



Security Council briefing on Syria (CW), 11 June 2024

Malta Statement delivered by Ms Francesca Gatt

Deputy Permanent Representative of Malta to the United Nations, New York

Thank you, President, and I also thank USG Nakamitsu for her informative briefing.

At the outset, we thank you and your delegation for convening this important meeting. Malta continues to support regular discussions on this important file, as mandated by resolution 2118.

According to the latest OPCW report, and I quote, “serious concerns remain regarding the presence of unexpected chemicals collected by the DAT”, end quote. These were collected during multiple missions between 2020 and 2023 at several declared sites.

It is deeply troubling that over ten years after its accession to the Chemical Weapons Convention and the passing of resolution 2118, the Syrian Arab Republic has yet to declare and destroy all its stockpiles.



This is unacceptable. The Syrian Arab Republic must fully comply with its obligations under the Convention and resolution 2118. Any attempt to produce, acquire, stockpile or retain chemical weapons constitutes a clear violation and must be condemned.

Furthermore, there are still seventeen outstanding issues in the declaration presented by Syria. In light of the persisting gaps and inconsistencies assessed by the Secretariat, the declaration still cannot be considered accurate and complete in accordance with the Convention and with resolution 2118. This is deeply regrettable.

Once again, we urge the Syrian Arab Republic to resolve all outstanding issues in its declaration and to make progress towards the full elimination of its chemical weapons programme. In doing so, it must cooperate in a full and transparent manner with the OPCW Secretariat, as mandated by resolution 2118.

We take note of the fact that the twenty-seventh round of consultations between the DAT and the Syrian National Authority was taking place during the reporting period. We look forward to the report on the substance of these consultations.



We welcome the planning by the Secretariat of the next round of inspections of the Barzah and Jamrayah facilities of the Scientific Studies and Research Center (SSRC) later this year. The OPCW Fact-Finding Mission (FFM) is also preparing upcoming deployments and we call on the Syrian Arab Republic grant full access to OPCW personnel in line with resolution 2118.

President

The use of chemical weapons is unconscionable and completely contrary to the legal standards of the international community. Malta strongly condemns their use by any actor, under any circumstances.

We must collectively ensure that the perpetrators of chemical weapons attacks are held accountable. Effective accountability means justice for the victims, as well as prevention of future attacks.



In closing, we reiterate our full support for the OPCW and its technical teams. They carry out their mandate independently and impartially, in accordance with international standards. All Council members should recognise this and refrain from dangerous rhetoric that aims at casting doubt on their integrity and delegitimising their work.

I thank you.