



OPCW

Executive Council

Fifty-Sixth Meeting
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ENGLISH and SPANISH only

CHILE

**STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR MARÍA TERESA INFANTE
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF CHILE TO THE OPCW AT THE
FIFTY-SIXTH MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

Mr Chairperson, Mr Director-General, and distinguished delegations,

We have carefully read the seventh report of the OPCW-United Nations Joint Investigative Mechanism (JIM) and the reports by the Fact-Finding Mission dated 29 June 2017 and 1 May 2017, referring to the locations of Khan Shaykhun and Um-Housh, respectively. These are taken collectively with the report dated 2 November 2017 regarding an alleged incident in Ltamenah on 30 March 2017, also on Syrian territory.

This Executive Council has the extraordinary responsibility of considering the report by the JIM. Its conclusions are not unrelated to the obligations and authorities that we have as States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention. The JIM, employing appropriate methods which involve taking the facts determined from the investigations conducted by the Fact-Finding Mission of this Organisation as a basis, as concluded that chemical weapons were used on Syrian territory on the dates of 15 and 16 September 2016, and 4 April this year. The JIM has made conclusions that should bring us to consider these events, their origins, and background in order to identify those responsible. For this reason, we advocate for the extension of the mandate of the JIM by the Security Council, in compliance with its functions.

My delegation is interested in once again reiterating its profound concern regarding the recurrence of events of this nature, regardless of the circumstances, the context, or the actors involved. As States Parties, we cannot renounce our obligations under the Convention, under which we must not only declare the chemical weapons in our possession, but also adopt all appropriate measures in line with international law in order to ensure that these weapons are not used by anyone.

We know, as the seventh report of the JIM stated, that its work was carried out in a highly sensitive political atmosphere, which presents special complications with regard to security. This has been a matter of particular caution in the assessment of the background information that has been gathered. We are confident that the work was conducted professionally, and was based on a valid and proven methodology, and that the ultimate goal has been the submission of a full picture explaining the events and making it possible to determine who is to be held accountable.



With regard to the conclusions of the JIM report, we share the concern about the existence or the control of chemical weapons in Syria, as has been shown in the incidents that were investigated. The international community hopes that it will not be forgotten that the Organisation, via its Executive Council, can consider the factors that affect the Convention and the implementation thereof, as set out in paragraph 35 of Article VIII of the Convention.

The recent report of the Fact-Finding Mission, dated 2 November 2017, confirms the presence of sarin in the samples from one investigated site, as well as components of munitions used for chemical weapons. For this reason, we conclude our statement by affirming that the primary concern of the States Parties is the termination of the use of chemical weapons in Syria, and that everyone must intensify their cooperation to contribute to this purpose. In this regard, we appeal to the knowledge and influence that some actors have in this reality.

As such, this is an opportunity to make progress in closing the gaps and resolving the inconsistencies that persist in the Syrian Arab Republic's declaration of its chemical weapons programme, and in intensifying the means of political and technical cooperation as a means of contributing to the effective termination of the use of chemical weapons.

I would like to request that this statement be considered an official document of the Council and published on the Organisation's webpage.

Thank you.

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