



OPCW

Executive Council

Seventy-Ninth Session
7 – 9 July 2015

EC-79/NAT.12
7 July 2015
ENGLISH only

TURKEY

**STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF TURKEY AT THE
SEVENTY-NINTH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

Mr Chairperson,

On this occasion, allow me to congratulate you on your new role as the Chairperson of the Executive Council.

I also wish all the best to the outgoing Deputy Director-General Ambassador Grace Asirwatham in her future endeavours.

At the outset, I would like to thank Mr Director-General Ambassador Üzümcü for his comprehensive update today.

We also fully align ourselves with the EU statement made by the distinguished Permanent Representative of Luxembourg.

As the Council is well aware, the use of chemical weapons by the Assad regime in Syria continues unabated.

So many thresholds have already passed with respect to violation of international law and the Chemical Weapons Convention in Syria. However, the Assad regime still enjoys impunity despite its actions.

Turkey wonders how long the international community will allow further violation of international law in Syria.

We believe the OPCW should continue to play a central role in further underscoring the fact that the Syria file on elimination of chemical weapons is far from over.

With more and more evidence surfacing on undeclared chemicals in Syria, it looks like there is yet much to be done.

Turkey shares the concerns on the traces of sarin and VX detected by the DAT in Syria, ambiguities on the tactical munitions and the activities of the Syrian Scientific Research Centre.



With this respect, Turkey firmly supports the activities of both the Declaration Assessment Team/DAT and Fact-Finding Mission (FFM).

The DAT's activities are key to further underlining the critical inconsistencies in Assad regime's declarations. We will examine the Team's latest report on its activities in Syria.

Likewise, the FFM is of critical importance in establishing the facts around continuing use of chemicals as weapons in Syria by the regime forces.

Undoubtedly, use of chemical weapons by anyone, must be confronted unanimously.

Taking this opportunity, can I highlight that Turkey has the full confidence of the professionalism and commitment of both DAT and FFM members.

Turkey shares the commitment of other States Parties in furthering the universality of the Chemical Weapons Convention.

In this regard, we welcome the close engagement of Myanmar, South Sudan and Angola with the OPCW.

Turkey sincerely hopes that this engagement can translate into their accession to the Chemical Weapons Convention soon. This would be a significant progress towards universality of the Convention.

Finally, we thank the Director-General for sharing the draft Programme and Budget for 2016 last week. Turkey will duly examine this draft.

We wish fruitful and constructive deliberations on this matter in the coming months.

I would like to request that this statement be treated as an official document of this session of the Council and be posted on the external server and the website.

Thank you.

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