



OPCW

Executive Council

Forty-Sixth Meeting
19 November 2014

EC-M-46/NAT.4
19 November 2014
ARABIC and ENGLISH only

IRAQ

**STATEMENT BY THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF IRAQ TO THE OPCW
AT THE FORTY-SIXTH MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

Mr Chairperson,
Excellency the Director-General of the OPCW,
Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

I greet you and welcome you to this meeting of the Executive Council, which I hope will be crowned with success. I also welcome H.E. Ambassador Medeiros and I wish him success in his new mission. I am certain that he is the best person to whom such a difficult mission can be assigned.

During the last few months, many regions in Iraq have been the target of vicious terrorist attacks. The terrorist groups have terrorised citizens, devastated properties, and targeted all public facilities for destruction. The site of the Al-Muthanna storage bunkers was among the facilities that fell under the control of terrorists. My delegation had already reported, in our statement at the Seventy-Seventh Session of the Executive Council of October last, that these storage bunkers were no longer under the control of the State.

The Al-Muthanna site comprises two extremely well fortified bunkers, namely bunkers 13 and 41. These storage bunkers contain remnants of the former regime's chemical programme, destroyed by UNSCOM in the period from 1991 to 1994. These remnants consist of contaminated, corroded and obsolete equipment that no longer poses any threat.

Pursuant to the provisions of Article 9, paragraph First E, of the Iraqi Constitution, and in compliance with Iraq's obligations, Iraqi authorities have started to develop a plan for the destruction for those remnants, in cooperation with a number of friendly states which have provided their technical assistance. Also, integrated facilities, including laboratories, personnel accommodation, guard houses and other conveniences required for the destruction operation, have been built for the implementation of the destruction plan at the bunker sites. The detailed destruction plan was submitted to the Technical Secretariat, and its implementation was due to start by the end of 2014. However, at dawn of 11 June 2014, the site came under attack by terrorist groups and fell under their control, and the security personnel who were protecting the site were detained, their individual weapons seized and all equipment at the site looted, owing to which the implementation of this plan had to be postponed. The delegation of my country had already reported officially on these events that occurred on the ground, with all clarity and transparency.



During the last weeks, the Iraqi Army has achieved great progress in recovering and clearing many regions in Iraq, including retaking full control of the Al-Muthanna site and the roads leading to it. Immediately after it was retaken, engineers started to clear hundreds of explosive devices planted at the site and its surrounding areas. The mine and explosives clearance operation is still ongoing. A specialised technical team is currently conducting a field visit to assess damages at the site and the destruction facilities. My delegation will submit a detailed report on the assessment once it is completed. I have to reaffirm that only the destruction facilities were looted and damaged and that terrorists were not able to penetrate storage bunkers 13 and 41.

In this respect, my delegation confirms that the relevant technical Iraqi teams will resume their work once the site has been secured, the infrastructure rebuilt and supplies needed for the destruction facility and its personnel provided, in implementation of Iraq's obligations under Article I, paragraph 2, of the Chemical Weapons Convention.

With regard to the use of chlorine gas by terrorists in various locations in Iraq, recently reported by some media, we wish to state that no other such incident occurred since the one we have reported on at the Seventy-Seventh Session of the Executive Council, and during which terrorist groups detonated two cylinders filled with chlorine gas typically used for the purification of water, which led to the exposure of eleven security personnel. But these were treated, and they recovered fully two hours later. There have been no other such incidents since.

I wish to avail myself of this opportunity to reiterate that my country remains fully committed to complying with all treaties and conventions on disarmament and the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, pursuant to the provisions of the Iraqi Constitution that prohibit the possession, transfer, use and storage of weapons of mass destruction and materials used for their manufacture.

Finally, I request that this statement be adopted as an official document of this meeting and posted on the official website of the OPCW.

I thank you.

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