



REGERINGSKANSLIET

**Ministry for Foreign Affairs
Sweden**

Statement by Sweden

**87th Regular Session of the Executive Council of the
Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW)**

H.E. Mr. Per Holmström

Permanent Representative of Sweden to the OPCW

14 March 2018

Thank you Mr. Chairman,

Sweden is fully aligned with the statement delivered by Ambassador Krassimir Kostov from Bulgaria on behalf of the European Union. I would like to add the following few remarks in my national capacity, focusing on recent developments and Syria.

Mr. Chairman,

The UK investigation's finding that the nerve agent of a type developed by Russia as a chemical weapon has been used to poison civilians in Britain is shocking. We fully share the British Government's condemnation of this abhorrent deed and we support its efforts to identify those responsible and bring them to justice. In this, we stand firmly by the UK.

Mr. Chairman,

It has now been almost a year since the horrific sarin attack at Khan Sheykhoun. It is highly regrettable that this organization - charged with the prohibition of chemical weapons - has not yet been able to condemn this attack, which was attributed by the JIM to the Syrian regime.

Moreover,

We continue to see alarming reports of alleged chemical weapons use in Syria including Eastern Ghouta, where the humanitarian situation is unbearable and unacceptable despite UNSC Res. 2401 unanimously adopted the UNSC. They must be followed up and duly investigated. It is important to establish a new attributive mechanism to investigate reports on confirmed use. We call for constructive engagement by all members of the UN Security Council with a view to protecting the disarmament and non-proliferation regime and ensuring accountability. Sweden is ready to take its responsibility as member.

We welcome the French initiative, International Partnership against impunity for chemical weapons use, in the launching of which Sweden participated in on January 23rd in Paris this year. We trust that this initiative, which focuses on information exchange and documentation, will be an important and useful way to support and complement the multilateral processes.

We continue to have complete faith in the independent mechanisms set up by this organization. The Director General can count on Sweden's support for the FFM as an indispensable mechanism for ensuring accountability. All States Parties must refrain from micromanaging the independent work of the FFM or casting doubts on its integrity and professionalism for political gains.

Furthermore, with regard to the Syrian initial chemical weapons declarations, we have taken note of the latest report by the Declaration Assessment Team, including its findings of the Syrian Scientific Studies and Research Center (SSRC) in Barzah. It is high time for the Syrian regime to cooperate more proactively with the OPCW. All of the required documentation needed to address the many remaining ambiguities and open issues must be provided to the OPCW

As we move towards the Fourth Review Conference many challenges lie ahead. Sweden is confident that the parties to the Convention will take the appropriate decisions. We have full confidence in the Director General Ambassador Ahmet Üzümcü as well as his successor Ambassador Fernando Arías, for ensuring the integrity of the Convention and this organization.

As this is the last Executive Council in which Sweden participate as a member, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Director General and all of his team for their excellent cooperation and for the professionalism in which they have performed their duties.

In conclusion, I would kindly ask that this statement be issued as an official document and placed on the OPCW public website.

Thank you Mr. Chairman

