



## Security Council briefing on Syria (CW), 5 September 2024

Malta Statement delivered by Mr Darren Camilleri

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

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

Malta supports the regular holding of these meetings. Not only are they mandated by resolution 2118, but the recent OPCW reports clearly show the need to keep international attention on this file.

In July, the Secretariat assessed that the information provided by Syria regarding the chemical warfare agents previously detected by the DAT was insufficient. This resulted in the opening of two new outstanding issues in its initial declaration, which were also reported to the Executive Council.



The samples collected by the DAT suggested, and I quote, ‘potentially undeclared full-scale development and production of chemical weapons’, end quote. This is unacceptable. The Syrian Arab Republic has an obligation, in line with the Chemical Weapons Convention and resolution 2118, not to produce, acquire, stockpile, or retain chemical weapons. Violations of these provisions must be unequivocally condemned.

Furthermore, in its most recent report, the OPCW noted its intention to deploy the DAT to conduct the twenty-eighth round of consultations with Syrian authorities. Regrettably, Syria did not accept the time periods proposed by the Secretariat. Therefore, due to the time limitations and its reporting obligations, the Secretariat will only deploy a reduced team which will not be able to conduct any field visits.

The delayed deployment of the DAT will also have, and I quote, ‘an operational impact’ on the schedule of the 2024 round of inspections of the Barzah and Jamrayah facilities of the Scientific Studies and Research Center (SSRC) by the Secretariat.



This is deeply regrettable. We call on Syria to cease its obstructionism and to fully comply with its obligations, including full cooperation with the OPCW Technical Secretariat.

President

The lack of progress on this file is deplorable, and Syria bears full responsibility for it. Over ten years after its accession to the Convention and the passing of resolution 2118, its initial declaration still cannot be considered accurate and complete.

Once again, we urge the Syrian Arab Republic to make decisive progress towards the full elimination of its chemical weapons programme. The use of chemical weapons is completely contrary to the legal standards of the international community and can never be justified.

Malta condemns their use by any actor, under any circumstance. We must collectively ensure that the perpetrators of these horrific attacks are held accountable. This means justice for the victims, but also prevention of future attacks.



To conclude, President, we reaffirm our full support for the OPCW and its technical teams, who implement their mandate independently and in accordance with international standards. Their professionalism and impartiality should be recognised by all, especially within this Council.

I thank you.