



Security Council briefing on Syria (Chemical Weapons) 4 March 2024

Malta Statement delivered by Mr Darren Camilleri
Political Coordinator of Malta to the United Nations, New York

Thank you, President, and I also thank Director Ebo for his informative briefing.

At the outset, I congratulate you on assuming the Presidency of the Council. You can count on our full support during this time.

We also thank Guyana for steering the work of the Council in February in a smooth and effective manner.

President,

We continue to support the holding of regular meetings on this file, as mandated by resolution 2118.



This resolution, adopted unanimously, established that those responsible for the use of chemical weapons must be held accountable. This is not only a question of justice, but also one of prevention. Effective accountability is necessary to make sure that chemical weapons will never be used again.

The use of chemical weapons is unacceptable and completely contrary to the legal norms and standards of the international community.

In view of the recent issuance of the fourth IIT report on the use of Chemical Weapons in Syria, while expressing our continuous support for IIT's key role in identifying perpetrators, it is crucial for the international community to reiterate its condemnation of chemical weapons use, and to ensure that adequate measures are taken.



We take note of the holding of the twenty sixth round of consultations between the DAT and the Syrian National Authorities last month. While this is a positive step, it is not enough to meet the obligations under the Chemical Weapons Convention and resolution 2118.

In this regard, we look forward to the outcome of these engagements, including the assessment by the Secretariat of the responses of the Syrian Arab Republic regarding the samples collected by the DAT during its deployment in the country.

The latest OPCW report clearly states that the declaration submitted by the Syrian Arab Republic still cannot be considered accurate and complete in accordance with the Convention and with resolution 2118.

This is regrettable. We urge the Syrian authorities to provide explanations and documents to resolve outstanding issues, including scientifically plausible and verifiable explanations regarding research and development at certain sites.



The Syrian Arab Republic has used chemical weapons against its population at least nine times, as demonstrated by independent OPCW and joint UN-OPCW investigations. Yet, over ten years after its accession to the Convention and the passing of resolution 2118, it has failed to declare and destroy all its stockpiles. This is deeply troubling.

Malta also condemns Da'esh's reprehensible deployment of sulphur mustard during its siege to capture Marea in September 2015. The development of this unlawful chemical warfare agent and a delivery system by a terrorist group is concerning.

In closing, President, we reiterate our strong condemnation for the use of chemical weapons by any actor, under any circumstances.

Furthermore, we reaffirm our full support for the OPCW and its technical teams. They carry out their mandate independently and impartially, and in accordance with international standards. The Council should be united in recognising this, and refrain from casting any doubt on their work.



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Malta
2023-2024

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I thank you.