

STATEMENT BY THE REPUBLIC OF LATVIA
TO THE OPCW
AT THE 58TH MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL
16 APRIL 2018

Mr. Chairperson,

Latvia fully aligns itself with the statement delivered by the Ambassador of Bulgaria H.E Krassimir Kostov on behalf of the European Union and would like to highlight the following in national capacity.

The recent reckless use of chemical weapons in Douma, Syria is another cowardly and outrageous act of the Syrian regime against innocent people. Latvia joins in condemning this attack in the strongest terms and believes that missile strikes by the United States, France and the United Kingdom targeting chemical weapons facilities was appropriate action to prevent any further use of chemical weapons against Syrian civilians.

In this respect, it is crucial for the Fact Finding Mission of the OPCW to continue its work on the ground and gather the evidence of this horrific act. Latvia would like to commend the Director – General of the OPCW H.E. Ambassador Ahmet Üzümcü in upholding the relevance of the OPCW to address the recent incidents of use of chemical weapons that pose serious challenges to the compliance with the Chemical Weapons Convention in Syria. It is also pertinent to highlighting once again the persistent work of the Declaration Assessment Team on unresolved issues regarding the initial declaration of Syria.

Mr. Chairperson,

We have witnessed another horrific reminder that the ruling regime in Syria is prepared to use weapons of mass destruction against its own people. With deep regret, we see a clear pattern of erosion of the international ban on the use of chemical weapons. One member of the United Nations Security Council systematically applies veto and thus prevents establishment of an independent investigation mechanism. Latvia firmly believes that an independent mechanism to investigate the use of chemical weapons in Syria is highly necessary.

We strongly support relevant efforts to end impunity and therefore Latvia has decided to join the International Partnership against Impunity for Chemical Weapons.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson