



OPCW

Executive Council

Thirty-Eighth Meeting
30 January 2014

EC-M-38/NAT.11
30 January 2014
ENGLISH and RUSSIAN only

RUSSIAN FEDERATION

**STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR R. A. KOLODKIN PERMANENT
REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION TO THE OPCW AT
THE THIRTY-EIGHTH MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

Mr Chairperson,

We have listened carefully to the Director-General and appreciate his report and his assessments.

We have also listened with due attention to our colleagues in the Executive Council.

In this context, we would like to comment briefly on the statement on behalf of the European Union. We are not aware that the European Union is a member of this Organisation or a party to the Convention. We operate on the understanding that it is the Member States of the European Union who are members of the Organisation and parties to the Convention.

We have also listened carefully to the statement by the Syrian delegation. We know what has not been done in Syria and what is yet to be done. Like all other delegations, we would also like to see chemical weapons removed from Syrian territory as quickly as possible. We would like this to be done within the time frames set in the relevant decisions.

In this connection we wish to call your attention to what has been said here today about the deadlines. We note that there is only one such deadline that we are aware of – the end of the first half of the year. As regards the other time frames, we have always believed, and continue to believe, that they are timelines, not deadlines. We have always said that these intermediate timelines should be based on reality, and objective reality comes down, in the first place, to security issues. It is our understanding that the security situation on the ground is evaluated, above all, by the Syrian Government which is responsible for this operation. And if any delegations present in this room are ready to give their assessments of the security situation, we would listen to them with interest.

As I mentioned, a lot is yet to be done in Syria. But I would also like to note, that a lot has already been done. And some things have even been done ahead of the dates established by the Executive Council. And they were done by the Syrian Government.

We would also like to note the exchange of letters between the Director-General and the Syrian Deputy Foreign Minister and Head of the Syrian National Authority, responsible for the chemical weapons destruction programme. We believe that the Syrian Government will fulfil what is contained in these letters, including Mr Mekdad's letter. It is evident both from



today's statement by the Syrian representative and from Mr Mekdad's letter that Syria seeks to maintain its commitment to its obligations, is doing its utmost to fulfil its obligations and is describing the steps it will make in the near future. We expect, of course, these steps to be implemented in practice.

In this connection, Mr Chairperson, we would like to call on the Executive Council to show patience. We have heard certain assertions which, in the view of respective delegations, should be included in the report of this meeting of the Executive Council. We cannot accept such an approach. We believe that there is sufficient reason for the Executive Council, I repeat, to show restraint and patience.

On a separate note, I would like to touch upon the question of methods of destruction of chemical weapons production facilities in Syria.

Mr Chairperson, we did not expect this issue to be addressed at this meeting of the Executive Council. We are participating in the consultations which were mentioned here and, frankly, it came as a surprise for us that this issue—that of destruction of facilities—arose today. Everybody is aware that the consultations are ongoing, everybody understands that there are certain time frames. However, it is our understanding that the question of destruction of these facilities will be considered at the next meeting of the Executive Council. I understand, we are talking about 21 February. In this context, we cannot agree that this matter has to be considered at today's meeting of the Executive Council.

Thank you, Mr Chairperson.

- - - 0 - - -