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Identical letters dated 27 January 2020 from the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council and the Secretary-General

On instructions of my Government, I should like to convey to you the following information.

Over the years, the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic has regularly apprised the Security Council and the Secretary-General of the efforts by terrorist groups, of various names and supported by actors from the region and beyond, to use internationally prohibited chemical weapons against Syrians. The Government has also apprised you of the preparations made by those terrorist groups to stage the fake use of such weapons in various parts of the Syrian Arab Republic and then accuse the Syrian Arab Army of having used chemical weapons against civilians.

All are now aware that whenever the terrorist groups find themselves in dire straits, the White Helmets terrorist group, acting at the behest of its controllers in certain Western States, contrives these theatrical exhibitions, with the help of experts and military personnel from the States that support the terrorists, in order to accuse the Syrian Government of using chemical weapon and thereby create a pretext for a military aggression against Syria by Washington and its allies, even as the Syrian Arab Army is battling the terrorists.

The media arms of the terrorist groups and the White Helmets continue to disseminate scenarios and fake news concerning the alleged use of chemical weapons. Meanwhile, the States that sponsor and support the terrorists ignore all the information and news that is conveyed to the United Nations and the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) regarding those fabrications and ongoing preparations to use chemical weapons.

The Syrian Arab Republic reiterates that the actions of Syrian Arab Army forces and their allies in western Aleppo and south-eastern Idlib are in keeping with the exercise by Syria of its sovereign and constitutional right to defend its people and its territory pursuant to the principles of international law, the Charter of the United Nations and all Security Council resolutions concerning counter-terrorism. The aim of the current military operation in western Aleppo and south-eastern Idlib is to end the suffering of Syrian civilians in Idlib and Aleppo.

In that connection, the Syrian Government can confirm that the terrorist organizations are fabricating, with Turkish support, an alleged chemical attack in western Aleppo and south-eastern Idlib, with a view to accusing the army of having committed the attack and compelling it to halt its operations in those areas. Indeed,

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the terrorist organizations are now making the very same claim that they make whenever Syrian Arab Army forces achieve victory in their battles to liberate the land and protect civilians from the terrorists' crimes.

The tricks and fabrications that the terrorists are forced to march out every time have become hackneyed and no longer fool anyone, and they will not help the terrorist organizations and their supporters achieve their aim of halting the military operations, which will continue until the entire territory of Syria is free of terrorists and their crimes, in particular given that everyone is aware that the Syrian Arab Army has never used and no longer possesses such weapons.

The Syrian Arab Republic reiterates that all States of the world, in particular those that claim to care about international peace and security, instead of covering up the crimes committed by terrorist groups in Syria in order to advance their well-known agendas and undermine the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Syria, should direct their efforts to confronting the threat that all States, without exception, are facing, namely, the increase in acts of international terrorism and the ability of terrorists to get their hands on toxic chemicals and use them as weapons.

The Syrian Arab Republic reiterates that it condemns strongly any use of chemical weapons by any party, under any circumstances and anywhere.

The Syrian Arab Republic draws attention to what OPCW experts revealed at the Arria-formula meeting that the Security Council held on 20 January 2020 and calls upon the Security Council and the Secretary-General to condemn immediately and forcefully the crimes committed by terrorists against Syrian civilians, including their open use of chemical weapons. It also calls for the Syrian Government to be supported in its fight against terrorism and terrorist groups that use chemical weapons.

I should be grateful if the present letter could be issued as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Bashar **Ja'afari**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative