

**STATEMENT BY H.E. DATO' ROSELI ABDUL,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF MALAYSIA
AT THE 68TH MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL
THE HAGUE, 22 JULY 2025**

Mr Chairperson,
Director-General Ambassador Arias,
Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,

My delegation has reviewed the letter from the State of Qatar, in its capacity as Syria's representative to the OPCW, concerning the Israeli airstrike of 16 July that hit, among other sites, the Syrian Ministry of Defence in Damascus and its implications for future OPCW deployments.

As the letter notes, the building that was hit is the same site where the Technical Secretariat and the Syrian Ministry of Defence met during the last deployment to discuss support for the OPCW. The letter further stresses that the strike poses a direct threat to Syria's capacity to meet its Convention obligations and to safely facilitate any future deployments, thereby obstructing effective implementation of the ground.

We also thank the Director-General and the Syrian delegation for the comprehensive briefing on the issue that we are discussing today.

We strongly condemn this airstrike, which clearly violated Syria's sovereignty and international law, and threatens Syria's ability to discharge its Convention obligations. Regardless of stated justifications, such actions risk eroding the progress achieved since the new Government of Syria renewed cooperation with the Organisation in December 2024.

The recently announced ceasefire, now accepted by all parties, demonstrates that diplomacy remains not only possible but indispensable. Respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all States is a foundation of common security and a fundamental principle at the core of the Charter of the United Nations. Treaty-based disarmament is its complement when faithfully upheld under international law.

My delegation therefore denounces any act that threatens or obstructs a State's ability to honour its obligations under the Chemical Weapons Convention, mindful though we are of the region's complex security environment.

Mr Chairperson,

Syria's chemical-weapons dossier remains a priority for this Organisation, and the recent renewal of cooperation must be sustained.

The Convention's overarching purpose, as set out in its Preamble, is "*to exclude completely the possibility of the use of chemical weapons*". States Parties are bound to advance that purpose, and signatories must, under Article 18 of the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties, refrain from acts that would defeat it.

Strikes that threaten Syria's capacity to meet its remaining obligations under the Convention, impede the safe deployment of OPCW verification teams, or otherwise obstruct implementation run counter to our common objective and must not be allowed to derail progress.

My delegation therefore calls on all parties to respect Syria's sovereignty and territorial integrity and to refrain from any action that could impair the OPCW's vital mission.

In closing, my delegation reaffirms its commitment to a world free of chemical weapons, attainable only through respect for international law, the sovereignty of States, and the unimpeded work of this Organisation.

We kindly request that this statement be circulated as an official document of this Executive Council meeting and placed on the OPCW website and external server.

Thank you, Mr Chairperson.