

Statement by  
H.E. Ambassador Ole E. Moesby  
Permanent Representative of Denmark  
to the OPCW



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**Statement of Denmark**  
**19<sup>th</sup> session of the Conference of State Parties to**  
**the Chemical Weapons Convention**  
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Madam Chairperson,

Denmark associates itself fully with the comprehensive statement made by Mr. Jacek Bylica on behalf of the European Union. I will therefore only highlight a few points of particular interest to Denmark.

Madam Chairperson,

Allow me first to welcome you, Ambassador Vesela Mrden Korac, as new Chair of the Conference and assure you of my delegation's full support. In a similar vein I wish to express our appreciation for the outstanding work done by the outgoing Chair, Ambassador Sa'ad Abdul Majeed Ibrahim Al-Ali of Iraq. Likewise, our gratitude goes to the previous and current chairpersons of the Executive Council, ambassadors Olexandr Horin of Ukraine and Alvaro Moerzinger of Uruguay, as well as to the vice-chairs, facilitators and others contributing to the work of the organisation and its policymaking organs.

Madam Chairperson,

2014 has been an extraordinary year for the OPCW. Following the horrific chemical attack in Ghouta in August last year the international community undertook, in an unprecedented example of multilateral disarmament cooperation, to remove Syria's declared chemical weapons from her territory and destroy them as well as to eliminate the Syrian chemical weapons programme in its entirety. As you are aware, Madam Chairperson, Denmark played a leading role in providing maritime transport for the removal operation as well as a navy escort for the merchant ships together with Norway and the United Kingdom. Russia and China provided invaluable contributions as well, as did many others, financially and in-kind. Following removal and transloading in Italy of priority one chemicals these have been hydrolysed on-board the US ship Cape Ray.

The OPCW-UN joint mission set up to oversee the timely elimination of the Syrian Chemical Weapons programme carried out its task in an exemplary manner under very difficult circumstances, and the special coordinator and her staff deserve our praise and gratitude. Denmark believes that many important lessons for the future can be learnt from both the way the Joint Mission was set up and implemented its mandate, the way the UN and the OPCW cooperated in a broader sense, and the way in which the removal operation was organised logistically, legally, financially and otherwise. We encourage such lessons-learnt exercises both here in The Hague, in New York and elsewhere and look forward to receiving their conclusions.

However, the elimination of the Syrian Chemical Weapons programme in its entirety is far from over.

Firstly, Madam Chairperson, our collective achievements are tainted by compelling confirmation established by the Director General's Fact-Finding Mission that toxic chemicals, most likely chlorine, has been used against civilians systematically and repeatedly. Moreover, those attacks were invariably linked to the presence of helicopters, an asset only the Syrian Government possesses. Additional recent allegations of similar attacks only add to the seriousness of the situation. Those responsible for these atrocities, and in particular the attack in Ghouta, must be held

accountable for their crimes. Denmark fully supports the continuation of the work of the fact-finding Mission, while our hearts go out to victims of these horrific attacks.

Secondly, the Syrian Arab Republic must take all measures necessary to ensure that its chemical weapons programme is fully and correctly declared and completely and irreversibly destroyed – and provide credible and conclusive evidence to that effect to the OPCW. We commend the progress achieved by the Declarations Assessment Team, and call on Syria to provide full disclosure of the facts regarding the remaining areas of concern identified by the team, without delay. All inconsistencies and uncertainties must be clarified, and we look forward to receiving further regular reports from the team in this respect. It goes without saying that for Syria to fulfil her obligations under the Convention a key issue is the verified destruction of the remaining Chemical Weapons Production Facilities without further delay.

Given the many serious issues that remain unresolved, we must insist that the Director General continues his monthly reporting on progress in eliminating the Syrian Chemical Weapons Programme as established, and that the Executive Council – as mandated by the Convention, United Nations Security Council Resolution 2118 and decisions of the Council itself – remains seized of the issue. The Council must convene frequently to assess the situation, including the work of the Fact-Finding Mission and the Declarations Assessment Team, and take any necessary measures in this respect.

Madam Chairperson,

The Conference has many other important issues on its agenda. These issues all relate to our common goal of destroying the existing stockpiles of chemical weapons as soon as possible and preventing their re-emergence in the hands of states and non-state actors alike. As we will discuss each issue on its merits in the coming days I will simply say, that it is in our collective interest to ensure that the verification tools available to the Technical Secretariat and to the States Parties and Policy-Making Organs are as sharp and effective as possible. To mention a few issues, this includes maximum transparency with regard to ongoing destruction efforts, strengthening the industry verification regime, furthering national implementation and – more specifically – making sure that the Secretariat retains the necessary capacity and expertise in terms of knowledge and personnel, in particular in the inspectorate. Pursuing these objectives will allow the Organisation to meet the heightened expectations of the International Community as we look to the future and honour the obligations which befalls a Nobel Peace Prize Laureate.

In closing, Madam Chairperson, I wish to extend my deep-felt gratitude to the Director-General and the Staff of the Technical Secretariat for all their efforts throughout what has been a very challenging year. I especially wish to commend the excellent cooperation we have had with the Technical Secretariat in the removal of the Syrian Chemical Weapons and congratulate our colleagues in the Secretariat with their achievements under very difficult circumstances in this regard.

That concludes my statement Madam Chairperson. I thank you and request that it be circulated as an official document of this session of the Conference and published on the OPCW website and extranet.