



**STATEMENT BY H.E. JURAJ PODHORSKÝ,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC
TO THE OPCW,
AT THE 099th SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL
(The Hague, 8 to 11 July 2025)**

Agenda item 6 (c) – Elimination of the Syrian chemical weapons programme

Mr. Chair,

Slovakia aligns itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the European Union.

In my national capacity, I wish to make some additional comments and observations.

Last December brought huge change to Syria and its people. The fall of the Assad regime has opened the doors for a new chapter in the history of the country. At the same time, it has also presented the States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention and the OPCW with a historic opportunity to remove this threat of chemical weapons.

Through the dedicated work of the Declarations Assessment Team (DAT), it has become clear that the former government of Syria never declared its entire stockpile of chemical weapons. The Fact-Finding Mission (FFM) and the Investigation and Identification Team (IIT) have furthermore confirmed the use of chemical weapons on Syrian territory, even after it has become a State Party to the CWC, and have also identified the perpetrators of several incidents.

Against this backdrop, and with view to the repeatedly declared willingness of the Syrian transitional authorities to fully cooperate with the OPCW, the current historic opportunity must be seized, in order to fully uncover all elements and stockpiles of the chemical weapons programme and verifiably destroy it. Moreover, as a member of the International Partnership against Impunity for the Use of Chemical Weapons, we will support bringing justice to the victims of CW attacks in Syria.

We realize it is an immense task. Nevertheless, we have full trust in the professionalism, knowledge and experience of the OPCW personnel, now consolidated under the newly created Office of Special Missions, to successfully manage all challenges this may entail. We hope that States Parties will respond positively to the call of the Director-General to support the mandate and activities pertaining to the Syrian CW programme with extrabudgetary resources. Slovakia is willing to assume its part, specifically by offering to host trainings at its facility in Zemianske Kostolany, should such capacity-building needs be identified by the OPCW.

Mr. Chair,

I wish to conclude by commending once again the cooperation of the Syrian authorities with the OPCW and reiterating Slovakia's full support to the activities of the OPCW in Syria.

I wish to kindly request the issuance of this statement as an official-series document of the session, as well as its posting on the OPCW public website.

I thank you.