



MALAYSIA

**STATEMENT BY H.E. DR FAUZIAH MOHAMAD TAIB,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF MALAYSIA TO THE OPCW
AT THE SEVENTY-SIXTH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

Mr Chairman,
Director General
Distinguished Delegates,

On 23 June 2014, the final shipment of chemicals identified for removal from the territory of the Syrian Arab Republic took place. A hundred per cent of declared Priority 1 and 2 chemicals have been removed from the territory of the Syrian Arab Republic. A hundred per cent of declared isopropanol have also been verified as destroyed on Syria's territory.

The complete removal of declared chemicals from Syria as well as the verified destruction of isopropanol on its territory marks a major milestone. All this was done within the deadline and without a single shot fired.

Due recognition must be given to those that have brought us this far – the Director-General and his team, the Special Coordinator and members of the OPCW-UN Joint Mission, the United States and Russia who brokered the deal and other members of the international community who supported the effort in cash and in kind. It only goes to show the strength of the human will.

Mr Chairman,

We have a saying in Malay - *If only one hand is clapping, it makes no sound*. The fulfillment of the EC Decision was only possible because all parties pulled together to make it so. Syria's accomplishment was all the more significant for what it has been able to do in the face of exceptionally challenging circumstances – to destroy its weapons in the shortest timeframe possible. No other possessor state has been able to claim this record.

While welcoming the achievement, we recognise that our full objectives are not yet met. The following work remains:

- The verification of destruction, and the disposal of chemicals and effluents at commercial facilities in the United Kingdom, the United States, Finland, Germany and aboard the MV Cape Ray;
- The destruction of the 12 CWPFs;

- Clarification of the initial declaration submitted by the Syrian Arab Republic; and
- The destruction of chemical weapons declared by Syria as abandoned chemical weapons.

My delegation recognizes that there is progress on the remaining work and would call upon all parties to focus on moving the process forward.

Mr Chairman,

While we move forward in our efforts to complete the elimination of the Syrian chemical weapons programme, we should not be distracted from other important tasks of the Organisation. These include:

- Efforts at achieving universality of the Convention;
- Education and outreach;
- Monitoring and responding appropriately to technological advancements that would have an impact on the Convention; and the
- Follow-up on the recommendations of the Third Review Conference

The ongoing facilitations we have put in place provide an excellent platform to move these issues forward. Malaysia reiterates its commitment and support to these facilitations and we express our appreciation at the effort and hard work of the facilitators and the Technical Secretariat in conducting them.

But not everything in the garden is rosy. An 'Open Ended Working Group' is an intergovernmental platform for us to negotiate among ourselves, not a platform for experts to be talking at us. If lectures are being held at an OEWG, then it means that we have run out of things to talk about. We might have even talked the issue to death. Therefore, it might be time for us to prune this garden, to make it more manageable in order for the rest of it to thrive.

It is important to know when some ideas have reached its end – closing circles, shutting doors, finishing chapters. We move on because it is the better thing to do, because we have other battles that we need to fight, and only so much time in which to fight it.

Finally, Mr Chairman, my delegation has missed the chance to express our appreciation to Ambassador Peter Goosen of South Africa who completed his assignment as the PR to the OPCW last week. He is to chemical disarmament what Sergio Vieira de Mello was to humanitarian concerns. Peter is an outstanding diplomat who worked tirelessly to help find a solution to our problems, and my delegation wishes him well in his career ahead.

May I request that this statement be circulated as an official document of this session of the Executive Council. Thank you.