



OPCW

Executive Council

Thirty-Fifth Meeting
26 November 2013

EC-M-35/DG.1
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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 EC-M-33/DEC.1, dated 27 September 2013, the Technical Secretariat (hereinafter “the Secretariat”) reports to the Executive Council (hereinafter the “Council”) on a monthly basis regarding the implementation of the 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.
2. The first such report by the Secretariat was submitted to the Council on 25 October 2013 (EC-M-34/DG.1, dated 25 October 2013) and covered the period from 27 September to 22 October 2013.
3. 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 this decision, the Council decided that the Secretariat shall report on its implementation “in conjunction with its reporting required by subparagraph 2(f) of Council decision EC-M-33/DEC.1”.
4. This report is therefore submitted in accordance with both above-mentioned Council decisions and includes information relevant to their implementation during the period from 23 October to 22 November 2013.

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

5. Progress achieved within the reporting period by the Syrian Arab Republic in fulfilling its obligations as established in paragraph 1 of Council decision EC-M-33/DEC.1 is described below:
 - (a) In accordance with subparagraph 1(b) of EC-M-33/DEC.1, the Syrian Arab Republic shall submit the initial declaration required by Article III of the Chemical Weapons Convention (hereinafter “the Convention”) not later than 30 days after the adoption of the Council decision, that is, not later than 27 October 2013. The Secretariat received the initial declaration on 23 October 2013. In its initial declaration, the Syrian Arab Republic provided information required under Article III, declaring possession of chemical weapons, chemical weapons production facilities (CWPFs), abandoned



chemical weapons, riot control agents, and other chemical weapons-related facilities, as well as information required under Article VI about chemical industry facilities. On 21 November 2013, the Syrian Arab Republic submitted an amendment to its initial declaration increasing the total amount of declared munitions to approximately 1,260 items and providing information regarding receipts of chemicals and production equipment for its chemical weapons programme between 1982 and 2010.

- (b) In accordance with subparagraph 1(c) of EC-M-33/DEC.1, the Syrian Arab Republic is required to complete the elimination of all chemical weapons material and equipment in the first half of 2014. As required under Article III of the Convention, the Syrian Arab Republic provided its general plans for destruction of chemical weapons and CWPFs on 23 October 2013, as part of its initial declaration. The Director-General reviewed the submission closely and concluded that “the proposal by Syria that the destruction of chemical weapons be carried out outside its territory constitutes the most viable option available to fulfil the requirements established under the Council decision (EC-M-33/DEC.1) and United Nations Security Council resolution 2118 (2013) for the safe and expeditious elimination of chemical weapons in Syria” (EC-M-34/DG.14, dated 5 November 2013). Pursuant to subparagraph 1(c) of EC-M-33/DEC.1, the Council adopted decision EC-M-34/DEC.1 on 15 November 2013. This decision established detailed requirements for the destruction of Syrian chemical weapons and Syrian CWPFs. It also established timelines for the removal of chemical weapons from the territory of the Syrian Arab Republic and for their destruction outside this territory. In addition, on 18 November 2013, the Syrian Arab Republic informed the Secretariat that it had destroyed all declared items of Category 3 chemical weapons.
- (c) In accordance with subparagraph 1(d) of EC-M-33/DEC.1, the Syrian Arab Republic was required to complete as soon as possible, and in any case not later than 1 November 2013, the functional destruction (rendering useless or inoperable) of chemical weapons production and mixing and filling equipment. As reported by the Director-General at the Thirty-Fourth Meeting of the Council, this deadline was met within the target date. Pursuant to subparagraph 2(b) of EC-M-34/DEC.1, Syrian personnel are continuing to destroy special features of declared buildings and structures at CWPFs.
- (d) In accordance with subparagraph 1(e) of EC-M-33/DEC.1 and paragraph 7 of resolution 2118 (2013), the Syrian Arab Republic shall cooperate fully with all aspects of their implementation. The Syrian authorities have continued to extend the necessary cooperation to the OPCW team in the conduct of its activities during the reporting period.
- (e) Effective cooperation with the United Nations in the context of the OPCW-UN Joint Mission in the Syrian Arab Republic has continued.

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

6. OPCW personnel from the initial deployment to the Syrian Arab Republic returned to The Hague at the end of October 2013. The next rotation of personnel, which at the cut-off date comprised of 14 persons, arrived in Damascus, Syrian Arab Republic, on 6 November 2013 and will remain there for the month of November. Additionally, an OPCW logistics officer is based in Beirut, Lebanon.
7. During the reporting period, the Secretariat was able to verify one of the two sites that could not be visited earlier due to safety and security concerns. Verification was conducted with the support of sealed GPS¹ cameras used by Syrian personnel, in accordance with the guidance of the inspection team. The exact geographical location and the time the footage/images were captured were then fully authenticated. As stated in the initial declaration, the site was confirmed as long abandoned and the building showed extensive battle damage. Thus, the Secretariat has now verified 22 of the 23 sites declared by the Syrian Arab Republic. The one remaining site could not be visited for safety and security reasons. It has been declared by the Syrian Arab Republic as inactive. The items from this site were moved to other accessible sites and have been verified against the data declared by the Syrian Arab Republic. This remaining site will be inspected as soon as conditions permit and following the assessment by the United Nations.
8. As at the cut-off date of this report, the Secretariat personnel, during the inspections, had verified the destruction of more than 60% of the declared Category 3 chemical weapons described in subparagraph 5(b) above.
9. During the inspections, and in light of the timelines established by the Council for the destruction of Syrian chemical weapons, Secretariat personnel have engaged in preparations to verify the destruction by the Syrian Arab Republic of all items of specialised production and mixing and filling equipment, as described in subparagraph 5(c) above, as well as the destruction of special features of declared buildings and structures.
10. The Operational Planning Group (OPG), consisting of OPCW and United Nations personnel and national experts provided by States Parties in a position to do so, met in The Hague from 6 to 9 November 2013, with a delegation from the Syrian Arab Republic in attendance. The OPG, comprising 30 experts from various backgrounds, developed an outline of an “Outline Plan for the Removal of Chemical Weapons in Syria for Destruction Outside its Territory,” which was circulated as part of the Annex to document EC-M-34/DG.15, dated 14 November 2013. The OPG presented a scenario for the rapid, sequenced packaging and transport of chemical agents from the Syrian Arab Republic for destruction. The OPG concluded that conditions of safety and security will be absolute prerequisites for the success of such a plan and that due regard must be paid to the protection of people and the environment at every stage of the process of transportation and destruction. Furthermore, the OPG recommended that international norms and standards applicable to the transportation of hazardous material will have to be fully upheld.

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GPS = global positioning system

11. The Secretariat has developed measures to ensure that no undetected removal of chemical weapons occurs during reloading of some of the chemicals into maritime containers that are suitable for transportation and meet international transportation standards and requirements, or during their actual transportation between the chemical weapons storage facilities (CWSFs) in the Syrian Arab Republic and destruction sites outside the Syrian Arab Republic. These measures will entail a combination of physical presence of inspectors, the use of remote monitoring equipment, the application of seals, as well as, where applicable, weighing or use of alternative means to establish the quantities of chemicals reloaded and transported outside the Syrian Arab Republic. Moreover, samples will be taken, on a random basis, from various containers to assist in the characterisation of the chemicals for transportation purposes. These samples will be analysed by the inspection teams and the results will be included in the documentation packages accompanying the maritime containers. The latter will be sealed by OPCW personnel after their certification for maritime shipment and each container will be equipped with a tracking device. The United Nations will lend logistical support during the transportation phase and galvanize and coordinate international assistance to support this operation.
12. As required under paragraph 13 of EC-M-34/DEC.1, the Secretariat has also initiated work on the development of facility agreements for CWSFs in the Syrian Arab Republic. The specific arrangements that will govern inspections at such facilities pending the destruction or removal of the stored chemical weapons will be agreed between the Secretariat and the Syrian National Authority, and the Council will be informed accordingly upon their conclusion.
13. In order to explore options for destruction in commercial chemical disposal facilities of the binary chemical weapons components and any associated reaction masses referred to in subparagraph 3(a) of EC-M-34/DEC.1 and the declared chemicals referred to in subparagraph 3(b) of the same decision, as requested under paragraph 24 of EC-M-34/DEC.1, on 21 November 2013, the Secretariat issued a call for expressions of interest from companies interested in participating in a future tender for the treatment and disposal of hazardous and non-hazardous organic and inorganic chemicals and related packaging materials and containers/drums, or parts thereof. The Secretariat brought the call for expressions of interest to the attention of States Parties via a Note (S/1142/2013, dated 22 November 2013). The deadline for receipt of expressions of interest by companies is 29 November 2013.
14. The Director-General met with the Special Coordinator of the OPCW-UN Joint Mission in the Syrian Arab Republic, Ms Sigrid Kaag, on 19 October, 1 November, and 15 November 2013. Ms Kaag briefed the Council at its Thirty-Fourth Meeting on 15 November 2013. Furthermore, Mr Aamir Shouket has been appointed as Deputy Chief of Cabinet in the Secretariat and will act as the OPCW Liaison Officer with the Special Coordinator.

Supplementary resources

15. The OPCW trust fund to provide funding to facilitate the technical activities of the OPCW in support of the verification of the destruction of Syrian chemical weapons (S/1132/2013, dated 16 October 2013) had a balance of EUR 10.4 million as at the cut-off date of this report, having received contributions from Canada, Denmark,

Estonia, Finland, Germany, Ireland, the Netherlands, Switzerland, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and the United States of America. A further six States Parties (the Czech Republic, Italy, Latvia, Luxembourg, New Zealand, and the Republic of Korea) had made formal commitments to contribute an additional amount of EUR 6.5 million. The Director-General would like to express his appreciation to those States Parties that have already made voluntary contributions to the trust fund, or have committed to doing so.

16. The Secretariat would like also to express its gratitude to those States Parties that have provided in-kind support, namely: Cyprus and Lebanon for providing logistical support to the Mission; Germany, Italy, and the Netherlands for air transportation for the deployed teams; the European External Action Service, some European Union Member States, and the United States of America for providing armoured vehicles; and Canada for providing air transportation for the vehicles supplied by the United States of America.
17. In accordance with paragraph 6 of EC-M-34/DEC.1, on 19 November the Secretariat issued a call for voluntary contributions to the special trust fund for the financial resources needed for the activities related to the complete destruction of the Syrian chemical weapons outside the territory of the Syrian Arab Republic (S/1141/2013, dated 19 November 2013).

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