

**Türkiye: Statement by H.E. Ambassador Selçuk Ünal, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Türkiye to the OPCW at the 109th Session of the Executive Council under Agenda Item 6 (c) – Elimination of the Syrian chemical weapons programme**

Mr. Chair,

Türkiye commends the Syrian transitional government's cooperation with the OPCW.

We have taken good note of the recent Secretariat's briefing and in-country deployments.

We also support the Secretariat's call for voluntary contributions as the OPCW's Syria activities will require funding.

All these will ensure the clarification of the full extent of the Assad regime's chemical weapons programme.

Türkiye has supported the Syrian people throughout all the troubled period while they were under the Assad regime. And will continue to do so in the future.

Drawing up the inventory and verified destruction of any remaining chemical weapons stocks will surely take time. However, we would like to underline the urgency and highlight the operational challenges on the ground that may be faced by the teams.

In this regard, we believe it is time to set some kind of a rules of conduct – when chemical weapons or materials found. We would welcome Syria's plans and input to this process.

We know that it is hard to secure the sites. For this reason, it is crucial for the teams to know what to do when encountered. Therefore, it is essential to come up with a destruction plan while at the same time drawing up the inventory.

Mr. Chair,

We have also taken note of the reorganization of the Secretariat's Syria missions under the Office of Special Missions (OSM). We hope that it will deliver its mandate.

We would like to reiterate our support for accountability efforts, remember those murdered mercilessly and we respect a Syrian-led process.

Mr. Chair,

During the process of the elimination of the chemical weapons in Syria, it is important to respect the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Syria.

Syria is being targeted by Israeli airstrikes and parts of its territory are occupied. Israel's actions in Gaza/Palestine are well known to the world. We believe Israeli actions should be monitored by the Secretariat.

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

After working on the Syria file for 4.5 years, seeing war and peace, and continuing to work on the file for 2.5 years here, this will be the last multilateral meeting on Syria that I will be participating since I am leaving as Ambassador to the People's Republic of China. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all who supported the Syrian people.

Thank you.