



Eighty-First Session
15 – 18 March 2016

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NOTE BY THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL

**PROGRESS IN THE ELIMINATION OF THE
SYRIAN CHEMICAL WEAPONS PROGRAMME**

1. In accordance with subparagraph 2(f) of the decision by the Executive Council (hereinafter “the Council”) at its Thirty-Third Meeting (EC-M-33/DEC.1, dated 27 September 2013), the Technical Secretariat (hereinafter “the Secretariat”) is to report to the Council on a monthly basis regarding the implementation of that decision. In accordance with paragraph 12 of United Nations Security Council resolution 2118 (2013), the report by the Secretariat is also to be submitted to the Security Council through the Secretary-General.
2. The Council, at its Thirty-Fourth Meeting, adopted a decision entitled “Detailed Requirements for the Destruction of Syrian Chemical Weapons and Syrian Chemical Weapons Production Facilities” (EC-M-34/DEC.1, dated 15 November 2013). In paragraph 22 of that decision, the Council decided that the Secretariat should report on its implementation “in conjunction with its reporting required by subparagraph 2(f) of Council decision EC-M-33/DEC.1”.
3. The Council, at its Forty-Eighth Meeting, also adopted a decision entitled “Reports of the OPCW Fact-Finding Mission in Syria” (EC-M-48/DEC.1, dated 4 February 2015).
4. This, the twenty-eighth monthly report, is therefore submitted in accordance with the aforementioned Council decisions, and includes information relevant to the period from 22 December 2015 to 22 January 2016.

**Progress achieved by the Syrian Arab Republic in meeting the requirements of
EC-M-33/DEC.1 and EC-M-34/DEC.1**

5. Progress by the Syrian Arab Republic is as follows:
 - (a) In terms of the 27 chemical weapons production facilities (CWPFs) declared by the Syrian Arab Republic, significant progress has been made with their destruction. The focus on the destruction of the 12 robustly constructed CWPFs (five underground structures and seven reinforced aircraft hangars), which was a complex undertaking requiring explosives for the hangars, and mechanical works, has resulted in only one hangar still to be destroyed. As mentioned in previous reports, the Secretariat has also verified the destruction of eight mobile units, which were used for mixing and filling chemicals into warheads, and five other stationary above-ground facilities. Within the reporting period, the security situation continued to preclude safe access to the



aforementioned hangar to be destroyed. Also, as the locations of the two other stationary above-ground facilities remain outside the control of the Syrian Government, their condition cannot be confirmed at this time. Taken together, of the 27 CWPFS declared by the Syrian Arab Republic, the Secretariat has verified the destruction of 24, and three remain to be verified as destroyed.

- (b) On 15 January 2016, the Syrian Arab Republic submitted to the Council its twenty-sixth monthly report (EC-81/P/NAT.4, dated 15 January 2016) regarding activities on its territory related to the destruction of its CWPFS, as required by paragraph 19 of EC-M-34/DEC.1.
- (c) The Syrian authorities have continued to extend the necessary cooperation in accordance with the implementation of subparagraph 1(e) of EC-M-33/DEC.1 and paragraph 7 of United Nations Security Council resolution 2118 (2013).

Progress in the elimination of Syrian chemical weapons by States Parties hosting destruction activities

- 6. With the complete disposal of the remaining Category 2 chemical, hydrogen fluoride, by Veolia ES Technical Solutions, LLC in the United States of America at the end of 2015, all the chemicals declared by the Syrian Arab Republic that were removed from its territory in 2014 have now been destroyed.

Activities carried out by the Secretariat with respect to the Syrian Arab Republic

- 7. The Secretariat and the United Nations Office for Project Services continued their cooperation in the context of the OPCW Mission in the Syrian Arab Republic. Nine OPCW staff members were deployed as part of that mission as at the cut-off date of this report (this includes the Declaration Assessment Team (DAT)).
- 8. During the reporting period, the Syrian Arab Republic and the OPCW finalised their modalities of cooperation for ensuring the security of the remote monitoring systems installed at four of the CWPFS already destroyed (the four underground structures).
- 9. The Director-General has continued to communicate with senior officials of the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic. As requested by the Council at its Seventy-Fifth Session (paragraph 7.12 of EC-75/2, dated 7 March 2014), the Secretariat, on behalf of the Director-General, has continued to brief States Parties in The Hague on its activities.
- 10. The Secretariat and the Syrian authorities have maintained their ongoing cooperation on outstanding issues regarding the Syrian initial declaration, as encouraged by the Council at its Seventy-Sixth Session (paragraph 6.17 of EC-76/6, dated 11 July 2014). On 14 January 2016, the DAT briefed States Parties on the details of its thirteenth visit to the Syrian Arab Republic (which occurred from 13 to 22 December 2015), the observations made during that visit, and on the provisional analytical results of the samples taken during the DAT's eleventh and twelfth visits, as they have the potential to raise new issues.
- 11. The DAT, on its fourteenth visit (beginning on 18 January 2016), discussed the aforementioned provisional analytical results and observations with the Syrian

authorities. The DAT has also continued to pursue the outstanding issues, bearing in mind the Council's request at its Eightieth Session in October 2015 that the Director-General report to it, before its Eighty-First Session (in March 2016), the details of all unresolved issues, in particular those for which no further progress can be made. The DAT's fourteenth visit is expected to be completed in the last week of January 2016.

Supplementary resources

12. As at the cut-off date of this report, the Trust Fund for Syria Missions, which was established in November 2015 to support the Fact-Finding Mission (FFM) and other remaining activities, such as those of the DAT, had a balance of EUR 1 million. Contribution agreements have been concluded with Finland, France, Germany, Switzerland, and the European Union. Pledges from other donors are currently being processed.

Activities carried out with respect to the OPCW Fact-Finding Mission in Syria

13. As mentioned in the last monthly report, the FFM had in the course of its recent work come across indications from blood samples that certain individuals were at some point exposed to sarin or a sarin-like substance. It was also mentioned that further investigations would be necessary to determine when or under what circumstances such exposure might have occurred. Accordingly, the FFM is expected to soon conduct a mission to the Syrian Arab Republic to take forward its enquiry into this matter.
14. The Secretariat continues to offer its assistance and to work with the Joint Investigative Mechanism through the OPCW FFM.

Conclusion

15. The main focus of the future activities of the OPCW Mission in the Syrian Arab Republic will be on the DAT and FFM activities, as well as the destruction and verification of the remaining aircraft hangar.

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