

**STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR FATMA CEREN YAZGAN,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE REPUBLIC OF TÜRKİYE
TO THE OPCW AT THE 110TH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE
COUNCIL**

***Agenda Item 6(c) - Elimination of the Syrian chemical weapons
programme***

Türkiye aligns itself with the statement delivered by Denmark on behalf of the European Union and I will add the following in my national capacity.

Mr. Chair,

Türkiye continues to support Syria.

Syria lacks technical expertise. Economic constraints, insufficient equipment, ongoing security threats from terrorist groups as seen by PKK/YPG in Aleppo yesterday and Israeli airstrikes also pose significant challenges.

We recall the statements of the Secretariat at the last Syria briefing that Israeli airstrikes makes work difficult in the field. We were shown by photos how they destroyed some sites, making it harder for the teams to assess whether it is safe to enter or not, let alone exposed chemical hazardous situation.

The secret nature of the Assad regime's chemical weapons programme is a serious challenge for Syria and the OPCW. And it is estimated there are more than 100 sites to be inspected. Syria needs our help to fulfill their obligations under the Convention.

Syrian representative Dr. Katoub, who is also here with us today, said at the last briefing that this is not only about fulfilling their obligations under the Chemical Weapons Convention but also a nightmare to be dealt with, knowing that there could be chemical weapons somewhere and not secured.

Türkiye, for its part, stands ready to contribute to the training and capacity-building of Syrian experts and will continue to facilitate the work of OPCW missions in the field.

Thus, we welcome and co-sponsor the decision on "Expedited On-Site Destruction of Any Remnants of Chemical Weapons in the Syrian Arab Republic" Having said that, I would like to underline the importance of

consultation and coordination with interested neighboring countries in close proximity during the process of expedited on-site destruction as well as destruction and verification plans.

Mr. Chair,

Lifting of remaining sanctions on Syria would be an important step in the right direction to facilitate the efforts in identifying and eliminating any remaining chemical weapons which Türkiye will support.

Together we can make Syria, the region and beyond safer.

Thank you.