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NOTE BY THE TECHNICAL SECRETARIAT

SECURITY SITUATION IN THE SYRIAN ARAB REPUBLIC AND OPCW ACTIVITIES

1. The Technical Secretariat of the OPCW (the Secretariat) wishes to inform States Parties of recent developments affecting the security environment in the Syrian Arab Republic and their impact on OPCW operations.
2. On 27 March 2026, the United Nations Security Management Team (SMT) in the Syrian Arab Republic issued updated security advice regarding the relocation of United Nations personnel, following credible threats against several locations in the Syrian Arab Republic relating to the recently deteriorated security situation in the region. Among the potential targets identified is the Four Seasons Hotel in Damascus, which currently hosts an OPCW mission (offices, vehicles, and equipment) and provides accommodation for OPCW personnel.
3. In light of these developments, and in accordance with SMT recommendations, the Secretariat has taken precautionary measures to ensure the safety and security of its personnel.
4. As States Parties have already been informed, owing to the deteriorated security situation in the region, OPCW personnel were recalled from the Syrian Arab Republic on 17 March 2026 and have safely returned to The Hague.
5. Following the SMT recommendation of 27 March, the Secretariat has also relocated its operational vehicle fleet from the Four Seasons Hotel to a more secure location in Damascus.
6. These actions were undertaken as part of a broader risk mitigation strategy in response to the deteriorating security environment and heightened threat levels.
7. As a consequence, OPCW activities on the territory of the Syrian Arab Republic have been temporarily suspended until conditions permit a safe and secure resumption of operations.
8. Meanwhile, the Secretariat, through its Office of Special Missions at the OPCW Headquarters in The Hague, continues to analyse more than 50,000 pages of recently received documentation, together with the outcomes of its most recent deployments in preparation for future activities in the Syrian Arab Republic, once such activities resume. The Secretariat continues to closely monitor the situation in coordination with the United Nations Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS), the Syrian Government, and relevant international partners.
9. The Secretariat remains committed to fulfilling its mandate in the Syrian Arab Republic and will keep States Parties apprised of any further developments.

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