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**BRAZIL**

**STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR PIRAGIBE S. TARRAGÔ  
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF BRAZIL TO THE OPCW AT THE  
SEVENTY-EIGHTH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

Mr Chairman,

I am pleased to see you once again presiding over this session of the Executive Council. I wish to reiterate to you my delegation's cooperation for a successful outcome of this meeting. The current session includes many important items on its agenda. But I am going now to limit my remarks to some aspects of the Syrian programme.

As the programme continues to draw most of our attention, I would like to touch briefly on the question of the inquiry about the use of chlorine gas in the Syrian Arab Republic. At our last session, the Council had focused on the second report of the Fact-Finding Mission (FFM) and requested that the matter was further pursued. Since then, some developments have taken place.

Clearly outstanding was our Decision taken in reaction to the third report of the FFM, which provided the basis for the United Nations Security Council resolution 2209. It is noteworthy that the Executive Council succeeded in adopting a detailed document and in agreeing with its content. It was, indeed, a major political achievement. Though it was not decided by consensus, as there was no agreement on the form to express our common views, we were to assume that it gathered consensus on its content, thus reflecting a commitment of our membership to strongly proscribe the misuse of chemicals in the Syrian conflict.

My delegation remains convinced that the attainment of a sustained prohibition of chemical weapons in the Syrian Arab Republic will largely depend on the leverage created by the States Parties who have power and influence in the conflict. Diplomatic engagement of the key stakeholders will be crucial to set the stage for the work of the OPCW teams to assist the Syrian Arab Republic in getting permanently rid of chemical weapons, and of their eventual use, from its territory. Cooperation amongst all interested States Parties will be critical to stop fighting, de-escalate tensions on the ground, combat extremism, build confidence and create conditions for political compromises that put an end to the conflict. In its turn, the work of the Technical Secretariat will be necessary to indicate to the Syrian authorities and to the States Parties with influence in the conflict what are the relevant pending issues and how to address them, so that we can be sure of the elimination of the risk of chemical attacks.



Later this week, the Director-General will brief the Council on the unfolding of the FFM. Our experience tells us that his briefing will provide the Council an invaluable point of entry to consider how to operate in a more efficient manner in the second phase of the investigations, and how to find a way around the inevitable obstacles.

In general, my delegation favours the maximum transparency in matters that concern us all. It shall be important to know how the mission is prepared, how it is to be conducted, how it intends to report on its findings. We hope also to learn what sort of cooperation the mission is expected to develop and receive from the hosting-State and any other stakeholders in carrying out its task. Perhaps, this can be further advanced through more frequent briefings of the Director-General to the Council on the work performed by the FFM, and informal meetings with Council members and regional groups.

On a different matter, I would like to inform the members of the Executive Council that Brazil will host, from 23 to 27 March, the fourth edition of the Basic Course on Chemical Emergency Response for Experts from Latin America and the Caribbean. We expect to have up to 25 participants to attend a multi-faceted course on capacity-building.

I would ask that this statement be included in the official records of this meeting.

Thank you.

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