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ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN

**STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR DR ALIREZA JAHANGIRI
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN TO THE
OPCW AT THE FIFTY-FOURTH MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

Madam Chairperson,

The Islamic Republic of Iran would like to extend its deepest condolences over innocent Syrian people who lost their lives in the recent incidents and express its readiness to provide medical treatment to the victims of these incidents.

The aftermath of the catastrophic incident in Khan Shaykhun, the world, once again, was witness of another impetuous unilateralism action based on self-serving allegations at Shayrat airbase.

Having been the only recent victim of large-scale, systematic and frequent use of chemical weapons within the imposed war by Saddam's regime, the Islamic Republic of Iran condemns use of all weapons of mass destruction by anyone, anywhere and under any circumstances and those responsible for the use of chemical weapons must be held accountable. At the same time, my delegation does believe that it is dangerous, destructive and a violation of international laws and the Charter of the United Nations to use force and attack a sovereign State and kill innocent people according to unverifiable allegations based on unverifiable information which leads to strengthen terrorist groups in the Syrian Arab Republic. Such measures will complicate the situation in Syria, and a fortiori the region.

The Islamic Republic of Iran strongly believes that using chemical weapons, which is an unforgiveable crime, was done with the aim of deviating world's public opinions from the facts. Looking through history's rear-view mirror, it is clearly proved that the Syrian Arab Republic was the on-ramp to gain upper hand, either military or politically, while the extremist and their benefactors were desperate.

It is shameful that countries such as Canada take hostage this technical forum for their political intents. We should remind them again that here is the OPCW not the United Nations Security Council.

It is also surprising that some colleagues play a role of judge without having any reliable and verifiable technical information available. We are diplomats and some of us are lawyers. Today, we heard from the Director-General that nothing is clear yet and the Technical Secretariat is still at the beginning of the aforementioned process of investigation. I am



wondering how easily we can accuse others without trusted information and solid documents from reliable sources.

As all States Parties are kindly aware, every necessary step towards the complete removal and elimination of the Syrian chemical weapons programme has been undertaken by the OPCW and this significant and noticeable progress has been made in the light of full cooperation of the Syrian Arab Republic. In the same line, the Government of Syria was verifiably disarmed from all chemical arms by the United Nations. Thus, the undeniable fact is that, among others, the Al-Nusra Front and Da'esh are the only parties in possession of chemical weapons, with internationally documented track records of having used them, in Iraq and Syria.

In this regard, the Islamic Republic of Iran calls for formation of an impartial and professional international team of experts to investigate comprehensively both incidents on-site and clarify how and through which borders these chemical weapons entered and used in the Syrian Arab Republic.

Last but not the least, while working together here, at the OPCW as a unique international technical body, we are of the view that the ultimate solution to the Syrian issue will be a technical one. Therefore, my delegation encourages all States Parties, inter alia, those who follow baseless and or bogus allegations, to provide technical assistance to the Syrian Arab Republic to improve its national capacity building in order to address its remaining commitments.

In closing my statement, I would like to inform you that the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Russian Federation have jointly prepared a draft decision on "Addressing the Situation Around the Alleged use of Chemical Weapons in the Khan Shaykhun Area of Southern Idlib in the Syrian Arab Republic" for consideration by States Parties and then take an appropriate action as soon as possible.

Madam Chairperson, may I request that this statement be circulated as an official statement of this meeting of the Executive Council and posted on both the external server and the public website.

Thank you.

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