

Statement attributable to the Spokesman for the Secretary-General on Syria : completion of removal of chemical weapons material

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The Secretary-General welcomes the removal of the remaining 7.2 per cent of chemical weapons material from Syria. This now completes and brings to 100% the destruction and removal of the declared chemical weapons material from Syria.

The Secretary-General congratulates the OPCW-UN Joint Mission for completing this most challenging of tasks in an active war zone. He is particularly grateful to the Governments of the People's Republic of China, Denmark, Norway, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom and the United States – who have provided critical resources and support to the operations. He is also appreciative of the role of the Republic of Cyprus and the Republic of Lebanon for their facilitation and continuous cooperation. He further thanks the Italian authorities for providing a port for transloading part of the cargo, after which the rest of the chemical weapons materials will be transported onward to various destruction facilities. Throughout this process, the Secretary-General has welcomed the cooperation of the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic in assisting the Joint Mission to carry out its tasks.

The Secretary-General has repeatedly expressed his profound distress at the great tragedy that has befallen Syria and its people. He notes that when there is political will -- as demonstrated by the successful implementation of the mandated tasks of the Joint Mission -- there can be progress towards peace. He demands the same of all involved in Syria, the region and the international community.