

Statement attributable to the Spokesperson for the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission to Investigate Allegations of the Use of Chemical Weapons in the Syrian Arab Republic

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The Secretary-General is pleased to announce that the Government of Syria has formally accepted the modalities essential for cooperation to ensure the proper, safe and efficient conduct of the Mission. The departure of the team is now imminent.

As agreed with the Government of Syria, the team will remain in the country to conduct its activities, including on-site visits, for a period of up to 14 days, extendable upon mutual consent.

The Secretary-General wishes to express his appreciation to the Government of Syria for its cooperation. Our goal remains a fully independent and impartial inquiry. The Secretary-General has complete faith in the integrity and professionalism of Dr. Ake Sellstrom and his team.

The Secretary-General also wishes to express his appreciation to the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and the World Health Organization for their extraordinary efforts in supporting the Mission.

The Secretary-General believes that an effective mechanism to investigate allegations of the use of chemical weapons can serve as an important deterrent against their employment.

The overwhelming support of the international community for this investigation makes clear that the use of chemical weapons by any side under any circumstances would constitute an outrageous crime.