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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”) reports 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 submitted to the Security Council through the Secretary-General. This is the seventeenth such monthly report.
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 report is therefore submitted in accordance with the above-mentioned Council decisions. It includes information relevant to their implementation during the period from 23 January to 22 February 2015.

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 achieved within the current reporting period by the Syrian Arab Republic in fulfilling its obligations as per decisions EC-M-33/DEC.1 and EC-M-34/DEC.1 is described below:
 - (a) With respect to the destruction and verification of the 12 chemical weapons production facilities (CWPFs) (seven aircraft hangars and five underground structures) in the Syrian Arab Republic as per Council decision EC-M-43/DEC.1 (dated 24 July 2014), significant progress has been made since the start of the destruction operations on 24 December 2014. The destruction of the first underground structure was fully completed on 31 January 2015 and the final inspection report was signed on



9 February 2015. The second underground structure was verified by the OPCW team as destroyed on 22 February 2015. Destruction operations are currently under way at two of the three other underground structures. Regarding the destruction of the aircraft hangars, the preparatory works have been completed at five sites where the soil covering the hangars has been removed. The equipment required for the destruction of the aircraft hangars has been moved to the first site scheduled to be destroyed. With regard to the planned time frame, it is expected that the destruction of all five underground structures will be completed before 30 June 2015. The operations to destroy the seven aircraft hangars are expected to be fully completed shortly thereafter. Another meeting of the Steering Committee also took place to discuss all relevant details concerning the destruction of the 12 CWPFs.

- (b) Pursuant to paragraph 19 of EC-M-34/DEC.1, the Syrian Arab Republic is required to submit a monthly report to the Council regarding activities on its territory related to the destruction of its chemical weapons and CWPFs. The fifteenth such report was submitted to the Secretariat on 16 February 2015 (EC-78/P/NAT.3, dated 16 February 2015).
- (c) In accordance with subparagraph 1(e) of EC-M-33/DEC.1 and paragraph 7 of United Nations Security Council resolution 2118 (2013), the Syrian Arab Republic shall cooperate fully with all aspects of the implementation of the decision and the resolution. The Syrian authorities have continued to extend the necessary cooperation during the reporting period.

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

- 6. As reported previously, all declared chemicals have been removed from the territory of the Syrian Arab Republic, while all declared stocks of the Category 1 chemicals have been destroyed, with only one Category 2 chemical remaining to be destroyed. As at the cut-off date of this report, 89.8% of the Category 2 chemicals had already been destroyed, representing a combined total of 98%, including the isopropanol previously destroyed in the Syrian Arab Republic. The following subparagraphs provide information on the destruction of the remaining Category 2 chemical and the effluents at commercial facilities selected pursuant to paragraph 24 of EC-M-34/DEC.1, and at facilities sponsored by States Parties pursuant to paragraph 7 of decision EC-M-36/DEC.2 (dated 17 December 2013):
 - (a) As at the cut-off date of this report, a total of 16.5% of the only remaining Category 2 chemical had already been destroyed at Veolia ES Technical Solutions, LLC in the United States of America and at Mexichem UK Limited in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. Destruction of the only remaining chemical at these two facilities is currently on hold as technical issues are sorted out.
 - (b) As at the cut-off date of this report, 57.5% of the DF effluent and 86.3% of the HD effluent, which were produced by the neutralisation process on board the United States Vessel MV Cape Ray, had already been destroyed by Ekokem in Finland and at the GEKA facility in Germany, respectively.

7. The Secretariat will continue to provide information on the aforementioned destruction activities during briefings to States Parties in The Hague and through the monthly reports. Timelines for the completion of the destruction of Syrian chemical weapons were provided in the overall report on the elimination of the Syrian chemical weapons programme (paragraph 25 of EC-76/DG.16, dated 4 July 2014), which was noted by the Council at its Seventy-Sixth Session. While the Secretariat is not able to give a forecast at this stage about the completion of the destruction of the remaining chemical in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America, estimates for Germany and Finland remain the end of March and June 2015, respectively.

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

8. Cooperation with the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) has continued in the context of the OPCW Mission in the Syrian Arab Republic. As at the cut-off date of this report, four OPCW staff members were deployed as part of that Mission. Ambassador José Artur Denot Medeiros of Brazil, in his capacity as Special Adviser to the Director-General on Syria, travelled to Damascus for meetings with senior Syrian officials, UNOPS staff, and the United Nations Designated Official in Syria, from 25 to 27 January 2015.
9. The Director-General has continued to meet with senior representatives of the States Parties hosting a destruction facility or otherwise providing assistance with the destruction of Syrian chemical weapons. He also communicated regularly with senior officials from 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 has continued to provide regular information briefings to States Parties in The Hague on behalf of the Director-General.
10. As stipulated by the Council at its Seventy-Sixth Session (paragraph 6.17 of EC-76/6, dated 11 July 2014), the Secretariat and the Syrian authorities continue to cooperate on outstanding issues regarding the Syrian declaration. From 25 January to 5 February 2015, the Declaration Assessment Team visited the Syrian Arab Republic for the seventh time in order to hold further consultations with the representatives of the Syrian National Authority and to continue technical-level discussions. Visits were carried out at two sites where samples were collected. These samples, together with those taken during previous visits, were transported to the OPCW Laboratory and to two designated laboratories for analysis. Further consultations with the Syrian authorities will be held with a view to updating the Syrian declaration, and the next visit has been scheduled towards the end of March 2015.
11. As reported previously, the implementation of additional special monitoring measures, as specified in Note EC-M-43/DG.1/Rev.1 (dated 21 July 2014), will include the use of a vault monitoring system, which is based on technology already in use by the International Atomic Energy Agency. The Secretariat has finalised all administrative requirements for the first phase of implementing the monitoring system in the underground structures, and has also finalised the administrative requirements for the delivery of the system by Aquila Technologies. The implementation of the special remote monitoring system will be in line with the agreed time frame for the planned construction activities related to the interior plugs. Fibre-optic cables have

been already installed and successfully tested in two interior plugs at two underground structures. The supplier of the special monitoring system, Aquila Technologies, will provide training for operators on system installation and operation at the OPCW in The Hague in April 2015, to coincide with the delivery by Aquila Technologies to the OPCW of the first set of the special monitoring system to be installed in the Syrian Arab Republic.

Supplementary resources

12. As at the cut-off date of this report, the total contributions of EUR 50.3 million in the Syria Trust Fund for the Destruction of Chemical Weapons and the contributors thereto remained unchanged compared to the previous report.
13. As reported previously, the Secretariat had approached the Syrian Government with a request for reimbursement of costs relating to verification activities for the period from September 2013 to August 2014, amounting to EUR 2.3 million. The request was made in keeping with States Parties' obligations under Articles IV and V of the Chemical Weapons Convention (hereinafter "the Convention"). The Syrian authorities have indicated that they remain unable to cover these costs on the basis of the reasons stipulated at the time that the Syrian Arab Republic joined the Convention.

Activities carried out with regard to the Fact-Finding Mission

14. At the conclusion of its Forty-Eighth Meeting on 4 February 2015, the Council adopted a decision entitled "Reports of the OPCW Fact-Finding Mission in Syria" (EC-M-48/DEC.1) in which it, inter alia, "expresses serious concern regarding the findings of the Fact-Finding Mission, made with a high degree of confidence, that chlorine had been used as a weapon in Syria in the villages of Talmenes, Al Tamanah, and Kafr Zita from April to August 2014".
15. Delegations addressing the Council at its Forty-Eighth Meeting expressed their positions on the work undertaken by the Fact-Finding Mission and on its three reports. The Council heard expressions of support for the work done thus far by the Mission. Some doubts and questions were also raised in regard to the procedures and methods followed by the Mission. For his part, the Director-General underscored the integrity and professionalism of the Fact-Finding Mission and the validity of its work and conclusions.

Conclusion

16. The main focus of the future activities of the OPCW Mission in the Syrian Arab Republic will continue to be on the destruction of the 11 remaining CWPFs and the installation of the special remote monitoring system in the five underground structures. The Declaration Assessment Team and the Fact-Finding Mission will also continue their work in the Syrian Arab Republic.