



OPCW

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Fifty-Sixth Meeting
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ENGLISH and SPANISH only

VENEZUELA

**STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR HAIFA AISSAMI MADAH
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE BOLIVARIAN REPUBLIC OF
VENEZUELA TO THE OPCW AT THE
FIFTY-SIXTH MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

Mr Chairperson, Mr Director-General, Your Excellencies, and distinguished delegates,

The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela wishes to thank the Director-General, the Technical Secretariat, and all of the staff of the Organisation for the work done in the service of all of the States Parties and within the framework of the Convention.

We would like to take advantage of this opportunity to begin our statement today with a necessary reference to what constitutes a position of principles for our country, which is that the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela repudiates and condemns the use of chemical weapons by anyone, anywhere, and under any circumstance, and reiterates that those responsible must be held accountable under the law for their atrocious actions.

The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela notes with concern the reliability of the report submitted to this Executive Council, above all bearing in mind the inconsistencies and contradictions that it reflects.

We must place an emphasis on a variety of the elements noted in our statement. One of these is related with a point that we believe to be extremely delicate and important: this is the chain of custody—or perhaps it would be more appropriate to say the absence of such, or the lack of information regarding how, when, and by whom it was established.

Another matter that should concern us has to do with the testimonies that have become affirmations that are considered fully reliable, precluding the fact that the majority of these—if not all of them—are not first-hand accounts which, of course, means that they must be treated and valued accordingly and appropriately within the framework of any serious analysis.

This designation of investigative attributions casts a shadow on the credibility of the results and the use thereof to identify the perpetrators is, at the very least, careless.

In conclusion, and without repeating all of the arguments voiced by my distinguished colleagues who have already spoken regarding the reliability of this report, we wish to address one important thing: the very fact that there is a report demonstrates that there is in fact cooperation by the Syrian Arab Republic with this Organisation; this is a key fact,



without which it would not have been possible to make the progress we have achieved to date. For this reason, we recognise and urge the Syrian Arab Republic to continue cooperating and working constructively with the OPCW.

Finally, I would like to kindly request, Mr Chairperson, that this statement be considered an official document of this meeting.

Thank you for your kind attention.

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