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RUSSIAN FEDERATION

**STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR A.V. SHULGIN
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION TO THE OPCW
AT THE EIGHTY-THIRD SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

Madam Chairperson,

One month ago, we paused to suspend the Eighty-Third Session of the OPCW Executive Council, as we were unable to reach an agreement on the Syrian dossier. At that time, the delegations were asked to bring their attention to the American draft decision of the Executive Council. Due to the fact that we could not work using that draft decision as a basis, we had to submit our own draft decision.

So as not to lose any time, we reiterate: our draft decision has been drawn up in strict compliance with the requirements of the Chemical Weapons Convention; it emphasises the fact that in order to ensure that the Syrian authorities are in compliance with the relevant requirements of the Convention, an internal national investigation into these incidents was carried out, as indicated in the reports by the OPCW-UN Joint Investigative Mechanism, and a report based on said investigation was submitted to the OPCW.

Over the past period, our Spanish colleagues took the opportunity to submit their own draft decision of the Council on Syria. In this regard, I would like to express my gratitude to our Spanish partners, and especially to Ambassador González for his attempts to help reach a consensus. We willingly engaged in the work on the Spanish draft decision, and we tried to use it as a foundation and retain the overall structure of the document, the main contents, and the number of paragraphs. However we immediately encountered some issues that are problematic for us. We found that our Spanish colleagues were quick to respond. Over the past few days our delegations have worked hard to reach a compromise on this document that would suit everyone. Unfortunately, that has not yet happened. But we remain hopeful. We are ready to continue working on this for as long as it takes.

As we wait for this situation to come to a resolution, we will be keeping the Russian draft decision on the table, as modified by the Russian delegation on 4 November as a statement of fact.

We would ask you, distinguished delegations, to take a most serious approach in assessing the issue of the use of chemical weapons in Syria. In this regard, we would like to inform you of the fact that, as stated by the Ministry of Defence of the Russian Federation, officers of the Scientific Centre of the Radiation, Chemical, and Biological Defence Corps, during their investigation into the location in district 1070 in Aleppo, found evidence of the use by



terrorists of chemical weapons against the population and Syrian government troops. Military servicemen found unexploded projectile munitions of the terrorists filled with toxic substances and collected soil samples from the locations in which they were used. After conducting an express analysis in mobile laboratory, it was established with a high degree of certainty that the toxic substances that had been used to fill the projectile munitions of the fighters were chlorine and white phosphorus.

Our military servicemen invite experts from the Fact-Finding Mission to visit Aleppo to inspect the locations and collect the requisite samples. If this is not possible due to security factors, Russian soldiers are prepared to use their own resources to deliver samples to The Hague for analysis at a certified OPCW laboratory.

What has happened in Aleppo is just one of the many incidents of this kind, which points to the need for an open-minded and unbiased view of what has happened in Syria. We cannot mechanically place the blame for the use of chemical weapons on the Syrian authorities, as some delegations propose to do, forgetting that terrorist organisations have the potential to produce chemical weapons and are actively using them as provocation to lead the international community to a conclusion that is beneficial to the terrorists themselves. We would ask the delegates to very carefully weigh all of these facts, and compare them with the provisions that, as we can see, have migrated from the American draft decision over to the Spanish one.

We assure you that the Russian delegation is firmly intent on reaching a compromise within the Council on this matter.

I request that this statement be made an official document of the Eighty-Third Session of the OPCW Executive Council.

Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

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