



**UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
STATEMENT ON AGENDA ITEM 6 (C)
ELIMINATION OF THE SYRIAN CHEMICAL WEAPONS PROGRAMME
TO THE 109TH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

Thank you Mr. Chairperson,

The United States is delighted to join other countries in welcoming the tremendous and historic opportunity we have before us to help the OPCW and the Syrian Arab Republic rid Syria of any remnants of Assad's chemical weapons program.

For over ten years, all of us representing our countries at the OPCW and our predecessors sat in these very chairs urging the Assad regime to cooperate fully with the OPCW. We made repeated calls for the regime to stop using chemical weapons against the Syrian people and to destroy its entire chemical weapons program.

While this discussion should have been straightforward, the Assad regime and some States Parties pushed back against these calls to cooperate meaningfully with the OPCW, by accusing us and others of "politicizing" the work of this organization, rather than questioning why ten years of so-called cooperation was resulting in no progress. As I said at the CSP, however, calling on a country to fulfill its obligations is not politicization.

And so now, we finally have the chance to turn the page and open a new chapter at the OPCW. We have this chance because we have a new Syrian government that is committed to working with the international community to find and destroy any remnants of this chemical weapons program under international verification.

But today's Syria faces many challenges, as the Director-General shared with us. So we need to ensure the OPCW has the resources it requires to move forward as

quickly as possible. The United States is prepared to help support the OPCW's mission in Syria – but other countries must share that burden.

Many countries in this room have answered that call before and provided financial or in-kind contributions. We ask that others also support this effort financially. This is a mission that serves our collective interest. Together, we can work to ensure that ISIS or any actor that seeks to do harm, does not get hold of any remaining elements of the Assad regime's CW program.

Thank you.