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TURKEY

**STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR SADIK ARSLAN
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE REPUBLIC OF TURKEY TO THE OPCW
AT THE THIRTY-NINTH MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

Turkey welcomes the total elimination of the chemical weapons in Syria.

To this end, the OPCW-UN Syria Joint Mission has Turkey's full support to fulfill its mandate in a timely fashion and in accordance with the United Nations Security Council Resolution 2118 as well as the relevant OPCW Executive Council decisions.

Seizing this opportunity, I would also like to express our gratitude to Director-General Ahmet Üzümcü and United Nations Special Coordinator Ms Sigrid Kaag for their exemplary leadership as well as to the members of the Mission for carrying out this daunting task.

On previous occasions, Turkey made it clear that the timelines defined by the respective Executive Council decisions, which were approved by the United Nations Security Council, should be met without delay and without conditions.

It has been confirmed by the Joint Mission that Syria has the necessary means and resources to complete the removal of the chemical weapons.

However, the amount of the chemicals removed outside Syria for destruction to date are far from satisfactory.

Therefore, Turkey shares widely acknowledged concern that the current delay might have greater implications for the overall operation regarding the removal and the destruction of the Syrian chemical weapons.

Lack of progress in the destruction process deserves particular attention, as the international community is very familiar with the repeated attempts of the regime to exploit various past initiatives to bring stability to Syria.

Therefore while noting that 11% of the chemical stockpiles have been relinquished so far, we cannot ignore the fact that the process is 89% behind schedule. Despite the optimism expressed by the United Nations, in view of the unwillingness of the regime, the 30 June deadline for the complete destruction could hardly be met.



For this reason, Turkey agrees with the appeal made by Director-General Ahmet Üzümcü and United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon that the operation must pick up pace.

Significant amounts of resources are allocated by the international community for the conduct of this operation. More importantly we have a responsibility of ensuring strict implementation of the process for those 1,400 innocent people who have been brutally gassed to death on 21 August.

Hence, we expect the Syrian side to fulfill its obligations in an expeditious manner and not to hide behind some artificial excuses. Non-compliance by the regime cannot be an option and should be firmly addressed by taking necessary measures in accordance with Article 21 of United Nations Security Council Resolution 2118.

I would like to request that this statement be treated as an official document of this session of the Executive Council.

Thank you.

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