

**Statement by the German Deputy Permanent Representative to the OPCW
at the 44th meeting of the Executive Council, 28 August 2014**

Mr. Chairman,

Thank you for giving me the floor.

We welcome the update given by the Director General.

The completion of the destruction of the declared Syrian chemical weapons aboard the US Maritime Vessel Cape Ray constitutes an important step and a remarkable effort – this important achievement clearly shows the ability of the international community to act when it is united.

We thank the Director General and his staff as well as UN Special Coordinator Mrs. Kaag and the Joint Mission personnel for their outstanding work.

Foreign Minister Steinmeier described the destruction of these weapons of mass destruction as “an unprecedented operation”. Thanks to the coordinated efforts of the OPCW and of many states worldwide, the declared Syrian chemical weapons could be destroyed by now. Germany is playing its part in the destruction operations of the chemical weapons stockpile, for example by taking part in the multinational protective escort operation for the Cape Ray and by disposing of 370 tons of HD effluent and solid material in Germany.

However, the completion of the destruction of the Syrian chemical weapons stockpile is not yet the end of the process; more work has to be done.

First: Any lingering concerns about discrepancies and gaps in Syria’s initial declaration have to be resolved. As a member of this organization, the Syrian Arab Republic has the responsibility and burden of clarifying all outstanding declarations and of building international confidence. We highly appreciate the Director General’s efforts in this regard and encourage the Declaration Assessment Team to continue its work.

Second: The destruction of the twelve declared Chemical Weapons Production Facilities has to be completed within the mandated timelines set out in EC-M-43/DEC.1, dated 24 July 2014. Germany as a major contributor to the OPCW Syria Trust Fund for the destruction of Chemical Weapons agrees that the Technical Secretariat uses the funds provided in the Trust Fund to finance the activities in relation to the destruction of the declared CWPF in Syria in accordance with the EC’s decision. However, the Syrian Arab Republic has to bear a significant share of the costs as it is obliged to do under the Convention.

Third: Germany remains deeply concerned about continuing reports of systematic use of chlorine in Syria. It has to be emphasized: the use of chlorine is a clear breach of international law and the Convention and a violation of the absolute and unconditional CW taboo. Germany fully supports the intention of the Director General to continue the Fact-Finding-Mission and to establish the facts surrounding the use of chlorine as a chemical weapon.

Fourth: As it was recently stated by Foreign Minister Steinmeier: "We have not forgotten that murder is continuing in Syria with other means, but with no less brutality. We must display the same unity and determination in our endeavours to find a political solution to this bloody conflict".