



**High Representative's briefing to the Security Council on the  
implementation of Security Council resolution 2118 (2013) on the  
elimination of the chemical weapons programme of the Syrian  
Arab Republic**

By

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Mr. President, distinguished Members of the Security Council,

Thank you again for the opportunity to brief you on the implementation of Security Council resolution 2118 (2013) on the elimination of the chemical weapons programme of the Syrian Arab Republic.

I remain in regular contact with the Director-General of the OPCW to discuss matters related to this file and spoke to him last week. In addition, I met with the Chargé d'Affaires of the Permanent Mission of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations this past Friday.

Mr. President,

At the time of my last briefing, planning was underway with regard to the destruction of the remaining two stationary above-ground facilities of the 27 declared by the Syrian Arab Republic. I am informed that the OPCW, working with the United Nations Office of Project Services (UNOPS), is currently at the stage of finalizing a contract with a private company to carry out the destruction. I understand that the destruction could be completed within two months.

Mr. President,

There have been some developments on the issues related to Syria's initial declaration and subsequent amendments. Translation and analysis of documents, WHICH were provided to the OPCW by the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic in November, has been completed. The OPCW has indicated that this information provided clarifications on some issues. However, the OPCW is continuing to follow up, with the Government of Syria, on the remaining gaps, inconsistencies and discrepancies. The Director-General will submit a report in this regard to the next session of the OPCW Executive Council, which takes place in March.

Further to its routine inspections in Syria, samples taken by the OPCW team during its second inspection at the Syrian Scientific Studies and Research Centre (SSRC) are currently being analysed by two OPCW designated laboratories. The Executive Council will be informed of the results of this inspection, by a separate Note to the next session of the Executive Council from the Director-General.

Mr. President, distinguished Members of the Council,

The OPCW Fact-Finding Mission (FFM) continues to look into all allegations of the use of chemical weapons in Syria, the majority of which involve the use of toxic chemicals such as chlorine, in areas not under the control of the Government. The FFM expects to submit a report on these allegations very soon.

In addition, another FFM team has been looking into allegations of the use of chemical weapons brought to the attention of the OPCW by the Government of Syria. At the time of our last briefing, an FFM team was in Damascus, at the invitation of the Government, to look into several of these allegations. I am informed that a report in this regard is also pending.

Mr President, Distinguished Members of the Council,

There is still work to do before resolution 2118 (2013) can be considered to have been fully implemented and for the international community to have shared confidence that the chemical weapons programme of the Syrian Arab Republic has been fully eliminated. Moreover, allegations of the use of chemical weapons in Syria have continued, including only this past weekend, in the town of Saraqeb. This makes abundantly clear our continuing and collective responsibility to ensure that those responsible are held to account.

New reports by the FFM are pending. Should they conclude that there has been the use, or likely use, of chemical weapons in *any* of these alleged incidents, our obligation to enact a meaningful response will be further intensified. It is my hope, and the hope of the Secretary-General, that such a response will favour unity – not impunity.

As always, the Office for Disarmament Affairs stands ready to provide whatever support and assistance it can.

Thank you very much for your attention.

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