

7.10.2014

**Statement delivered by Mr. Antti Vaaras, Deputy
Permanent Representative of Finland to the OPCW
Seventy Seventh session of the Executive Council**

Mr. Chairperson,

Finland fully aligns itself with the statement made by Italy on behalf of the European Union.

I would like to thank the Director-General for his statement. We are looking forward to participating in the deliberations during the week.

As the OPCW-UN Joint Mission has ended its task, we would like to thank all the OPCW and UN staff who have participated to the mission. It has been an exceptional mission. We look forward to discussing 'lessons learnt' of the Joint Mission.

Mr. Chairperson,

We reiterate our deep concern about the findings of the second report of the OPCW Fact Finding Mission that stated 'compelling confirmation' about the use of a toxic chemical. Any use of chemical weapons is deplorable and those guilty for these horrible crimes must be held responsible. We give our full support to Director General's intention to continue Fact-Finding Mission's work. Continuation is important indeed in the light of latest accounts of incidents. And as has been stressed before, the safety and security of the Mission personnel must remain a priority.

We support the initiative of retaining the samples of Syrian chemical weapons. It is important to provide the Technical Secretariat with all possible means in the case of future investigations.

Mr. Chairperson,

Finland stresses the importance that the Secretariat maintains verification expertise related to chemical weapons. In contingency operations, challenge inspections and investigations of alleged use the expertise has a particular significance. Finland is therefore in favour of adoption of decision on "Rehiring of inspectors".

Mr. Chairperson,

I would like to request that this statement be circulated as an official document of this session of the Council.