



OPCW

Executive Council

Forty-Second Meeting
17 and 30 June 2014

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NETHERLANDS

**STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR JAN LUCAS VAN HOORN
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE NETHERLANDS TO THE OPCW
AT THE FORTY-SECOND MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

Mr Chairman,

The Netherlands associates itself with the statement by Greece on behalf of the European Union.

My delegation thanks the Director-General for his report on progress in the elimination of the Syrian chemical weapons programme.

My delegation is also grateful to the Special Coordinator of the OPCW-UN Joint Mission, Ms Sigrid Kaag, for being here and briefing the Council on recent developments.

I would like to reiterate my delegation's deep respect and appreciation for the work being done by OPCW and United Nations staff in implementing the mandate of the Joint Mission to eliminate the Syrian chemical weapons.

The information the Director-General and the Special Coordinator have provided us with is disappointing. Disappointing because, again there is no substantial progress to be reported.

No progress with regard to the removal of the remaining priority chemicals for destruction outside the Syrian Arab Republic. No progress with regard to the destruction of the twelve chemical weapons production facilities that have to be destroyed in accordance with the Convention. This disappointing state of affairs is not a reflection on the speakers in question, but on the authorities of the Syrian Arab Republic.

The agreed deadline for the complete elimination of the Syrian chemical weapons programme, 30 June, is now less than two weeks away. The responsibility for the failure to meet the deadline lies with the authorities of the Syrian Arab Republic and with them alone.

And let there be no misunderstanding: the obligations of the Syrian Arab Republic under the decision taken by this Council on 27 September 2013, the United Nations Security Council resolution 2118 of that same date, the subsequent Council decisions and as a Party to the Chemical Weapons Convention will remain as valid after 30 June, as they were before that date. The Syrian Arab Republic must fulfil all of them, in full.



In addition, questions and concerns about the Syrian Arab Republic's declaration continue to exist.

We look forward to the briefing by the declaration assessment team. We reiterate that any remaining unclarity about the Declaration must be resolved by the Syrian Arab Republic.

Fact- Finding Mission

At the previous meeting of the Council, my delegation like many others, expressed serious concern about reports of renewed use of chemical weapons in the Syrian Arab Republic and gave its support to the Fact-Finding Mission set up by the Director-General to investigate these allegations.

Since then, the team was forced to return to The Hague, after an attack on its convoy by unknown assailants on 27 May. Thankfully, no-one of the team was seriously injured in the incident. The safety of the team members takes precedence over other concerns. Nevertheless, the possible use of chemical weapons is a matter of such seriousness, that it is hoped that the facts surrounding these reports will be determined soon. Any use of chemical weapons is a flagrant violation of international law and those responsible will be held to account.

In closing, I request that this statement be issued as an official document of this Forty-Second meeting of the Executive Council and placed on the external server as well as on the website of the Organisation.

Thank you.

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