

Statement by
Ambassador Dr. Christoph Israng
Permanent Representative of Germany to the OPCW
at the 77th Meeting of the Executive Council

Mr. Chairman, Mr. Director-General, distinguished colleagues,

Thank you very much for giving me the floor.

Germany fully aligns itself with the statement of the European Union delivered by Ambassador Azzarello.

Frist of all, I would like to thank the Director-General and all of the OPCW staff for their tremendous efforts to free our world of chemical weapons.

The leper event next year will give us an excellent opportunity to remind ourselves of the importance of our joint task. Germany supports the plans of the Technical Secretariat as presented by the Director-General.

We are pleased that destruction programmes of chemical weapons are progressing in general. We are looking forward to receiving a new completion date from the Russian Federation as announced by the Director-General this morning.

We hope that this Council takes necessary decisions to ensure that the Technical Secretariat continues to employ skilled and experienced staff. The decision to rehire inspectors is an important step in this regard. We also look forward to receiving a detailed and comprehensive mid to long-term staffing plan by mid 2015 which is a crucial element for the future outline of the Technical Secretariat.

Germany also supports the budget for 2015 as it is presented to this Council.

Mr. Chairman,

The OPCW cannot remain silent when chemical weapons are used to kill and harm human beings. This is not "any other business" for this organization. Silence would question the credibility of the Convention and of the OPCW. This holds true wherever and by whomever chemical weapons are used. As a collective body, we have to

make clear again and again that we strongly condemn any use of chemicals as weapons.

Mr. Chairman,

This is especially true, when allegations refer to States Parties, as it is unfortunately the case with the Syrian Arab Republic. We regret that its chemical weapons programme is not yet a closed chapter – despite all the progress the international community has achieved in the past year.

This refers to open questions if the initial declarations was complete, the outstanding destruction of Syrian chemical weapons production facilities and the repeated use of chlorine as a weapon as confirmed with a high degree of certainty by the Fact Finding Mission.

Mr. Chairman,

We have all received the written report of the Declaration Assessment Team at the end of last week. Its findings are of utmost concern to us. It is therefore important to set aside sufficient time in order to discuss the ramifications of this report in greater detail at this EC.

Mr. Chairman,

Germany is also concerned that it was not yet possible to start the destruction of the Syrian CWPF. The calculated costs as presented to this Council so far are way above any reasonable expectations. While we are ready to contribute to funding this part of dismantling the Syrian CW programme as well, I need to recall the responsibility of Syria under the Convention to pay for the cost of destruction of Chemical Weapons Production Facilities.

Mr. Chairman,

On the findings of the FFM, we urge this Council to unanimously express concern about the repeated and systematic use of a toxic chemical as a weapon in Syria. As a collective body we should not remain silent.

At the same time, we call on the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic to meet its obligations under the Chemical Weapons Convention, the decisions of this Council and the UN Security Council Resolution 2118.

The fact that we have to continue to pay attention to developments in Syria underlines the necessity to keep samples of Syrian toxic chemicals under OPCW custody for future reference.

In closing, I would like to request this statement to be circulated as an official document of this meeting of the Council.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.