



Sixty-Eighth Meeting
22 July 2025

EC-M-68/1
17 July 2025
Original: ENGLISH

NOTE BY THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL

NOTIFICATION OF A MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

1. The Director-General, in consultation with the Chairperson of the Executive Council (the Council), Ambassador Thomas Schieb of Germany, and in accordance with Rule 12(b) of the Rules of Procedure of the Council, is requesting that the Council meet to receive and consider information on the situation in the Syrian Arab Republic.
2. The Director-General's request is in response to the request from the Permanent Representative of the State of Qatar to the OPCW to convene a meeting of the Council (two Letters from H.E. Ambassador Mutlaq M. Al Qahtani, Permanent Representative of the State of Qatar to the OPCW (Annexes 2 and 3)). A letter from the Director-General of the OPCW Technical Secretariat (Annex 4) and a letter from the Chairperson of the Council (Annex 5), have been transmitted to H.E. Ambassador Mutlaq bin Majed Al Qahtani, Permanent Representative of the State of Qatar to the OPCW, in response.
3. The meeting of the Council will be held at 10:00 on Tuesday, 22 July 2025, in the Ieper Room of the OPCW Main Building (Johan de Wittlaan 32, The Hague).
4. In accordance with Rule 16 of the Rules of Procedure of the Council, the provisional agenda for the meeting is also annexed hereto.

Annexes

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| Annex 1: | Provisional Agenda for the Sixty-Eighth Meeting of the Executive Council |
| Annex 2 (English only): | Letter from H.E. Ambassador Mutlaq M. Al Qahtani, Permanent Representative of the State of Qatar to the OPCW, Addressed to the Chairperson of the Executive Council, Dated 16 July 2025 |
| Annex 3 (English only): | Letter from H.E. Ambassador Mutlaq M. Al Qahtani, Permanent Representative of the State of Qatar to the OPCW, Addressed to the Director-General of the OPCW Technical Secretariat, Dated 16 July 2025 |



Annex 4 (English only): Letter L/ODG-714/25, Dated 16 July 2025, from the Director-General of the OPCW Technical Secretariat, Addressed to H.E. Ambassador Mutlaq bin Majed Al Qahtani, Permanent Representative of the State of Qatar to the OPCW

Annex 5 (English only): Letter L/PMO-628/25, Dated 17 July 2025, from the Chairperson of the Council, Addressed to H.E. Ambassador Mutlaq bin Majed Al Qahtani, Permanent Representative of the State of Qatar to the OPCW

Annex 1

**PROVISIONAL AGENDA
FOR THE SIXTY-EIGHTH MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

1. Opening of the meeting
2. Adoption of the agenda
3. Request by Qatar as contained in its Letters (dated 16 July 2025)
4. Adoption of the report
5. Closure

Annex 2

**LETTER FROM H.E. AMBASSADOR MUTLAQ M. AL QAHTANI
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE STATE OF QATAR TO THE OPCW
ADDRESSED TO THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL
DATED 16 JULY 2025**

سفارة دولة قطر في لاهاي
Embassy of the State of Qatar in the Hague



URGENT

Dear Excellency,
Ambassador Thomas Schieb,
Chairperson of the OPCW Executive Council,

I am writing to you in my capacity as representing the interests of the Syrian Arab Republic to the OPCW to bring to your urgent attention the grave developments arising from the Israeli air strike on 16 July 2025 targeting several sites in Damascus, including the General Staff Headquarters of the Ministry of Defence.

The Ministry of Defence plays a critical role in supporting the OPCW Technical Secretariat's deployed teams in Syria. These teams are essential to the ongoing process of identifying, declaring, destroying, and verifying residual elements of the Syrian chemical weapons programme left behind as a legacy of the former government. The recent attack poses a direct threat to Syria's capacity to fulfil its obligations under the Chemical Weapons Convention.

Significantly, the building targeted in this strike is the very same location where meetings were held between the OPCW Technical Secretariat and the Syrian Ministry of Defence during the last deployment to discuss support to be provided to the OPCW.

This strike constitutes a serious violation of Syrian sovereignty and international law. It has immediate implications for the ability of Syria to safely facilitate deployments of OPCW experts and obstructs the effective implementation of the Convention on the ground.

In light of these developments, I respectfully request that you convene an urgent Special Meeting of the Executive Council, pursuant to Rule 12(a) of the Rules of Procedure which, inter alia, states that "the Council shall meet without delay to consider any issue or matter within its competence affecting the Convention and its implementation." This meeting will be necessary for the Executive Council to be briefed and address the situation.

I also kindly request that this communication be circulated to all States Parties and posted on the OPCW Catalyst platform.

Yours sincerely,
Dr. Mutlaq M. Al Qahtani
Ambassador of the State of Qatar to the Netherlands
Permanent Representative to the OPCW

16 July 2025



Annex 3

**LETTER FROM H.E. AMBASSADOR MUTLAQ M. AL QAHTANI
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE STATE OF QATAR
TO THE OPCW, ADDRESSED TO THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL
OF THE OPCW TECHNICAL SECRETARIAT
DATED 16 JULY 2025**

سفارة دولة قطر في لاهاي
Embassy of the State of Qatar in the Hague



URGENT

Dear Ambassador Fernando Arias
Director-General of The OPCW,

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I also kindly request that this communication be circulated to all States Parties and posted on the OPCW Catalyst platform.

Yours sincerely,
Dr. Mutlaq M. Al Qahtani
Ambassador of the State of Qatar to the Netherlands
Permanent Representative to the OPCW

16 July 2025



Annex 4

**LETTER L/ODG-714/25, DATED 16 JULY 2025, FROM THE
DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF THE OPCW TECHNICAL SECRETARIAT
ADDRESSED TO H.E. AMBASSADOR MUTLAQ BIN MAJED AL QAHTANI,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE STATE OF QATAR TO THE OPCW**



OPCW

Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons

Director-General

The Hague, 16 July 2025
L/ODG-714/25

Dear Ambassador,

Excellency,

I refer to your letter dated today, which I received this evening, requesting the convening of a special meeting of the Executive Council.

I will summon the Council pursuant to Rule 12(b) without delay to consider the issue referred to in your letter.

In compliance with Rule 14 of the Rules of Procedure I shall notify each Representative of the Council Members as far in advance as possible and in any case not less than 72 hours.

Consequently, having also consulted the Chairperson of the Council, a meeting of the Council will be convened for Tuesday 22 July 2025 at 10.00hrs in the Ieper room.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Ambassador Fernando Arias
Director General of the OPCW

H.E. Mr Mutlaq bin Majed Al Qahtani
Ambassador, Permanent Representative
of the State of Qatar to the OPCW
Borweg 7
2597 LR The Hague

Annex 5

**LETTER L/PMO-628/25, DATED 17 JULY 2025, FROM THE CHAIRPERSON OF
THE COUNCIL, ADDRESSED TO H.E. AMBASSADOR MUTLAQ BIN MAJED
AL QAHTANI, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE STATE OF QATAR
TO THE OPCW**

ORGANISATION FOR THE PROHIBITION OF CHEMICAL WEAPONS



The Hague, 17 July 2025

L/PMO-628/25

OPCW

Johan de Wittlaan 32

2517 JR The Hague

The Netherlands

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Excellency,

Thank you for your letter of 16 July 2025, sent in your capacity as representing the interests of the Syrian Arab Republic at the OPCW, requesting the convening of a meeting of the Executive Council (Council) pursuant to Rule 12(a) of the Rules of Procedure of the Council, which, *inter alia*, states that “the Council shall meet without delay to consider any issue or matter within its competence affecting the Convention and its implementation...”

Rule 12 of the Rules of Procedure of the Council clarifies that the members of the Council should be prepared, at short notice, to attend meetings of the Council and Rule 12(a) outlines some of the circumstances in particular in which this rule may be invoked.

The term “without delay” under Rule 12 has to be understood in light of Rule 14 of the Rules of Procedure of the Council which provides, in relevant part, that “[t]he Director-General shall notify each Representative as far in advance as possible and in any case not less than seventy-two hours in advance of the calling of other meetings unless shorter notification timelines are required by the Convention.”

The Convention expressly provides for shorter notification timelines for meetings of the Council only in certain circumstances, including, e.g., under paragraph 17 of Article IX of the Convention, which provides for a meeting of the Council not later

H.E. Mr Mutlaq bin Majed Al Qahtani
Ambassador, Permanent Representative
of the State of Qatar to the OPCW
Borweg 7
2597 LR The Hague

than 12 hours after having received a request for a Challenge Inspection, as is also reflected in Rule 12(a) of the Rules of Procedure of the Council, which uses the term “immediately” for the same purpose.

The terms “without delay” and “immediately” in Rule 12(a) of the Rules of Procedure of the Council have to be read in light of the provisions of the Convention as well as Rule 14 of the Rules of Procedure of the Council. Unless the Convention specifically provides a shorter timeline for the convening of a meeting of the Council, Rule 14 requires a minimum of seventy-two hours’ notice for convening meetings of the Council. Consequently, Representatives have a legitimate expectation that the applicable notification timelines will be followed to allow them time to sufficiently prepare for the meeting.

You will recall that recent meetings of the Council were convened with adherence to the minimum notification timeline under Rule 14, i.e., EC-M-66, which was convened on 12 December 2024 at the request of the Director-General, and EC-M-67, which was convened on 1 July 2025 at the request of the Islamic Republic of Iran to discuss a similar subject-matter.

In accordance with Rules 12(b) and 14 of the Rules of Procedure of the Council, the Director-General has notified the members of the Council that a meeting of the Council shall be convened on Tuesday, 22 July 2025 at 10:00, pursuant to your request.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Yours sincerely,



H.E. Ambassador Thomas Schieb
Chairperson of the Executive Council
Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons