

**Statement by Ambassador Katri Viinikka,
Permanent Representative of the Republic of Finland to the OPCW,
The Fifty-Fifth Meeting of the Executive Council
5 July 2017**

Mr Chairperson, Director General, distinguished colleagues,

Thank you for giving me the floor. I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the new Chair of the Executive Council Ambassador Belal of Bangladesh on the assumption of his duties.

Finland aligns itself with the statement made on behalf of the European Union. The following remarks will be on my national capacity.

I would like to express our appreciation for the OPCW and its Fact Finding Mission for the comprehensive reports on the Um Housh and Khan Shaykhun incidents. FFM has conducted meticulous investigations under extremely difficult conditions. Finland values highly the professionalism and dedication of the OPCW's staff and we continue to support OPCW's impartial and independent work.

The FFM's report is conclusive; sarin or a sarin-like substance was used in Khan Shaykhun on 4 April 2017. Facts are undeniable. We offer our full support for the OPCW-UN Joint Investigative Mechanism to identify those responsible for this heinous act.

Mr Chairperson,

We have come to a point where we have exhausted the vocabulary to describe the atrocities committed in Syria. Finland will do its part to ensure that those responsible for gross abuses and violations of human rights and violations of international humanitarian law in Syria will be brought to justice.

Thank you, Mr Chairperson.