

**Statement by**  
**Ambassador Dr. Christoph Israng**  
**Permanent Representative of Germany to the OPCW**  
**at the 45<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Executive Council**

Mr. Chairman, Mr. Director-General, distinguished colleagues,

Thank you very much for giving me the floor.

Germany fully aligns itself with the statement of the European Union delivered by ~~Ambassador Azzarello~~. *the Italian delegation.*

First of all, I would like to thank the Fact-Find Mission (FFM) for its substantial report. As the German delegation already stated immediately after the report was presented to States Parties, this report is a source of grave concern to us.

It confirms that a toxic chemical was used as a weapon, systematically and repeatedly, in Syria this year, i.e. after Syria has become a State Party to the Chemical Weapons Convention. In this context, it has to be noted that the report mentions the use of helicopters, a capability that only the Syrian regime possesses.

Mr. Chairman,

This organization cannot remain silent when chemical weapons are used to kill and harm human beings. Silence would question the credibility of the Convention and of the OPCW.

This is why Germany has joined those delegations asking for this special meeting. By now, we have all had the opportunity to study the FFM report in detail.

As the OPCW family we are striving for a world without chemical weapons. So we are all working hard to destroy existing stocks. We are not indifferent to these stocks wherever they are. So we certainly should not be indifferent, when stocks are actually used. The use of chlorine as a weapon is a clear breach of the Chemical Weapons Convention, it is a violation of the absolute and unconditional chemical weapons taboo.

Moreover, Germany is deeply concerned as the report also mentions a spate of reports about additional attacks in August with strong resemblance to those that are now confirmed beyond reasonable doubt as having been chlorine attacks this spring. This is why we welcome the intention of the Director-General to continue the work of the FFM.

At the same time, we call on the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic to meet its obligations under the Chemical Weapons Convention, the decisions of this Council and the UN Security Council Resolution 2118. Apart from the total ban of chemical weapons, these include, among others, the solution of unresolved issues regarding its initial declaration and the timely destruction of its chemical weapons production facilities.

For the time being, Syria cannot be looked upon as any other Party to the Convention. As long as there are lingering doubts about Syria's commitment to meeting all its obligations under the Chemical Weapons Convention, the OPCW and its Member States need to continue to pay a high degree of attention to all

open issues. It is also obvious that we cannot afford lowering the level of verification.

In closing, I would like to request this statement to be circulated as an official document of this meeting of the Council.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.