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Identical letters dated 12 April 2020 from the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

An official source at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates made the following statement:

On 8 April 2020, the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) issued a misleading report authored by the Investigation and Identification Team, which Syria and a large number of other States have declared to be illegal and lack credibility.

The purpose of the false and fabricated conclusions contained in that report is to falsify the facts and accuse the Syrian Government of having used toxic substances in 2017 in the town of Lataminah. Those conclusions are based on sources that were invented and fabricated by Nusrah Front terrorists and the White Helmets terrorist group on instructions from their controllers in the United States of America, Turkey and certain Western countries. The incorporation of those conclusions demonstrates utter disregard for the working methods of OPCW and violates the most basic rules for the conduct of an impartial investigation.

The Syrian Arab Republic condemns in the strongest terms the report of the illegal Investigation and Identification Team and rejects it in form and substance. Moreover, Syria categorically denies that it has used poison gas in Lataminah or in any other Syrian city or village, and reaffirms that the Syrian Arab Army, in keeping with its high standards, has not used such weapons, even in the most difficult battles that it has fought against armed terrorist organizations.

The conclusions that the Investigation and Identification Team sets out in its report demonstrate why Syria and a large number of other States rejected the Team and why Syria understood beforehand that the Team is a tool designed to politicize the work of OPCW and transform it into a platform that serves the purposes of well-known States.

We remind those who are in charge of OPCW that, in March 2020 at the ninety-third session of the organisation's Executive Council, Syria and a large number of other States exposed the pressure that had been exerted by the United States of America on OPCW member States and the suspicious contacts that the United States had had with member States prior to the release of the report in question. They also exposed the actions of American diplomats, who have been agitating for this report since the start of the current year in a shameless appropriation of the powers of the organisation's Technical Secretariat. The United States coerced member states in

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every way possible to get them to support the conclusions contained in the report, thereby clearly demonstrating that the report was prepared and written in advance by the American and Western intelligence services or on their instructions, and that they were aware of the conclusions, which are directed against Syria and its heroic army.

The Syrian Arab Republic reaffirms that the conclusions contained in the report represent another scandal for the organisation and its investigative teams and comes on the heels of the scandal related to the report on the 2018 Duma incident. It also reaffirms that all of these fabricated allegations and false accusations will not deter it from continuing its war against terrorism and terrorist organizations and their supporters, a war that it is pursuing in defence of its sovereignty, territorial integrity and people.

Syria calls upon the international community to reject these new, fabricated allegations. At the same time, it finds it regrettable that OPCW has been transformed into a tool that is being used to implement the hostile plans of the United States of America and its allies and into an arena for settling political scores with Syria, which is combating terrorism on behalf of the entire world.

The Syrian Arab Republic reiterates that it categorically rejects the use of chemical weapons by any party, at any time or in any place. It furthermore reaffirms that it has never used chemical weapons and is incapable of using today them because it does not possess this type of weapon and considers the use of such toxic weapons as being contrary to its moral and legal obligations.

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