

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 5 – General Debate

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

I congratulate H.E. Ambassador Thomas Schieb of Germany on his new position as the Chairperson of the Executive Council and assure him of my delegation's full support during his tenure. It is an honor to work together with you as Vice Chairperson of the 29th Session of the Conference of the States Parties.

I would also like to thank the outgoing Chair H.E. Ambassador Andrés Terán Parral of Ecuador for his successful leadership of this Council.

Mr. Chair,

As you assume your new role, significant developments are taking place in the world in terms of international security as well as in the context of the OPCW and disarmament.

Syria has been moving toward the right direction since the fall of the Assad regime. The Director-General's visit to Damascus and the participation of the Syrian Foreign Minister in the previous EC were both historic. We commend the Syrian transitional government's cooperation with the OPCW. We also express our appreciation for the efforts of the Syrian authorities to ensure the OPCW deployments even at difficult times. Operational challenges remain and we believe it is time to set the rules of conduct – when chemical weapons or materials found. Relevant work should take Syria's input. Elimination of the Assad regime's chemical weapons program requires substantial amount of resources and Syria cannot do it on its own. It needs our assistance. We support the Technical Secretariat's appeal to all States Parties in this regard.

Türkiye has long been a supporter of the Syrian people in their aspirations for peace, prosperity and stability and it has intensified its humanitarian aid. Türkiye will continue to contribute to Syria's reconstruction through both public and private sectors, in cooperation with regional and international stakeholders. In this regard, we welcome the lifting of significant portion of sanctions on Syria by the US and the EU.

Syria's territorial integrity and sovereignty is the key priority for Türkiye. While supporting a Syrian-led and Syrian-owned transition, Türkiye also remains steadfast for any direct national security concern. Syria is being targeted by Israeli airstrikes and parts of its territory are occupied by Israel. Israel's actions in Gaza/Palestine are well known to the world. We have made our views clear regarding its attacks to Iran at the special session in this very room. We believe Israeli actions should be monitored by the Secretariat according to its mandate.

Mr. Chair,

We note the third Ukraine TAV report and the Notes Verbales exchanged yesterday. On this occasion, I would like to reaffirm Türkiye's commitment to territorial integrity and sovereignty of Ukraine, and a just and lasting peace in Ukraine. Türkiye recently hosted Russian and

Ukrainian delegations for talks and is ready to take facilitating steps to initiate work on a technical level.

Mr. Chair,

We commend the OPCW for its proactive approach to Artificial Intelligence and for continuing this momentum by organizing a workshop in Shanghai in cooperation with the Chinese government.

We also look forward to the work of the Temporary Working Group on AI.

Mr. Chair,

Türkiye continues to support the work of the OPCW. As a recent contribution, a workshop on strengthening chemical security legislation and enforcement capabilities towards Central Asian States Parties was organized on 3-4 June 2025 in Ankara hosted by AFAD, Türkiye's disaster agency and with the participation of senior officials.

Mr. Chair,

We were impressed by the presentations of the DG candidates on Monday and to see their eagerness for the position. We wish all the candidates success, for the most competent one to be elected based on merit.

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

As you mentioned earlier today, this will be the last EC session that I will be participating since I am posted as Ambassador to the People's Republic of China. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of you for the close cooperation and friendly relations during my tenure here both as Permanent Representative and also as Vice Chairperson of the CSP.

Thank you.