allies in the United States of America and some Western countries, and that constitutes a serious threat to the security, stability, and lives of the peoples of the region. This official public statement did not receive any attention from the Western countries supporting the Israeli entity.

Mr. Chairperson,

Syria calls for international cooperation to confront the illegal restrictions imposed by the United States, the European Union, and some other Western countries on the transfer of scientific technology for peaceful purposes to developing countries, subjecting them to illegal unilateral coercive measures, with

the aim of preventing the transfer of scientific technology for peaceful purposes to developing countries and preventing them from achieving economic and scientific development for their people, in clear violation of to the provisions of the Convention and international law. In this context, the Syrian Arab Republic confirms that these unilateral coercive measures have the main goal of political blackmail and pressure on the Syrian people, and are blatant interference in the internal affairs of Syria. Therefore, Syria demands that these countries stop this immoral and inhumane policy.

Thank you, and I kindly request that this statement be considered an official document of the 105th Session of the Executive Council, and published on the General OPCW Website and Catalyst.