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Letter dated 26 November 2024 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to transmit herewith the 134th monthly report of the Director General of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), submitted pursuant to paragraph 12 of Security Council resolution 2118 (2013) (see annex).

The report provides information on the activities of OPCW in implementing Security Council resolution 2118 (2013) and the relevant provisions of the decisions of the OPCW Executive Council in relation to the elimination of the chemical weapons programme of the Syrian Arab Republic. It covers the period from 24 October to 23 November 2024.

As I have stated previously, the use of chemical weapons anywhere by anyone, and under any circumstances, is intolerable. Impunity for their use is equally unacceptable. It is imperative that those who have used chemical weapons be identified and held accountable. Unity in the Security Council is essential to achieve this urgent objective.

I should be grateful if you would bring this matter to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) António **Guterres**

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Annex

[Original: Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish]

I have the honour to transmit to you my report entitled “Progress in the elimination of the Syrian chemical weapons programme”, prepared in accordance with the relevant provisions of decision EC-M-33/DEC.1 of the Executive Council of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and Security Council resolution 2118 (2013), both dated 27 September 2013, for transmission to the Security Council (see enclosure). My report covers the period from 24 October to 23 November 2024 and also covers the reporting requirements of Executive Council decision EC-M-34/DEC.1, dated 15 November 2013.

(*Signed*) Fernando **Arias**
Director General
Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons

Enclosure

[Original: Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish]

Report by the Director General of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons

Progress in the elimination of the Syrian chemical weapons programme

1. In accordance with subparagraph 2(f) of the decision by the Executive Council (the Council) at its Thirty-Third Meeting (EC-M-33/DEC.1, dated 27 September 2013), the Technical Secretariat (the Secretariat) is to report to the Council on a monthly basis regarding the implementation of that decision. In accordance with paragraph 12 of United Nations Security Council resolution 2118 (2013), the report by the Secretariat is also to be submitted to the Security Council through the Secretary-General.

2. 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 that decision, the Council decided that the Secretariat should report on its implementation "in conjunction with its reporting required by subparagraph 2(f) of Council decision EC-M-33/DEC.1".

3. The Council, at its Forty-Eighth Meeting, adopted a decision entitled "Reports of the OPCW Fact-Finding Mission in Syria" (EC-M-48/DEC.1, dated 4 February 2015), noting the Director-General's intent to include reports of the OPCW Fact-Finding Mission in Syria (FFM), along with information on the Council's discussion thereof, as part of the monthly reporting pursuant to United Nations Security Council resolution 2118 (2013). Similarly, the Council, at its Eighty-First Session, adopted a decision entitled "Report by the Director-General Regarding the Declaration and Related Submissions by the Syrian Arab Republic" (EC-81/DEC.4, dated 23 March 2016), noting the Director-General's intent to provide information on the implementation of that decision.

4. The Council, at its Eighty-Third Session, adopted a decision entitled "OPCW-United Nations Joint Investigative Mechanism Reports on Chemical Weapons Use in the Syrian Arab Republic" (EC-83/DEC.5, dated 11 November 2016). In subparagraph 12(a) of that decision, the Council decided that the Director-General shall "regularly inform the Council on the implementation of this decision and incorporate information regarding the implementation of this decision into his monthly reporting to the United Nations Security Council, through the United Nations Secretary-General, regarding EC-M-33/DEC.1".

5. The Council, at its Ninety-Fourth Session, adopted a decision entitled "Addressing the Possession and Use of Chemical Weapons by the Syrian Arab Republic" (EC-94/DEC.2, dated 9 July 2020). In paragraph 12 of that decision, the Council decided that the Director-General shall "regularly report to the Council on the implementation of this decision and decide[d] also that the Director-General shall provide a copy of this decision and its associated reports by the Secretariat to all States Parties and to the United Nations Security Council and the United Nations General Assembly through the United Nations Secretary-General".

6. The Conference of the States Parties (the Conference), at its Twenty-Fifth Session, adopted a decision entitled "Addressing the Possession and Use of Chemical Weapons by the Syrian Arab Republic" (C-25/DEC.9, dated 21 April 2021). In paragraph 8 of this decision, the Conference decided that the Director-General shall regularly report to the Council and States Parties on whether the Syrian Arab Republic has completed all of the measures contained in paragraph 5 of Council decision EC-94/DEC.2.

7. This, the 134th monthly report, is therefore submitted in accordance with the aforementioned Council and Conference decisions and includes information relevant to the period from 24 October to 23 November 2024.

Progress achieved by the Syrian Arab Republic in meeting the requirements of Executive Council decisions EC-M-33/DEC.1 and EC-M-34/DEC.1

8. Progress by the Syrian Arab Republic is as follows:

(a) As stated in previous reports, the Secretariat has verified the destruction of all 27 chemical weapons production facilities (CWPFs) declared by the Syrian Arab Republic.

(b) On 15 November 2024, the Syrian Arab Republic submitted to the Council its 132nd monthly report (EC-108/P/NAT.2, dated 15 November 2024) regarding activities on its territory related to the destruction of its chemical weapons and CWPFs, as required by paragraph 19 of EC-M-34/DEC.1.

Progress in the elimination of Syrian chemical weapons by States Parties hosting destruction activities

9. As stated in previous reports, all of the chemicals declared by the Syrian Arab Republic that were removed from its territory in 2014 have been destroyed.

Activities carried out by the Technical Secretariat with respect to Executive Council decisions EC-81/DEC.4 and EC-83/DEC.5

10. The Secretariat, through the Declaration Assessment Team (DAT), continues its efforts to clarify all outstanding issues regarding the initial and subsequent declarations submitted by the Syrian Arab Republic in accordance with the Chemical Weapons Convention (the Convention), paragraph 1 of Council decision EC-M-33/DEC.1, paragraph 3 of Council decision EC-81/DEC.4, paragraph 6 of Council decision EC-83/DEC.5, and paragraph 5 of Council decision EC-94/DEC.2.

11. The DAT continues to analyse the information gathered during the twenty-eighth round of consultations from the documents submitted by the Syrian National Authority, interviews, and explanations provided by Syrian experts.

12. With regard to the results of the analysis of the samples collected in May 2024, the Secretariat, through a note verbale dated 1 November 2024, sent a reminder to the Syrian National Authority to provide the requested information at the earliest in order for the DAT to proceed with its assessment of the relevant outstanding issues. Subsequently, the Syrian National Authority provided to the Secretariat, through a note verbale dated 11 November 2024, explanations of the results of the analysis of these samples. The DAT is currently assessing the information provided by the Syrian National Authority and will report the outcome of this assessment in due time.

13. Through another note verbale dated 1 November 2024, the Secretariat requested the Syrian National Authority to identify, at the earliest, among the more than 1,000 pages of information it submitted to the Secretariat during the twenty-eighth round of consultations, those elements relevant to the explanations it had provided, to progress in resolving outstanding issues. As at the date of this report, the Secretariat had not received the Syrian National Authority’s response to this request.

14. As a result of the work of the DAT, the Syrian Arab Republic has submitted 20 amendments to its initial declaration, declaring additional and previously undeclared elements of its chemical weapons programme. The DAT raised and reported a total of 26 outstanding issues. These include two recently opened outstanding issues related to potentially undeclared full-scale development and production of chemical weapons

at two declared chemical weapons-related facilities. The facilities were previously declared as having never been in operation. So far, seven issues have been resolved, while 19 remain open.

15. At this stage, the substance of the 19 outstanding issues previously reported by the DAT remains a serious concern to the Secretariat, as it involves large quantities of chemical warfare agents and munitions that were reportedly destroyed or otherwise consumed prior to the Syrian Arab Republic's accession to the Convention, the fate of which cannot be fully verified by the Secretariat. It also involves potentially large quantities of chemical warfare agents, the production of which has not been declared by the Syrian Arab Republic to the Secretariat.

16. The Secretariat remains fully committed to implementing its mandate aimed at verifying the fulfilment of the Syrian Arab Republic's declaration obligations under the Convention, decisions of the policy-making organs, and relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions.

17. Considering the identified gaps, inconsistencies, and discrepancies that remain unresolved, the Secretariat assesses that the declaration submitted by the Syrian Arab Republic still cannot be considered accurate and complete in accordance with the Convention, Council decisions EC-M-33/DEC.1, EC-81/DEC.4, EC-83/DEC.5, and EC-94/DEC.2, as well as Conference decisions C-SS-4/DEC.3 (dated 27 June 2018) and C-25/DEC.9, and United Nations Security Council resolution 2118 (2013).

18. In accordance with paragraph 10 of Council decision EC-83/DEC.5, the Secretariat is continuing to assess conditions for the conduct of inspections at the sites identified by the OPCW-United Nations Joint Investigative Mechanism in its third and fourth reports.

19. As mandated by paragraph 11 of Council decision EC-83/DEC.5, the Secretariat planned for the eleventh round of inspections of the Barzah and Jamrayah facilities of the Scientific Studies and Research Centre (SSRC) to take place in September 2024.

20. The eleventh round of SSRC inspections was initially due to take place from 18 to 24 September 2024, but was postponed for security reasons. It eventually took place from 12 to 20 November 2024. The Secretariat will report on the outcome of these inspections in due course. The twelfth round of inspections is planned to take place before the end of 2024.

21. With regard to the presence of a Schedule 2.B.04 chemical in the sample collected during the November 2018 inspection, and to the origin and usage of a chemical of a dual-use nature observed by the inspection team during the September 2022 inspection at the SSRC Barzah facilities, the Secretariat has not received any new information that might resolve these matters, and will further engage on them with the Syrian National Authority during the next round of SSRC inspections.

Other activities carried out by the Technical Secretariat with respect to the Syrian Arab Republic

22. In a note verbale to the Secretariat dated 9 July 2021, the Syrian National Authority also reported the destruction in an attack on a former CWPF of, inter alia, two chlorine cylinders used in the chemical weapons incident that took place in Douma, the Syrian Arab Republic, on 7 April 2018. In its reply dated 15 July 2021, the Secretariat requested the Syrian Arab Republic to, inter alia, provide all relevant information regarding the unauthorised movement of the two cylinders from the site where they had been stored and inspected in November 2020, 60 kilometres away from the site where the cylinders had allegedly been destroyed. As at the date of this report, the Secretariat had not received a response to this request. The Secretariat will keep the Council informed of further developments on this matter.

23. The United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) continues to provide support to the OPCW Mission in the Syrian Arab Republic in accordance with the Tripartite Agreement concluded between the OPCW, UNOPS, and the Syrian Arab Republic. This Agreement facilitates the Secretariat's mandated activities in the Syrian Arab Republic pertaining to the full elimination of the Syrian chemical weapons programme, and to any subsequent decision or resolution of the relevant organs of the OPCW or the United Nations, as well as any bilateral agreements concluded between the OPCW and the Syrian Arab Republic. An agreement on a six-month extension is being finalised. The current extension of the Agreement remains valid up to and including 31 December 2024.

Activities carried out with respect to the OPCW Fact-Finding Mission in Syria

24. Guided by Council decisions EC-M-48/DEC.1 and EC-M-50/DEC.1 (dated 4 February 2015 and 23 November 2015, respectively), as well as by United Nations Security Council resolution 2209 (2015), the FFM continues to study all available information relating to allegations of the use of chemical weapons in the Syrian Arab Republic.

25. The FFM is continuing its work and will issue further reports in due course.

Activities carried out by the Technical Secretariat with respect to decision C-SS-4/DEC.3 of the Conference of the States Parties at its Fourth Special Session related to the use of chemical weapons in the Syrian Arab Republic

26. Pursuant to paragraph 10 of C-SS-4/DEC.3, the Secretariat established the Investigation and Identification Team (IIT) to identify the perpetrators of the use of chemical weapons in the Syrian Arab Republic by identifying and reporting on all information potentially relevant to the origin of those chemical weapons in those instances in which the FFM determines or has determined that use or likely use occurred, and cases for which the OPCW-United Nations Joint Investigative Mechanism did not issue a report.

27. The IIT is continuing its investigations in accordance with the Note entitled "Work of the Investigation and Identification Team Established by Decision C-SS-4/DEC.3 (Dated 27 June 2018)" (EC-91/S/3, dated 28 June 2019) and will issue further reports in due course. In accordance with paragraph 12 of C-SS-4/DEC.3, the Secretariat will continue to preserve and provide information to the mechanism established by the United Nations General Assembly in resolution 71/248 (2016), as well as to any relevant investigatory entities established under the auspices of the United Nations. Further, the Secretariat will continue to integrate knowledge and expertise from the IIT, in line with the Convention and decisions adopted by the policy-making organs, into standard operations.

Activities carried out by the Technical Secretariat with respect to Executive Council decision EC-94/DEC.2

28. In paragraph 5 of decision EC-94/DEC.2, the Council decided:

> to request, pursuant to paragraph 36 of Article VIII of the Convention, that the Syrian Arab Republic complete all of the following measures within 90 days of this decision in order to redress the situation:
>
> (a) declare to the Secretariat the facilities where the chemical weapons, including precursors, munitions, and devices, used in the 24, 25, and 30 March 2017 attacks were developed, produced, stockpiled, and operationally stored for delivery;

(b) declare to the Secretariat all of the chemical weapons it currently possesses, including sarin, sarin precursors, and chlorine that is not intended for purposes not prohibited under the Convention, as well as chemical weapons production facilities and other related facilities; and

(c) resolve all of the outstanding issues regarding its initial declaration of its chemical weapons stockpile and programme.

29. At the end of the 90 days, the Syrian Arab Republic had not completed any of these measures.

30. With regard to the inspections mandated by paragraph 8 of EC-94/DEC.2, the Secretariat is monitoring the current security situation and will inform the Syrian Arab Republic when it is prepared to deploy for this purpose.

Activities carried out by the Technical Secretariat with respect to Conference of the States Parties decision C-25/DEC.9

31. In paragraph 7 of decision C-25/DEC.9, the Conference decided, after careful review, and without prejudice to the Syrian Arab Republic's obligations under the Convention, pursuant to subparagraph 21(k) of Article VIII and paragraph 2 of Article XII of the Convention, to suspend several rights and privileges of the Syrian Arab Republic under the Convention.

32. In paragraph 8 of the decision, the Conference decided, inter alia, that the rights and privileges of the Syrian Arab Republic suspended in accordance with paragraph 7 of decision C-25/DEC.9 are reinstated by the Conference once the Director-General has reported to the Council that the Syrian Arab Republic has completed all of the measures stipulated in paragraph 5 of EC-94/DEC.2. As at the date of this report, the Syrian Arab Republic had not completed any of these measures.

33. The Secretariat will continue to engage with the Syrian Arab Republic with regard to the completion of said measures and will continue to report to the Council as mandated.

Decision on addressing the threat from chemical weapons use and the threat of future use

34. As previously reported, at its Twenty-Eighth Session, the Conference adopted a decision entitled "Addressing the Threat from Chemical Weapons Use and the Threat of Future Use" (C-28/DEC.12, dated 30 November 2023). The Secretariat is reporting on the elements in the decision concerning the Syrian Arab Republic's chemical weapons dossier in accordance with existing reporting obligations.

Supplementary resources

35. The Trust Fund for Syria Missions was established in November 2015 to support the FFM and other remaining activities, which presently include the work of the DAT and the IIT, as well as the biannual inspections of the SSRC and the two sites identified in paragraph 8 of EC-94/DEC.2. As at the cut-off date of this report, total contributions and pledges to this fund stood at EUR 46 million. Contribution agreements had been concluded with Australia, Canada, Chile, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Japan, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Monaco, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, the Republic of Korea, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United States of America, and the European Union.

Conclusion

36. The future activities of the OPCW Mission in the Syrian Arab Republic will focus on: the work of the FFM; the implementation of Council decisions EC-M-33/DEC.1, EC-81/DEC.4, and EC-83/DEC.5, including declaration-related issues; inspections at the Barzah and Jamrayah sites of the SSRC; the implementation of Conference decision C-SS-4/DEC.3; the implementation of Council decision EC-94/DEC.2; the implementation of Conference decision C-25/DEC.9; and the implementation of Conference decision C-28/DEC.12.