



Eighty-First Session
15 – 18 March 2016

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NOTE BY THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL

PROGRESS IN THE ELIMINATION OF THE SYRIAN CHEMICAL WEAPONS PROGRAMME

1. In accordance with subparagraph 2(f) of the decision by the Executive Council (hereinafter “the Council”) at its Thirty-Third Meeting (EC-M-33/DEC.1, dated 27 September 2013), the Technical Secretariat (hereinafter “the Secretariat”) is to report to the Council on a monthly basis regarding the implementation of that decision. In accordance with paragraph 12 of United Nations Security Council resolution 2118 (2013), the report by the Secretariat is also to be submitted to the Security Council through the Secretary-General.
2. The Council, at its Thirty-Fourth Meeting, adopted a decision entitled “Detailed Requirements for the Destruction of Syrian Chemical Weapons and Syrian Chemical Weapons Production Facilities” (EC-M-34/DEC.1, dated 15 November 2013). In paragraph 22 of that decision, the Council decided that the Secretariat should report on its implementation “in conjunction with its reporting required by subparagraph 2(f) of Council decision EC-M-33/DEC.1”.
3. The Council, at its Forty-Eighth Meeting, also adopted a decision entitled “Reports of the OPCW Fact-Finding Mission in Syria” (EC-M-48/DEC.1, dated 4 February 2015).
4. This, the twenty-fifth monthly report, is therefore submitted in accordance with the aforementioned Council decisions, and includes information relevant to the period from 23 September to 21 October 2015.

Progress achieved by the Syrian Arab Republic in meeting the requirements of EC-M-33/DEC.1 and EC-M-34/DEC.1

5. Progress within the reporting period by the Syrian Arab Republic is as follows:
 - (a) Regarding the 12 chemical weapons production facilities (CWPFs) in the Syrian Arab Republic, the sixth of the seven aircraft hangars was destroyed with the recently procured explosives, while the seventh hangar remained inaccessible during the reporting period due to the security situation. The Secretariat has verified all five underground structures and six hangars as destroyed.
 - (b) On 13 October 2015, the Syrian Arab Republic submitted to the Council its twenty-third monthly report (EC-81/P/NAT.1, dated 13 October 2015)



regarding activities on its territory related to the destruction of its chemical weapons and CWPFs, as required by paragraph 19 of EC-M-34/DEC.1.

- (c) The Syrian authorities have continued to extend the necessary cooperation in accordance with the implementation of subparagraph 1(e) of EC-M-33/DEC.1 and paragraph 7 of United Nations Security Council resolution 2118 (2013).

Progress in the elimination of Syrian chemical weapons by States Parties hosting destruction activities

6. Significant progress has been made in destroying all the chemicals declared by the Syrian Arab Republic, which were removed from its territory in 2014. A combined total of 98.9% of all declared chemical weapons has been verified as destroyed, which includes the isopropanol previously destroyed in the Syrian Arab Republic, 100% of the Category 1 chemicals, and 94.5% of the Category 2 chemicals. Also, facilities in Finland and Germany have destroyed all effluents produced by the neutralisation process of sulfur mustard and DF that took place on board the United States vessel MV Cape Ray. As at the cut-off date of the report, a total of 55% of the remaining Category 2 chemical, hydrogen fluoride (HF), has now been destroyed. Veolia ES Technical Solutions, LLC in the United States of America resumed its destruction activities during the reporting period after having completed the implementation of its technical solution to ensure the safe processing of the badly corroded HF cylinders. The Secretariat will continue to brief States Parties in The Hague on this activity, which is expected to be completed before the end of the year.

Activities carried out by the Secretariat with respect to the Syrian Arab Republic

7. The Secretariat continued its cooperation with the United Nations Office for Project Services in the context of the OPCW Mission in the Syrian Arab Republic, and is in the process of finalising arrangements to continue such cooperation to support that mission. Three OPCW staff members were deployed as part of that mission as at the cut-off date of this report.
8. The Director-General has continued to communicate with senior representatives of the States Parties hosting a destruction facility or providing assistance with the destruction of Syrian chemical weapons, and with senior officials of the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic. As requested by the Council at its Seventy-Fifth Session (paragraph 7.12 of EC-75/2, dated 7 March 2014), the Secretariat, on behalf of the Director-General, has continued to brief States Parties in The Hague on its activities.
9. The Secretariat and the Syrian authorities have maintained their ongoing cooperation on outstanding issues regarding the Syrian initial declaration, as encouraged by the Council at its Seventy-Sixth Session (paragraph 6.17 of EC-76/6, dated 11 July 2014). The Declaration Assessment Team (DAT) completed its eleventh visit to the Syrian Arab Republic as previously reported, and the Secretariat issued a Note entitled "Report on the Work of the Declaration Assessment Team Covering the Period April 2014 to September 2015" (EC-80/P/S/1, dated 25 September 2015), covering the DAT's tenth and eleventh visits, the notable outcomes to date, and the current status of outstanding issues. The Council, at its Eightieth Session, took note of the report and the Secretariat's presentation in that regard, and requested that the Secretariat and the Syrian Arab Republic expedite their efforts to resolve the issues.

The Council further requested that the Director-General report to it before its Eighty-First Session on the details of all unresolved issues, in particular those for which no further progress has been possible.

10. The DAT will continue its technical consultations and interviews with key principals from the Syrian chemical weapons programme on its next visit, which is scheduled for 2 to 12 November 2015.

Supplementary resources

11. The total contributions of EUR 50.3 million in the Syria Trust Fund for the Destruction of Chemical Weapons and the contributors thereto remain unchanged from the previous report.

Activities carried out with respect to the OPCW Fact-Finding Mission in Syria

12. The Fact-Finding Mission (FFM) continues to analyse information collected in the course of its most recent deployments. This includes information provided by the Syrian Arab Republic and from other sources alleging the use of toxic chemicals as weapons. The findings of the FFM are expected to be submitted to the Director-General before the end of October 2015, and will be shared with States Parties and also attached to his next monthly report to the United Nations Secretary-General in accordance with Council decision EC-M-48/DEC.1.
13. The OPCW is actively supporting the commencement of the work of the Joint Investigative Mechanism established under United Nations Security Council resolution 2235 (2015). The Organisation is providing specific technical and analytical expertise to the Mechanism, which is expected to become operational in early November 2015.

Conclusion

14. The main focus of the future activities of the OPCW Mission in the Syrian Arab Republic will be on the DAT and FFM activities, as well as the destruction and verification of the remaining aircraft hangar.

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