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

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

Mr Chairman,

The United Kingdom aligns itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the European Union by His Excellency Ambassador Maris Klisans, Permanent Representative of Latvia.

I would like to make an additional brief intervention on issues of importance before this Council, including on the situation in Syria.

Nearly 18 months after the United Nations Security Council passed its resolution 2118, the OPCW's Fact-Finding Mission has presented evidence showing conclusively that there are still persistent, credible reports of chemical weapon use in the Syrian Arab Republic.

This Executive Council made its views clear in its decision of 4 February that such use was totally unacceptable. The challenge we now face is to ensure an effective ongoing international response to ensure that all outstanding issues are resolved and perpetrators are held accountable.

We welcome the United Nations Security Council's most recent resolution, 2209, on Syria adopted on 6 March, which put all parties to the Syrian conflict on notice that further credible reports of use of chemicals as a weapon will be subject to Security Council action under Chapter VII. If attacks continue, action must be taken.

The ability to have credible verification mechanisms in the OPCW's toolbox is essential. The Declaration Assessment Team must be allowed to continue its vital work, unhindered, for as long as necessary. While questions about Syrian declaration remain unanswered, it will be impossible to confirm that Syria is in compliance with all its obligations under the Convention.

The potential use of chemicals as a weapon by non-state actors is also a serious concern. We therefore welcome the Director-General's recent paper on this issue and believe the discussion will need to continue. All States have a responsibility to implement and uphold the Convention on their own territory. This includes taking action against non-state actors. It



is also essential that all states comply with the requirements of United Nations Security Council resolution 1540.

We also welcome the recent paper circulated by the Director-General which considers the OPCW's future shape and role. It is important that the OPCW and the Executive Council do not lose sight of the long-term strategic challenges for, and expectations of, the Organisation as we focus on current priorities. We look forward to a more detailed discussion on these matters in the coming year.

I request that this statement be issued as an official document of this session of the Executive Council and placed on the external server.

Thank you Mr Chairman.

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