



**OPCW**

**Executive Council**

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**NEW ZEALAND**

**STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF NEW ZEALAND  
AT THE SEVENTY-SEVENTH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

Thank you Mr Chairman.

New Zealand was deeply concerned to read the contents of the second report of the OPCW Fact-Finding Mission in the Syrian Arab Republic. As we have heard, including in detail at the most recent Executive Council meeting, that report concluded that there is “compelling confirmation” that chlorine was “used as a weapon, systematically and repeatedly”, in the territory of the Syrian Arab Republic earlier this year. This is of serious concern.

The evidence also strongly suggests that, in contravention of the Chemical Weapons Convention and United Nations Security Council resolution 2118 (2013), responsibility for the attacks lies with the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic.

New Zealand remains deeply disturbed by this news. We join others in condemning these actions. Given the worrying reports of ongoing allegations, we support the continued work of the Fact-Finding Mission. In addition, we urge all members of the Executive Council to take action in order to ensure that this kind of atrocity does not happen again and that those responsible are held to account.

The situation in the Syrian Arab Republic continues to dominate the work of this Council, but there are other important areas of work before us this week. In particular, we will consider the draft programme and budget of the OPCW for 2015. New Zealand is pleased with the shape of this draft and we look forward to working together over the next year in pursuit of a world that is genuinely free of all chemical weapons.

I request that this statement be considered an official document of this session of the Council and published on the OPCW website and external server.

Thank you Mr Chairman.

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