



## Security Council briefing on Syria (CW), 5 December 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 High Representative Nakamitsu and Mr Shikhami for their briefings. It is important that the Security Council continues to hold periodic discussions on this significant matter.

I also express our sincere appreciation for the OPCW and the work of its Technical Teams. They carry out their mandate impartially, professionally, and in adherence to the highest international standards.

The work of the OPCW is crucial in upholding the international prohibition of chemical weapons. Over the past two years, we have continuously called out any attempt to undermine its credibility and authority, including within this Council.



Malta has repeatedly condemned, in the strongest terms, the use of chemical weapons by anyone, anywhere, under any circumstances. Their use is unconscionable and completely contrary to the international standard. This Council should be united in condemning any use of chemical weapons and in urging Syria to make progress towards the total elimination of its chemical weapons stockpile.

Regrettably, during our two years on the Security Council, no substantial progress has been made on this file. On the contrary, the Secretariat has assessed the presence of undeclared chemical warfare agents in Syria. This is unacceptable.

President

Syria has continued to obstruct the work of the OPCW, including by denying access to some of its personnel and by delaying the process, in violation of resolution 2118 and the Chemical Weapons Convention. Furthermore, Syria has failed to provide the Secretariat with all the requested information on its undeclared stockpile, which resulted in the opening of two additional outstanding issues.



In the latest OPCW report, the Secretariat noted that the substance of the remaining outstanding issues involves, and I quote, “potentially large quantities of chemical warfare agents, the production of which has not been declared by the Syrian Arab Republic”, end quote. The Secretariat also expressed serious concerns about the issue, since the chemical warfare agents and munitions were, quote, “reportedly destroyed or otherwise consumed” end quote, before Syria’s accession to the Convention.

While acknowledging some progress made by Syria, including the holding of new rounds of consultations, as well as the closing of some outstanding issues, we regret its continued delays. The Syrian government has yet to provide the Secretariat with plausible and unequivocal explanations of its undeclared chemical warfare agents stockpile.

In light of these, as well as other persisting gaps and inconsistencies, the Secretariat continues to assess that Syria’s initial declaration cannot be considered accurate and complete in accordance with the Convention, as well as resolution 2118.



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In closing, President, we urge the Syrian Arab Republic to make progress towards the complete and verifiable elimination of all its chemical weapons stockpiles, without delay.

We hope that the Council will be able to uphold the resolution that it unanimously adopted now more than ten years ago.

I thank you.