



**OPCW**

**Executive Council**

Seventy-Sixth Session  
8 – 11 July 2014

EC-76/NAT.32  
8 July 2014  
ENGLISH only

**UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND**

**STATEMENT BY H.E. SIR GEOFFREY ADAMS PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE  
OF THE UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND AT  
THE SEVENTY-SIXTH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

Mr Chairman,

At the outset I would like to welcome you back to the Chair of the Council and reiterate our support for your work.

The United Kingdom aligns itself with the statement given by the distinguished Ambassador of Italy on behalf of the European Union, but I will take this opportunity to highlight a few points.

We have studied carefully the report this Council commissioned from the Director-General on the progress achieved and work still to do to eliminate Syria's chemical weapons programme. It is clear that while progress has indeed been made, still much remains to be done. We are grateful therefore for the Director-General's assessment and, as always, his work and that of his staff in implementing the decisions of this Council towards elimination of the Syrian programme. We must not lose sight of our aim, which is to remove Syria's chemical weapons programme completely, and therefore the threat these weapons pose to the lives of Syria's people.

On 23 June, after the final removal operation, the British Foreign Secretary recognised that the removal of chemicals from Syria represented "... a very substantial achievement by the international community". Today, two weeks later, the next stage of that process – transportation, transshipment and destruction – is already underway. This task will be completed over the coming weeks and months, and we look forward to further briefings on progress. In the meantime, we salute all those States Parties which have provided in-kind or financial contributions towards the destruction of Syria's chemicals. This has been a truly international cooperative endeavour, carried out fully in the spirit of the Chemical Weapons Convention. And the United Kingdom has been pleased to contribute to this effort.

But it is vital that we, and all States Parties, can have confidence that every element of Syria's chemical weapons programme is eliminated. And for that to be possible the Syrian declaration needs to be complete, comprehensive and detailed; the exceptional circumstances in which Syria acceded to the Convention and the decisions of the United Nations Security Council and this Council mean that we must have full disclosure. So the work the Technical Secretariat is undertaking to ensure that discrepancies are resolved and gaps addressed is vital. It is only when we have confidence that Syria has declared its entire programme and



that all its elements have been destroyed that we can consider that this unique and challenging task has been fully achieved. This is clearly an area where more work is required.

Another area where there is more to be done is over some of Syria's former production facilities, which this Council specified should be destroyed by 15 March 2014. Let us recall that Syria requested permission to convert 12 of her former chemical weapon factories – which this Council did not approve. Since then Syria has been slow to agree how these facilities are to be destroyed. Syria cannot dodge the Convention's obligation for "physical destruction" and cannot hide behind statements that destruction plans have been submitted – their so-called plan suggests three possible methods of destruction for the facilities, without setting out which will actually be used: so not a plan, but more of a menu.

We welcome the efforts that the Technical Secretariat, with relevant States Parties, have made to identify an approach that will be acceptable to all States Parties, and we call on Syria to move forward on destruction of all these facilities and agree arrangements for both the aircraft hangars and underground facilities, as quickly as possible. We see no genuine reason for further delay.

Despite our work here, Syrians continue to live in fear of chemicals being used as weapons, brought home by the preliminary report from the Fact-Finding Mission of credible reports of systematic use. We believe that an independent and thorough investigation is essential, and we therefore strongly support the continuation of the Fact-Finding Mission until such time as clear results can be achieved. While we welcome the preliminary report, we look forward to the more detailed report, when such a report is ready for submission.

To end, Mr Chairman, we are grateful for the Director-General's note on education and outreach activity and for the work that is going into raising awareness of the Convention. The 100th anniversary next year of the first use of chemical weapons in battle and the award of the Nobel Peace Prize to the OPCW in 2013 highlight that this is a unique time in global disarmament. As such, we believe that there is also opportunity to outreach to States not Party to the Convention, with the aim of marking next year's centenary by achieving universality of the Chemical Weapons Convention. The United Kingdom calls upon all States not Party to the Convention to ratify or accede without delay.

I ask that this Statement be circulated as an official document of this meeting.

- - - 0 - - -