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Thursday, 4 June 2026, 10 a.m.
New York

President:	Mrs. Zalabata Torres.	(Colombia)
Members:	Bahrain	Mr. Alrowaiei
	China	Mr. Sun Lei
	Democratic Republic of the Congo	Mrs. Kabengele Lukundula
	Denmark	Ms. Landi
	France	Mr. Bonnafont
	Greece	Mr. Stamatekos
	Latvia	Ms. Pavļuta-Deslandes
	Liberia	Mr. Jappah
	Pakistan	Mr. Jadoon
	Panama	Mr. Moscoso
	Russian Federation	Mr. Nebenzia
	Somalia	Mr. Mohamed Yusuf
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Ms. MacNaughtan
	United States of America	Ms. Bruce

Agenda

The situation in the Middle East

Letter dated 28 May 2026 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2026/443)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the translation of speeches delivered in other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room AB-0928 (verbatimrecords@un.org). Corrected records will be reissued electronically on the Official Document System of the United Nations (http://documents.un.org).

The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in the Middle East

Letter dated 28 May 2026 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2026/443)

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representatives of Syrian Arab Republic and Türkiye to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Mrs. Izumi Nakamitsu, High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2026/443, which contains the text of a letter dated 28 May 2026 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council.

I now give the floor to Mrs. Nakamitsu.

Mrs. Nakamitsu: I thank Council members for the opportunity to brief them once again on the implementation of resolution 2118 (2013) on the elimination of the chemical weapons programme of the Syrian Arab Republic.

Since the previous consideration of this matter by the Council, and consistent with established practice, the Office for Disarmament Affairs has been in regular contact with counterparts in the Technical Secretariat of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) on activities related to resolution 2118 (2013). In addition, regular contact with the Mission of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations has continued, and I held a meeting most recently on 22 May with His Excellency Ambassador Olabi.

Since the Council's most recent meeting on this matter (see S/PV.10086), the OPCW and the Syrian Arab Republic have continued to engage on how to eliminate any remnants of the chemical weapons programme developed by the previous Government.

As previously reported, since 2014, the OPCW Technical Secretariat has not been able to confirm that the declaration submitted by the previous Government was accurate and complete, because of the insufficient and inaccurate information it contained. The OPCW Technical Secretariat reported serious concern over the declaration's issues as it involved large quantities of potentially undeclared or unverified chemical warfare agents and chemical munitions.

The current Government of Syria has been working with the OPCW Technical Secretariat to obtain clarifications on the full extent and scope of the programme developed by the previous Government and ensure Syria's long-term compliance with the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC).

Given the significant and long-standing challenges to overcome in these efforts, I welcome the continued cooperation on this important work, and I am pleased to report that significant progress has been made since the Council's most recent meeting.

In this month's report, the OPCW Technical Secretariat shares that, following an improvement in the regional security situation that permitted a safe and secure resumption

of operations, the OPCW Technical Secretariat recommenced its deployments to the Syrian Arab Republic, in coordination with the Syrian National Authority.

At the beginning of May 2026, a team from the OPCW Office of Special Missions (OSM) deployed to the Syrian Arab Republic to advance efforts to establish a complete and accurate inventory of the remnants of the chemical weapons programme developed by the previous Syrian Government. This deployment focused on several high-priority, undeclared sites in the northern coastal and central areas of the country, broadly within the geographic triangle encompassing Hama, Homs and Ladhiqiyah. Visits to these sites were conducted in full coordination with the Syrian National Authority and with substantial support from the relevant ministries of the Syrian Government.

Although the deployment was ongoing as of the cut-off date of the latest monthly report, the OPCW Technical Secretariat was already able to state that a significant amount of undeclared chemical weapons, related materials and documentation were discovered at the sites. The findings include dozens of chemical munitions previously undeclared to the OPCW, including the same type of aerial bombs that were used in the chemical attacks in Lataminah in March 2017 and Khan Shaykhun in April 2017. Rockets were also found, of the same type as those that were used in the chemical weapons attack in Ghouta in August 2013.

The OPCW further reports that findings include quantities of separately stored chemicals and related equipment, which is currently being analysed, and thousands of pages of documentation. These findings are a momentous discovery, not just for Syria, but for international security and the global disarmament regime. This significant step was made possible due to the tireless efforts made by the officials from the OPCW Technical Secretariat for more than a decade to uncover the full scope of Syria's chemical weapons programme and to eliminate it in line with the CWC; the continued advocacy by members of the Security Council for cooperation to resolve outstanding issues and for accountability for those that dared to use such weapons; and, of course, the urgency with which the current Syrian Government acted to ensure Syria's compliance with the CWC and the courageous work of Syrian teams on the ground to facilitate the activities needed to complete these tasks.

In order to reach this stage, extensive cooperation was required from all stakeholders. The OPCW Technical Secretariat has further emphasized the importance of effective support from the current Syrian Government. The OPCW reports that for this most recent deployment, approximately 200 personnel from relevant Syrian ministries have contributed to facilitating this mission, including representatives from the newly re-established Syrian National Authority, the Ministry of Emergency and Disaster Management, the Ministry of Defence and the Ministry of Interior; diplomatic security services, intelligence services and medical teams; chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear specialists; and explosive ordnance disposal and demining specialists.

This cooperation will remain critical going forward, as the newly discovered elements now need to be declared and destroyed, under the OPCW Technical Secretariat's verification. In addition, further investigations and deployments to additional sites will be required in order to discern the full scope of the chemical weapons programme developed by the previous Government. Given the risks posed by any remaining elements of the chemical weapons programme, these steps must be completed with urgency.

As previously reported, since March 2025, more than 20 locations have been visited. The OPCW has also conducted interviews with former chemical weapons experts. It has collected 19 samples and more than 6,000 documents from the locations visited. The Syrian Government handed over 34 sealed cardboard boxes of documents to the OPCW

Technical Secretariat. These were scanned and returned to the Syrian National Authority. The electronic copies will be analysed by the OPCW Technical Secretariat.

Based on the information gathered through the OPCW's deployments in 2025 and 2026, at least four locations visited by the OPCW could be declarable under the Chemical Weapons Convention. The OPCW is planning further activities to determine the full scope of chemical weapons-related activities conducted at these facilities and their subsequent declarability.

The OPCW Director-General has emphasized that if chemical weapons or related components are discovered during site visits, these sites must be secured, and the chemical weapons-related components must be relocated to a protected storage facility, pending their eventual destruction under the OPCW Technical Secretariat's verification.

I understand that the latest weapons found in May 2026 were transferred to a secure location and that consultations on destruction plans between the Syrian Government and the OPCW Technical Secretariat are ongoing. This is a crucial step to undertake in line with resolution 2118 (2013) and the decisions of the OPCW Executive Council and will require support from the international community.

As I have previously emphasized, this is a critical opportunity for the disarmament and non-proliferation regime. I welcome the continued cooperation of the Syrian National Authority with the OPCW Technical Secretariat, which is essential to these efforts. Significant and consistent support from the international community is also needed to complete the extraordinary efforts to rid Syria of all chemical weapons.

I once again urge the members of the Council to unite and show leadership in providing the support that this unprecedented effort requires. I also take this opportunity to reiterate the Organization's support for the integrity, professionalism, impartiality, objectivity and independence of the work of the OPCW. The United Nations stands ready to lend that support and will continue to do our part to uphold the norm against the use of chemical weapons anywhere, at any time.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank Mrs. Nakamitsu for her briefing.

I shall now give the floor to those members of the Council who wish to make statements.

Mr. Nebenzia (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We thank Mrs. Izumi Nakamitsu, High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, for her briefing.

We have carefully studied the latest report by Mr. Fernando Arias, Director-General of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW). At first, we had a sense of déjà vu, as all three of his reports circulated to the Council since the previous Security Council meeting on this issue in March (see S/PV.10117) appear to be virtually identical.

Such a coincidence is quite understandable given the armed aggression by the United States and Israel against Iran, which plunged the entire region into chaos and instability, making it impossible to guarantee the safety of OPCW staff in Syria. However, as the active phase of hostilities in the Middle East subsided, the OPCW Technical Secretariat's experts resumed their activities. It then emerged that the situation surrounding the Syrian chemical file was far worse than the Director-General's largely identical reports had suggested.

In its haste to assign responsibility to the former Government of Bashar Al-Assad for concealing a military chemical weapons programme, the Technical Secretariat announced with great fanfare its purported success in uncovering evidence of activities by Damascus that allegedly contravened the Chemical Weapons Convention. This concerns missiles and aerial bombs with chemical warheads, as well as chemical

substances discovered by experts from the Technical Secretariat's Office of Special Missions at undeclared sites in Hama and Homs Governorates. It is noteworthy that these announcements coincided rather conveniently with Eid al-Adha, the Muslim feast of sacrifice.

The proponents of the OPCW's illegitimate methods of work and its biased approach are rejoicing today, loudly proclaiming that they have finally found what they have been searching for all this time. However, I must temper their enthusiasm. Any such claims must rest on a clear, carefully verified and indisputable evidentiary basis. Unfortunately, judging by the report, no such basis exists. The Technical Secretariat faces genuine difficulties in providing one for a number of reasons, chief among them the lack of trust in the OPCW, which has repeatedly undermined its own credibility over the years.

First, over the years of the conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic, significant portions of the country's territory repeatedly came under the control of various armed groups. Many military and important industrial facilities were either destroyed or severely damaged as a result of extensive airstrikes carried out by both the Western coalition and Israel. Under such circumstances, it is simply impossible to ensure the proper collection of new samples or the discovery of documents at these sites. It should also be noted that the OPCW itself acknowledges the complex situation in the region, which the Technical Secretariat regularly highlights in its monthly reports, including as a reason for cancelling planned activities by its experts on the ground.

Secondly, it is evident that under such circumstances it is impossible to speak either about the integrity, authenticity and suitability of physical evidence for objective analysis, or about the completeness of the picture that could be reconstructed through an inspection. This is particularly relevant in light of the Technical Secretariat's chronic violations of the chain-of-custody principle. To avoid wasting the Council's time, I will not once again list these examples, especially since we have repeatedly highlighted them in our statements in the Chamber. The international community has witnessed all of this in the context of the Technical Secretariat's investigations into the incidents in Saraqib in August 2016, Lataminah in March 2017, Khan Shaykhun in April 2017, Duma in April 2018 and Aleppo in November 2018.

Thirdly, the OPCW's decision, hastily adopted in October 2025, on the expedited on-site destruction of any chemical weapons discovered in Syria does not help establish a credible evidentiary basis. This decision allows for the immediate destruction of purportedly discovered chemical weapons components and for reporting on the finding only thereafter. A prime example of how this works in practice is the case of the 75 cylinders at a facility in Aleppo that had "gone missing". Let me recall here that they were taken to a scrap metal yard and cut up there. Technical Secretariat experts who arrived there sometime later took samples from the so-called remains of those cylinders, asserting that they would report the results to the Syrian authorities in due course. That is all the evidence there is.

The bottom line is that the context is new, but the methods are old: violations of the evidence collection methodologies provided for in the Convention, fabricated evidence, conclusions that contradict basic scientific laws and false testimony of so-called eyewitnesses. How can we trust the sensational "discoveries" of the OPCW under such circumstances?

In addition to the OPCW, which has ruined its reputation, a new non-conventional entity has emerged: the so-called Breath of Freedom task force. We regard it as operating outside of the Chemical Weapons Convention framework. No one has charged it with any tasks relating to detection and destruction of the remnants of the Syrian chemical weapons, let alone with bringing to justice those involved in illegal chemical activities. The Council has nothing to do with it and should not be discussing the results of its

work. The participation of the OPCW Technical Secretariat in the work of this task force, as announced by Mr. Arias, is just as questionable. No one has granted it the authority to do so. In fact, Mr. Arias, who will be leaving the post of OPCW Director-General in July, has dragged the OPCW into yet another dubious venture.

I reiterate that Russia has consistently advocated and continues to advocate the earliest resolution of the remaining issues connected with Syria's initial declarations under the Chemical Weapons Convention. That is the only logical way to close the Syrian chemical dossier in the Council. We have also called over the years for the Technical Secretariat to do its work impartially and professionally based solely on its technical mandate, and to adopt a depoliticized approach that adheres strictly to the framework of the Convention. Yet time and again we have witnessed this once-reputable organization acting contrary to those principles. All OPCW activities on Syria continue to be geared towards to a single goal: the search for the elements of the Syrian Arab Republic's military chemical weapons programme "concealed" by the former regime, with a view to accusing the old Government of chemical crimes. Such an approach is not constructive and cannot yield positive results, even with the constructive cooperation of the new Syrian authorities with the OPCW, which we highly appreciate.

Ms. Bruce (United States of America): I thank High Representative Nakamitsu for her important and informative briefing.

The United States welcomes the return of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) inspection teams to Syria and their much-anticipated access to high-priority sites in the northern and coastal areas. We are encouraged by the meaningful progress made by the Syrian Government and the OPCW on the ground since the redeployment, including the significant discovery of undeclared chemical munitions, chemicals and related equipment. This is a major milestone for both Syria and the international community.

These developments follow the August 2025 and January 2026 sample analysis that identified two chemical warfare agents, as well as a degradation product, in buried barrels. The latest discovery serves to underscore what we all know: that the Al-Assad regime never fully declared the extent of its chemical weapons programme. As more sites and materials are discovered and assessed, we call on the OPCW and Syria to set the groundwork to enable expedited on-site destruction, where needed, in exceptional cases.

The United States took note of the Director-General's assessment that at least four locations visited by the Technical Secretariat could be declarable under the Chemical Weapons Convention. As such, we also urge Syria to update its national declaration in accordance with its obligations under the Convention.

The United States is eager to see progress on the Syrian chemical weapons file. Our meeting today marks a year and a half into the OPCW's effort in Syria to find, secure, declare and verifiably destroy any remnants of the Al-Assad regime's chemical weapons programme. While the mission faces myriad challenges, the OPCW and Syria have demonstrated adaptability, flexibility and shared commitment and determination to uphold the Convention and to close this chapter of Syria's history.

As Syria's Permanent Representative to the OPCW noted last month, Syria's progress thus far would not have been possible without the strong support of the international community. The United States therefore encourages Member States to consider both voluntary contributions to the OPCW's Syria mission and direct support to the Syrian Government's counter-chemical-weapons efforts.

Mr. Alrowaiei (Bahrain) (*spoke in Arabic*): I should like to express our thanks to the Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Mrs. Izumi Nakamitsu, for her valuable briefing on the latest monthly report on the

implementation of resolution 2118 (2013). I also welcome the participation of the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic and the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Türkiye in today's meeting.

The Kingdom of Bahrain has followed with great interest the latest report of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) and the subsequent significant field developments announced by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of the Syrian Arab Republic and its delegation to the OPCW regarding the discovery of munitions, materials, equipment and documents related to the former regime's chemical programme. This came within the framework of cooperation with the Organisation and ongoing efforts to address remaining issues in this file. The Kingdom believes that these developments constitute an important step towards bringing the Syrian chemical weapons file to a close. It stresses the importance of continuing cooperation and coordination between the OPCW and the Syrian Government to ensure the completion of activities to verify, secure and destroy such weapons in accordance with relevant international obligations.

The Kingdom of Bahrain affirms its full support for the Chemical Weapons Convention as one of the fundamental pillars of the disarmament and non-proliferation regime. It reiterates that it categorically rejects the use of chemical weapons, under any circumstances, by any party whatsoever. It underscores the importance of ensuring accountability and combating impunity.

In that connection, I would like to make the following points.

First, the Kingdom of Bahrain commends the professionalism with which the OPCW has gone about carrying out its mandate and the progress it has made in verification activities, field visits and the collection of relevant information and documentation, despite the security and logistical challenges it has faced during the recent period.

Secondly, the Kingdom welcomes the existing level of cooperation between the OPCW and the Syrian Government. That includes facilitating access to relevant sites and providing required documents and information, as well as support for ongoing technical activities. We believe that the results achieved in recent months confirm the importance of building on this positive momentum and continuing cooperation in the spirit of transparency and shared responsibility.

Thirdly, the Kingdom of Bahrain welcomes the measures taken by the Syrian Government to follow up on cases still under investigation and review. It encourages continued joint work with the Organisation to address the remaining issues on a technical, professional and objective basis and in a way that contributes to giving a full picture of this file and closing it definitively.

What has been achieved during the past period demonstrates that constructive cooperation between the OPCW and the Syrian Government represents the most effective path towards achieving real progress on this file. From this standpoint, the Kingdom of Bahrain calls upon the international community to continue supporting the efforts of the Organisation and the fraternal Syrian Arab Republic in a manner that accelerates the complete verification, securing and destruction of these items and enhances security and stability in Syria and the region as a whole.

Mr. Stamatekos (Greece): At the outset, I would like to thank the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Mrs. Izumi Nakamitsu, for her briefing. I also welcome the participation of the Permanent Representatives of the Syrian Arab Republic and of Türkiye in this meeting.

Greece reiterates its full support for the sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity of Syria and for a fully inclusive, Syrian-led and Syrian-owned political transition, in

the spirit of resolution 2254 (2015). The ongoing political transition in Syria will remain incomplete without the final resolution of the chemical weapons file, which remains an important legacy issue and a consequence of the prolonged conflict.

In this regard, I wish to highlight three points.

First, we welcome the positive developments highlighted by the High Representative regarding the ongoing efforts of the new Syrian Government to uncover the remnants of the Al-Assad regime's chemical weapons programme, secure the associated materials and equipment and prevent any potential threat to civilians.

In particular, the reported recent identification of chemical materials, equipment, stockpiles and munitions directly linked to the Al-Assad regime's chemical weapons programme, as well as their transfer to a secure storage facility, constitutes a crucial step towards the goal of the total elimination of the remaining chemical weapons in the country. Greece encourages the Syrian authorities to continue their constructive cooperation with the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), with the aim of accelerating field visits to suspected sites and destruction operations.

Nevertheless, we are concerned that 19 outstanding issues on Syria's initial declaration remain unresolved, noting in particular that, according to the OPCW Technical Secretariat, they involve large quantities of potentially undeclared or unverified chemical warfare agents and chemical munitions.

Allow me now to turn to the issue of the reported removal and destruction of 75 cylinders of category 3 chemical weapons in the Aleppo region last January without prior notification of the OPCW Technical Secretariat. In this regard, we welcome the preliminary information provided by Syria through its latest monthly report (S/2026/443) and take note that investigations are ongoing to determine the circumstances of the incident.

Secondly, Greece fully supports the efforts of Syria to resolve all outstanding issues of the Syrian chemical weapons file. In this regard, we are engaging with the competent Syrian authorities with a view to providing further assistance and capacity-building.

Thirdly, Greece strongly condemns the use of chemical weapons by anyone, anywhere, at any time and under any circumstances. Their use constitutes a grave violation of international law and may amount to war crimes and crimes against humanity. All perpetrators should be held accountable as a necessary means of providing justice to the victims. We commend the OPCW Investigation and Identification Team for its professional work towards establishing accountability for all those involved in the use of chemical weapons in Syria.

In conclusion, we reiterate our call for the unity of the Council in upholding resolution 2118 (2013) and the international norm against any use of chemical weapons. The Syrian people deserve finally to close this dark chapter of their recent history and move swiftly towards a more democratic, stable and peaceful future. Greece is committed to supporting Syria in a tangible manner throughout this process.

Mr. Mohamed Yusuf (Somalia): I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the three African members of the Security Council, namely the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Liberia and my own country, Somalia (A3).

We thank the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Mrs. Nakamitsu, for her briefing. We welcome the participation of the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic in today's meeting.

At the outset, the A3 reaffirms its unwavering commitment to the full implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention and reiterates its unequivocal condemnation of the use of chemical weapons anywhere, by anyone and under any

circumstances. We maintain that the use of such weapons is unacceptable and that accountability for their use is both a legal and moral imperative.

Against this background, the A3 wishes to highlight the following points.

First, we note the recommencement of deployments to Syria by the Technical Secretariat of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), following the temporary suspension due to security concerns in March 2026. This demonstrates a resilient framework for verification despite a challenging security environment. We also welcome the deployment conducted at the beginning of May 2026 to high-priority undeclared locations in the northern coastal and central areas.

Secondly, the A3 commends the Syrian Arab Republic's continued constructive cooperation and commitment to providing all necessary facilitation to the Technical Secretariat's teams, ensuring their access to Syrian territory and enabling them to complete their tasks. Through this cooperation, dozens of undeclared chemical munitions, such as aerial bombs and rockets, alongside thousands of pages of documentation, have been identified. These findings represent indispensable steps towards providing the necessary clarifications on the Syrian chemical weapons programme.

Thirdly, while we welcome these technical developments, the potential presence of undeclared chemical warfare agents and munitions remains a serious matter that requires continued transparency and investigation to ensure that the declaration can finally be considered accurate and complete. We also take note of the ongoing consultations regarding the expedited on-site destruction of chemical weapon remnants and encourage the finalization of arrangements to ensure the safety of personnel and the preservation of evidence.

Fourthly, progress continues to be influenced by the regional security environment, and we note the security advice that led to the temporary relocation of personnel earlier this year. We call for the immediate cessation of all external military actions against Syrian territories that undermine verification efforts. The A3 recognizes the critical importance of the needs and gaps assessment and urges the international community to provide the estimated €12.5 million required for 2027 to maintain operations and support capacity-building measures.

In conclusion, the A3 reiterates its steadfast support for the sovereignty, political independence, unity and territorial integrity of the Syrian Arab Republic. We emphasize that progress towards the complete elimination of chemical weapons in Syria requires sustained international support. We encourage continued dialogue and cooperation between Syria and the OPCW to permanently close this file.

Ms. Pavļuta-Deslandes (Latvia): Let me begin by thanking the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Mrs. Izumi Nakamitsu, for her informative briefing, and the Director-General of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) for the report. Let me also welcome the participation of the representatives of the Syrian Arab Republic and Türkiye in this meeting.

Latvia would like to emphasize the important example set by Syria. In a time of increased tensions and in a region seized with conflict, the new Syrian authorities are pursuing efforts towards stability, transparency, cooperation with the international community and compliance with international law. The elimination of one of the most dreadful types of weaponry is not just clear proof of the good faith of the Syrian authorities but also a powerful signal to States suffering from division and conflict that a new day and a better future are possible.

The use of chemical weapons is completely unacceptable anywhere, at any time and by anyone. It is critical to promptly and comprehensively investigate, identify and destroy all chemical weapons. Transparency and accountability for the brutal

crimes perpetrated by the Al-Assad regime against its own people play an integral part in the Syrian transitional justice process. We therefore note with concern that the turbulent security situation in the region negatively affected the ongoing efforts to eliminate chemical weapons in Syria, with the Technical Secretariat of the OPCW having been temporarily withdrawn from the country due to security concerns. While important cooperation continued in the meantime, it is regrettable that regional escalation delayed these crucial efforts.

We sincerely welcome the renewed deployments of the Technical Secretariat to Syria, the resumption of its activities on the ground and its continued cooperation with the Syrian authorities. The importance and effectiveness of full and unimpeded cooperation were vividly illustrated by the recent discovery of dozens of previously undeclared chemical munitions and related materiel as a result of the courageous and dedicated work of the Syrian team. We look forward to receiving further details regarding the ongoing deployment and the analysis of these considerable discoveries. In this regard, we also welcome the complementary role of the recently launched Breath of Freedom task force, which is led by Syria, in another example of its robust commitment to the Chemical Weapons Convention.

We continue to stress the need to strengthen and develop the technical capacities and resources of the Syrian authorities in order to eliminate all remnants of the Al-Assad regime's chemical weapons programme. We reiterate the positive example of the aforementioned Task Force in this regard and hope that further regional and international financial and technical support will follow.

In conclusion, allow me to once again express Latvia's appreciation for the good work of the OPCW and its Technical Secretariat, as well as for the dedicated cooperation of the Syrian authorities. Latvia will continue to remain a committed partner in the pursuit of our common goal: a Syria free of chemical weapons.

Mr. Moscoso (Panama) (*spoke in Spanish*): We thank the Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Izumi Nakamitsu, for her briefing. We also warmly welcome the representatives of the Syrian Arab Republic and Türkiye, who honour us with their participation today.

Eighteen months after the political transition in Syria, the authorities continue to confront challenges deeply rooted in the dark era of the Bashar Al-Assad regime. Among them, the chemical weapons file stands out because of its particular complexity, both because of the technical aspects involved and because of its implications for regional security and the credibility of the international non-proliferation regime.

Panama believes that it is important to recognize that the authorities inherited an issue that had accumulated over decades, the resolution of which will require perseverance, transparency and close cooperation with the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) and the international community. The challenge is considerable, but so too is the opportunity to make progress through cooperation and compliance with international obligations.

Panama reiterates its firm commitment to the fundamental principle that the use of chemical weapons by any actor, in any circumstances and under any conditions, is unacceptable, since their use constitutes crimes against humanity and their devastating effects transcend generations.

We take note of the Director-General's report and of the progress achieved. In particular, we note with interest the cooperation that has developed between Syria and the OPCW, as well as the support provided to the verification activities carried out by the Technical Secretariat. We believe that these developments represent an important

opportunity to move towards the definitive resolution of a file that has remained open for more than a decade, the successful closure of which would bring relief to the victims.

We encourage the Syrian authorities to deepen their cooperation with the OPCW. Transparency, timely access to sites of interest, the preservation of relevant evidence and documentation, and the continuous exchange of information are essential elements for moving towards full compliance with the obligations arising from the Convention.

We also express concern regarding the deterioration in security at various times during the period covered by the report, which forced the temporary suspension of on-site verification activities. In this context, it is essential that all actors refrain from actions that could aggravate the regional security situation and thereby hinder the important work that the OPCW is carrying out on the ground.

We also take note of the recent findings reported by the Technical Secretariat at previously undeclared locations. These discoveries confirm the importance of continuing verification efforts and establishing the facts, always on the basis of technical, objective and impartial criteria.

The complete and verifiable elimination of Syria's chemical weapons programme should not be viewed solely as a legal obligation. It also constitutes an essential contribution to the security of all Syrians and to the stability of the region. Panama will continue to support efforts aimed at promoting cooperation, transparency and full compliance with the Chemical Weapons Convention, with the aim of ensuring that these weapons are never used again.

Ms. Landi (Denmark): I too thank High Representative Nakamitsu for her briefing and welcome the representatives of Syria and Türkiye to this meeting.

Since our last meeting, we have seen further progress on the chemical weapons file in Syria. As we heard from the High Representative, cooperation between the Syrian Government and the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) has continued. Just last week, a significant amount of undeclared chemical weapons, related materials and documentation of the former Al-Assad regime's chemical weapons programme were discovered by the OPCW and the Syrian Government. This represents another example of sustained positive development towards the closure of this file.

Denmark commends the Syrian Government for its commitment to this file and its close cooperation with the OPCW. This is essential to finally establish the full scope of the former regime's programme and to move towards its verified and irreversible elimination. Denmark also welcomes the establishment of the Syrian-led Breath of Freedom international task force for the elimination of chemical weapons of the former Al-Assad regime and wishes to acknowledge the leadership displayed by the involved States.

Despite these positive developments, we would stress that the task ahead remains complex. Considering the complicated security environment and with many potentially relevant locations across Syria, it is important to continuously prioritize this file.

The Syrian authorities have previously stated that they do not possess the necessary means and resources to implement the country's obligations under the Chemical Weapons Convention. It is therefore important that the Syrian Government receive adequate support, and we encourage all actors to extend technical and financial assistance to Syria and the OPCW. This is crucial to secure progress, including deployments to the remaining sites, the development and implementation of plans for the

safe destruction of identified materials and the submission of a complete and accurate declaration of all remaining chemical weapons-related materials and activities.

Denmark recognizes the efforts to achieve accountability for the atrocious crimes committed by the former Al-Assad regime. In this regard, we note the recent arrest of 18 people suspected of involvement in the former regime's chemical weapons programme. Transitional justice remains key to a just and prosperous new Syria, and the Government's commitment to an independent, credible and transparent Syrian-led process on this agenda is of vital importance.

In conclusion, closing this file will send a strong message to the Syrian people that a new era has truly arrived, that there will be accountability and justice for past crimes and that the threat of chemical weapons can and will be eliminated once and for all. Denmark will continue to support efforts to this important end.

Ms. MacNaughtan (United Kingdom): I thank High Representative Nakamitsu for her briefing today, and I welcome the participation of the Permanent Representative of Syria and the representative of Türkiye in today's meeting.

The United Kingdom remains steadfast in our commitment to the complete, verified elimination of chemical weapons in Syria. Ridding Syria of Al-Assad's chemical weapons is a complex task. The former regime denied, concealed and lied about its chemical weapons programme. Despite this opaque and challenging context, Syria is achieving tangible results and accelerating the operation to identify and ultimately destroy the legacy of Al-Assad's chemical weapons programme.

Syria's significant operational support for the deployment of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) in early May allowed access to priority sites, enabling the identification of dozens of chemical munitions, such as aerial bombs and rockets. This is an important moment. Not only has this reduced the residual chemical weapons threat to the Syrian people, but it also provides further proof of Al-Assad's attempt to actively deceive the international community. The Al-Assad regime claimed repeatedly that it had no active chemical weapons programme after 2014. This discovery demonstrates unequivocally that this claim was false.

Sustained international support will continue to be essential for a Syria free of chemical weapons. In March, the United Kingdom was proud to stand with Syria and international partners to launch the Breath of Freedom task force here in New York. The Task Force, working in full coordination with the OPCW Technical Secretariat and other States parties, brings together expertise, experience and support to identify, secure and verifiably destroy the Al-Assad regime's chemical weapons programme. It also serves as a vehicle to de-conflict and to direct broader offers of support from the international community.

We encourage all States parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention to support Syria's efforts. We would also like to take this opportunity to thank the outgoing OPCW Director-General, Fernando Arias, for the central role that he has played.

For over 10 years, the international community has sought justice for those who suffered under the brutality of the Al-Assad regime. Owing to Syria's efforts, accountability for those who used chemical weapons is now in reach. The recent arrest of the alleged perpetrators of the 2013 Ghutah sarin attack represents an important step. Together, we should maintain this momentum and eradicate chemical weapons once and for all.

Mr. Sun Lei (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank High Representative Izumi Nakamitsu for her briefing and welcome the Permanent Representatives of Syria and the representative of Türkiye to this meeting.

China stands consistently and firmly against the use of chemical weapons by any State, organization or individual under any circumstances. Any use of chemical weapons must be strongly condemned.

China takes note of the recent progress on the Syrian chemical weapons issue and supports the engagement and cooperation of the Technical Secretariat of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) with Syria on the outstanding issues. The Syrian chemical weapons issue has been under discussion for more than 10 years and should be brought swiftly to a close to help Syria redirect resources towards national development.

We commend the Syrian transitional Government for reaffirming its commitment to fulfilling its obligations under the Chemical Weapons Convention and recognize its cooperation with the OPCW.

We take note of the efforts made by Syria to rebuild its national justice system and support Syria in following the Syrian-led, Syrian-owned principle to advance inclusive political transition, achieve early reconciliation and avoid internal division.

The accountability functions of the Investigation and Identification Team and the Office of Special Missions have exceeded the mandates of the Convention. Over the years, the Syrian chemical weapons-related accountability mechanisms have become a hallmark of the OPCW being politicized, seriously jeopardizing the Organisation's authority and effectiveness.

The Technical Secretariat should uphold the mandates of the Convention, maintain an objective and impartial position and rigorously observe the provisions of the Convention in handling the alleged use of chemical weapons in order to ensure that its findings can stand the test of history.

Once the Syrian missions are complete, the Syrian-related mechanisms should also come to an end in order to allow the OPCW to restore its technical nature and to avoid creating antagonism and confrontation.

The OPCW is one of the platforms of global counter-terrorism. The international community should regard counter-terrorism as an important dimension of its efforts to address the Syrian chemical weapons issue.

China urges the Syrian transitional Government to fulfil its international obligations by taking all effective measures to resolutely combat all international terrorist organizations designated by the Security Council, including the Eastern Turkistan Islamic Movement.

The OPCW should strengthen early warning and monitoring and assist States parties in building their capacity for compliance so as to prevent dangerous chemicals and sensitive technologies from falling into the hands of terrorists.

Mr. Jadoon (Pakistan): I thank Under-Secretary-General Izumi Nakamitsu for her briefing. We welcome the participation of Syria and Türkiye in today's meeting.

Pakistan reiterates its firm opposition to the use of chemical weapons by anyone, anywhere and under any circumstances. The Chemical Weapons Convention remains a cornerstone of the global disarmament framework, and we support all efforts towards its universalization, as well as its full, effective and non-discriminatory implementation.

Pakistan appreciates the commitment of the Syrian authorities to extend full cooperation to the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW). This includes providing the necessary facilities to ensure the success of the work of the Technical Secretariat teams and their unrestricted access to all suspected sites associated

with the chemical weapons programme. Such cooperation contributes to accelerating the process of eliminating potential remnants of the chemical weapons programme.

We also note the OPCW Director-General's report that 19 out of 26 outstanding issues remain unresolved. The Technical Secretariat continues to identify locations that could be declarable under the Convention. The Secretariat has also conducted a needs and gaps assessment, including a non-exhaustive list of gaps between what the Syrian authorities must provide and the capacity they have at their disposal.

In addition, the security situation and the occupation of parts of the country continue to impact the timely and effective implementation of the mandate. It is important to enhance capacities and extend cooperation to the Syrian authorities in overcoming obstacles and challenges associated with this complex file. Such cooperation is critical in addressing several challenges, including the nature of suspected sites, institutional constraints and the limited technological capacity and experience of Syrian national teams in handling, transporting and storing chemical munitions. We commend all those extending cooperation to the Syrian authorities to build capacity and enhance institutional capabilities. In this respect, we particularly wish to recognize the efforts of the brotherly countries of Türkiye and Qatar.

The OPCW Technical Secretariat must continue to be enabled to carry out its independent verification to eliminate suspected chemical weapons in Syria and any risks of proliferation, in compliance with the Chemical Weapons Convention. We hope that the continued positive engagement between the Technical Secretariat and the Syrian authorities will build further on the positive momentum to resolve all outstanding issues at the earliest and close this file.

Mr. Bonnafont (France) (*spoke in French*): I welcome the presence of the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Mrs. Izumi Nakamitsu, and the representatives of Syria and Türkiye.

We have listened carefully to Mrs. Nakamitsu's briefing. We commend the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) for its independence, rigour, professionalism and commitment.

We all bear in mind the memory of the victims of Ghutah, Khan Shaykhun and Duma — men, women and children massacred by sarin-based chemical attacks carried out by the regime of Bashar Al-Assad to terrorize those who fought for freedom.

We revisited those tragic images during the launch last March of the international Breath of Freedom task force initiative, which France considered its duty to join. Alongside our partners, we support the new Syrian authorities in their cooperation with the OPCW to dismantle the military chemical programme inherited from the Al-Assad era, meticulously developed under Hafez Al-Assad before being deployed by his son, Bashar Al-Assad.

For years, and despite having joined the Chemical Weapons Convention as early as 2013, the ousted regime used those inhumane weapons against its own population, as has been proven in at least nine cases documented by independent investigations. Denying it makes no sense. The regime obstructed OPCW teams, provided incomplete declarations on the status of its chemical programme and concealed the true extent of its weapons stockpiles. The OPCW's work in Syria is only just beginning to reveal the scale of the programme hidden from the international community.

An important milestone was reached last month: visits to undeclared sites enabled the OPCW to discover dozens of munitions and chemical agents — including aerial bombs and rockets — as well as thousands of pages of documentation. This is a first since the beginning of the transition, and we congratulate the Syrian authorities and the OPCW experts on this work.

It is essential that those stockpiles of chemical weapons be secured and destroyed as soon as possible. We commend the Syrian authorities' cooperation with the OPCW towards that end, which marks a new chapter in their country's history. France thanks the OPCW teams for their professionalism and calls on them to continue keeping the Security Council informed of their progress. France will continue to provide financial support for the OPCW's activities on the Syrian dossier.

Much remains to be done to achieve the complete and verified chemical disarmament of Syria. In addition to the 26 declared sites, nearly 100 undeclared sites remain to be inspected. Syria's continued commitment to this effort will be necessary to heal the legacy of the Al-Assad era chemical programme. Syria is deploying significant resources to fulfil its responsibilities as a State party to the Chemical Weapons Convention and to meet the expectations of the OPCW and all States parties. Thus, the restoration of Syria's rights and privileges as a State party to the Chemical Weapons Convention can be envisaged as a prospect. The discovery and declaration of the remnants of this programme will contribute to the fight against impunity, and France will continue to mobilize the International Partnership against Impunity for the Use of Chemical Weapons with this aim in mind.

Syria's chemical disarmament sends an important signal to the international community as a whole, contributing to the seriousness and effectiveness of international mechanisms to monitor compliance with the prohibition on chemical weapons. For Syria, it constitutes a decisive step towards establishing a new, stable and sovereign Syria that respects the rights of its citizens, is fully integrated into its regional environment and behaves like a responsible actor within the international community.

France reaffirms its support for an inclusive political transition in Syria in accordance with the principles of resolution 2254 (2015).

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of Colombia.

I thank High Representative Izumi Nakamitsu for her briefing. I also welcome the presence of the Permanent Representatives of Syria and Türkiye.

In the light of the information presented, I would like to make the following points.

First, my delegation welcomes the sustained efforts of the transitional Government towards the full and verifiable implementation of the international obligations assumed by Syria under the Chemical Weapons Convention. Colombia recognizes the concrete progress made in investigations and the provision of information as a result of the transitional Government's cooperation with the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW). In that regard, my country urges enhanced cooperation in order to fully clarify the scope of the chemical weapons programme and ensure compliance. Likewise, in line with the OPCW report (S/2026/443), Colombia calls for the provision of financial and technical support for the implementation of OPCW activities and the development of the technical capacity required for those purposes.

Secondly, my delegation reiterates its call for redoubled efforts to resolve the outstanding issues relating to potentially significant quantities of munitions and chemical agents that have still not been declared or verified. The information reported by the OPCW demonstrates the need to adequately safeguard suspected sites and prevent the loss or alteration of evidence. All actions conducive to the verifiable and definitive closure of the file can make a concrete contribution to the security and stability of Syria and the region.

Thirdly, although Syria has remained relatively on the margins of the escalation of tensions in the region, the security situation continues to constitute an operational limitation on progress. My delegation notes with concern that the latest reports reiterate

security challenges attributable to hostilities in the region, which prevent access to relevant sites. Colombia insists on the call for full respect for the political independence, sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity of Syria.

In conclusion, my country reaffirms its recognition of the technical, transparent and impartial work of the OPCW, as well as the importance of the full implementation of the Convention and of the international disarmament and non-proliferation regime. It also reaffirms its absolute rejection of the use of chemical weapons by any State, organization or individual, under any circumstances and for any purpose.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I give the floor to the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic.

Mr. Olabi (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I congratulate the President and her friendly country, Colombia, on assuming the presidency of the Security Council for this month and wish them every success during their presidency. I also thank Mrs. Izumi Nakamitsu, Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, for her briefing. I thank her for her cooperation and for her commitment to maintaining ongoing communication with us.

In the context of the Syrian Government's commitment to preserving national and regional security and safeguarding the global non-proliferation regime, the tireless efforts of Syrian national teams have recently culminated in the identification and securing of missiles and chemical munitions linked to the chemical programme of the defunct regime, similar to those it used in its attacks against Syrian men and women.

In this regard, we thank the friendly delegations that commended that achievement today. We believe that such commendations are deserved — first and foremost — by the national teams that worked day and night and were behind that achievement, from the Ministries for Defence, the Interior, Intelligence, Emergency and Disaster Management, Health and Foreign Affairs. The national teams were able to achieve this progress despite the challenges posed by the severe shortage of specialized personnel, limited advanced equipment and supplies, the scarcity of high-quality information on suspected sites and the need to work in an extremely difficult security environment. Our teams reached high-priority and high-risk sites and handled highly sensitive materials and munitions professionally, including by transporting and securing them and facilitating access for the teams of the Technical Secretariat to conduct verification procedures in accordance with approved standards.

What we are witnessing today is the result of months of diligent work involving gathering and analysing information, pursuing and monitoring those involved, conducting investigations with detainees and building the capacities of our teams through consultation and cooperation with our international partners. Our teams carried out a mission that constituted a decisive turning point in efforts to uncover the Al-Assad regime's chemical weapons programme and a major leap forward on the path towards accountability. In doing so, they rendered a great service to the region and the world by confronting proliferation risks and enhancing Syria's security and stability, despite the magnitude of the challenges. We salute the efforts and dedication of our national teams.

Since the liberation of Syria, Syria has facilitated 32 visits by the teams of the Technical Secretariat of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) to suspected sites and has provided it with more than 60,000 pages of documents related to the chemical weapons programme of the defunct regime. Those efforts have contributed significantly to reducing the number of suspected sites and identifying priorities, and they have enabled Syria to move from facilitating those efforts to the elimination of all remnants of the chemical programme.

The positive feelings resulting from this progress are mixed with the pain of recalling one of the darkest aspects of the previous regime's era. The technical teams that worked to transport those munitions recalled the suffering of the past years as they documented crimes involving similar munitions used by the Al-Assad regime. But the paradox is that this is the first time that they reached those munitions before they could be used against them. We survived. The discovery of those munitions provides an extremely important information base for uncovering and documenting evidence and helps to make progress in investigations, thereby strengthening efforts towards accountability and the identification of those involved.

In the context of other national efforts to achieve justice and accountability, the Syrian authorities have arrested a number of individuals who worked on the inherited chemical weapons programme. At the level of international cooperation, at the beginning of May the Syrian Minister of Justice, Mr. Mazhar Al-Wais, met the Director-General of the OPCW, Mr. Fernando Arias, at the Organisation's headquarters in The Hague to discuss ways to enhance the role of the OPCW in achieving justice by supporting national accountability processes, exchanging information and cooperating in investigations. The Permanent Mission of Syria in The Hague, in cooperation with the missions of a number of friendly States, also organized an event entitled "Roles and responsibilities in the pursuit of accountability", in partnership with a Syrian human rights organization.

Syria has suffered from chemical weapons for more than 12 years, since their first use at the end of 2014, and today it is determined to rid itself of that legacy. Despite the aforementioned complexities surrounding the chemical dossier, whether related to gaps and shortcomings in institutional memory and structure or to weak human and technical capacities and capabilities, the Syrian Government continues its diligent work. In that context, it took the initiative to establish an international working group, the Breath of Freedom task force, as a Syrian-led coordination framework to support related efforts. Syria looks forward today to the support of the international community for that team, as addressing the proliferation risks that affect our collective security is a responsibility borne by everyone. The multifaceted complexities of the inherited chemical file make it difficult for any single entity to deal with it properly and highlight the vital need to provide all possible support in overcoming those challenges, whether at the operational level or in the path towards achieving justice and holding those involved accountable.

Syrians have suffered as a result of the many tensions that surrounded this file in the past. They also suffered from the previous regime's policy of denial, manipulation and disinformation and from its obstruction of investigation and inspection teams. Today, we are before a new and entirely different Syria. Syria, which was once a victim of chemical weapons, is now determined to rid itself of the effects of that era and to become a Syria that views all States members of the OPCW as partners with shared goals.

In the light of the new positive atmosphere made possible by the transparent and open approach of the Syrian Government, we stress the need to avoid returning to outdated practices with regard to the chemical file and to refrain from politicization by treating this as a technical issue, given the potential harm politicization poses to progress. Supporting Syria's efforts in that context will help transform the file that has led to much polarization in the Council and in the OPCW into a matter of consensus and will help turn it into a model of international cooperation in support of the global non-proliferation regime.

In conclusion, between the previous briefing and the current one, I had the opportunity to attend, in April, the annual commemorations of the Duma and Khan Shaykhun attacks in Syria. From that platform, I pledged to the victims' families to work to make our forum one that preserves their rights and works to hold accountable those

who committed atrocities against them. That was a promise that we made, and here we are today fulfilling it.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Türkiye.

Mr. Yıldız (Türkiye): I would also like to thank High Representative Izumi Nakamitsu for her comprehensive briefing.

The chemical weapons file in Syria remains one of the most tragic and disturbing legacies of the Al-Assad era. At the same time, there are now grounds for optimism. The Syrian Government has been demonstrating a genuine commitment to addressing this issue in close coordination with the international community. We welcome the progress achieved on the ground, facilitated by the serious constructive engagement and the support extended to the personnel of the Technical Secretariat of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) in carrying out their duties. We also commend the professionalism and dedication of the Technical Secretariat, including its efforts to visit numerous sites, conduct interviews and collect and analyse samples. To that end, we particularly commend the efforts undertaken jointly by Syria and the OPCW in recent months to locate remnants of the former regime's clandestine chemical weapons programme, including undeclared chemical munitions, agents, equipment and related documentation. We view this development as an important step towards the complete elimination of the remnants of the former chemical weapons programme. At the same time, these discoveries once again serve as a stark reminder of the scale of repression and suffering inflicted upon the Syrian people by the former regime, as mentioned by the representative of Syria in relation to the attacks on Duma and Khan Shaykhun, especially as regards the de-escalation zones declared by the United Nations.

We all recognize that the chemical weapons file is highly technical and operationally complex. Following years of concealment and obstruction, significant information gaps continue to complicate verification efforts and operational planning. We firmly believe that sustainable progress can be achieved only through gradual, practical and well-coordinated cooperation with Syria, taking fully into account the realities on the ground. In this regard, the Breath of Freedom task force plays an important role in supporting the Syrian Government in both technical and logistical terms. The Task Force provides a practical framework for aligning international assistance with Syrian priorities and operational requirements. Türkiye will continue to contribute to the efforts aimed at strengthening Syria's preparedness and technical capacity to address chemical weapons-related challenges in line with OPCW standards. In this context, Türkiye hosted the first workshop of the Task Force in Ankara on 16 and 17 February this year. We also look forward to the upcoming meeting in The Hague next week.

We are encouraged by the Syrian Government's stated commitment to ensuring accountability for chemical weapons attacks. The time is ripe to reinstate the suspended rights and privileges of Syria under the Chemical Weapons Convention. In closing, we encourage all Member States to lend their full support towards achieving a chemical weapons-free Syria. Türkiye reiterates its strong support for Syrian-led and Syrian-owned efforts to identify, secure, declare and destroy chemical weapons-related materials in cooperation with the OPCW and other relevant stakeholders because the securing and the safe storage of these materials are critical not only for Syria's national security but also for regional and international peace and security.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): There are no more names inscribed on the list of speakers.

The meeting rose at 11.25 a.m.