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TAR-REPUBBLIKA TA' MALTA



EMBASSY OF
THE REPUBLIC OF MALTA

THE HAGUE

**Statement of the Republic of Malta Under Agenda Item 6(c)
Delivered by H.E. Jeffrey Curmi
Ambassador of the Republic of Malta to the Kingdom of the Netherlands
109th Session of the Executive Council of the OPCW
Ieper Room, The Hague, Netherlands, 8-11 July 2025**

Malta aligns itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the EU. In addition, I would like to convey some additional remarks in my national capacity.

Malta commends the work carried out so far by the OPCW Technical Secretariat in relation to Syria.

Malta also acknowledges the challenges faced by the Technical Secretariat to safely and securely access 100+ sites for inspection due to the presence of several hazards, including UXO (Unexploded Ordnance) and possibly IED (Improvised Explosive Devices).

It is also of concern that these sites are currently abandoned and unguarded. The sooner these sites are cordoned off, cleared for safe access and inspected by OPCW Technical Secretariat, the better it is in ensuring that any hazardous munitions possibly including CW (and/or related parts or precursors) are safely disposed of.

The longer these sites are left unattended and uninspected, the harder it becomes for OPCW Technical Secretariat to achieve accurate and reliable outcomes, and the more detrimental it is for Regional and International Safety and Security.

Malta has identified a number of concrete options which could concurrently assist the OPCW TS, the Syrian Authorities, and above all – the Syrian people. These include:

1. Building an EOD (Explosive Ordnance Disposal) Capacity to Syria.

This may be achieved by a coordinated approach between OPCW State Parties who are able and willing to contribute either through their expertise, or by funding EOD Specialised equipment.

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Concrete examples include:

- Sponsoring Syrian candidates to respective State Parties national EOD training facilities,
- Providing MTT (Mobile Training Teams) to Syria to deliver training, or to other facilities such as the OPCW ChemTech Centre.

Such capacity building would enable the Syrian Authorities to:

- a. start rendering safe these 100+ inspections sites from UXO's and IED's in coordination with OPCW, and
- b. To continue rendering safe UXO present throughout the whole country for the years to come.

2. **EOD Clearance by EOD Units from other State Parties**

This would obviously depend on whether Syria is ready to accept foreign EOD units on their territory, and how much foreign militaries are ready to contribute.

3. **EOD Clearance by Private EOD Companies.**

This depends on budget available.

4. **Combination of the mentioned options.**

MT strongly believes that should State Parties, manage to join forces to help Syria build an EOD capacity, apart from assisting the OPCW Technical Secretariat to accomplish their tasks, such an initiative will also:

1. ensure effective and efficient use of resources
2. enhance the safety of the of Syrian People
3. contribute to state building activities and reconciliation
4. put Confidence Building Measures into practice

The viability of this proposal is dependent on the extent of the willingness of state parties to provide-in kind assistance and on Syria's commitment to build and (more importantly) maintain such a capacity.

Towards this end Malta has already prepared a non-paper which we shared with all regional groups and stands ready to discuss further should there be interest in considering such an initiative.

I would kindly ask you to consider this statement as an official document and to post it on the OPCW external server and public website.

Thank you

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