

The 68th Meeting of Executive Council
Statement by H.E. Ambassador Seok-in Hong
Permanent Representative of the Republic of Korea to the OPCW

22 July 2025, The Hague

Mr. Chair,
Mr. Director-General,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,

I would like to thank the Chairperson Ambassador Thomas Schieb and Director-General Fernando Arias for swiftly convening this meeting, following the request by the delegation of Qatar.

Mr. Chair,

The Republic of Korea is deeply concerned about the recent escalation of violence in southern Syria and the Israeli airstrikes in Damascus. We reaffirm our strong commitment to the sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity of the Syrian Arab Republic. We emphasize the importance of all parties prioritizing the safe and verifiable destruction of Syria's chemical weapons programme.

Just two weeks ago, this Council collectively acknowledged and encouraged the efforts made by the OPCW Technical Secretariat and the Syrian authorities toward resolving the longstanding issues related to Syria's chemical weapons programme. In this regard, we are seriously concerned that the recent escalation on the ground may undermine these efforts, and hinder broader attempts by the Syrian Government to restore national unity and stability.

After nearly a decade, we now have a genuine opportunity to achieve the full and verifiable elimination of Syria's chemical weapons programme. We must not allow this opportunity slip away.

We therefore call on all relevant parties to refrain from any actions that may lead to further escalation of tensions. We also urge full respect for ceasefire agreement reached last week. Thank you. /END/