



# Security Council

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## Letter dated 25 April 2014 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to transmit herewith the seventh 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 present letter provides information requested in that resolution on the activities of the United Nations from 22 March to 24 April 2014 related to the implementation of the resolution.

### Introduction

During the latter half of the reporting period, the Syrian Arab Republic made important progress towards the elimination of its entire declared stockpile of chemical weapons material. As at 24 April 2014, the total figure for removal and in-country destruction had reached 92.5 per cent. This includes 96.45 per cent of high priority chemical materials and 81.09 per cent of other chemical materials removed. The amount of declared isopropanol verified as destroyed in country remained at 93.1 per cent.

The Syrian Arab Republic had earlier committed to removing all chemical weapons material from its territory by 13 April 2014, apart from material located at two sites that had been considered inaccessible by the Government, owing to the prevailing security situation, which were to be cleared by 27 April 2014. The Syrian authorities postponed planned chemical weapons material removal operations for two weeks in late March 2014 in view of the deterioration in the security situation in the Latakia region. Removal operations resumed on 4 April 2014 and a systematic and regular series of movements was re-established in mid-April 2014.

At the same time, the Syrian Arab Republic made significant progress eliminating other parts of its chemical weapons programme. This included the destruction of the remaining standard equipment and buildings related to the storage and production of chemical weapons material, aside from the 12 remaining production facilities currently awaiting an OPCW Executive Council decision on the modalities for destruction.

It is critical for the Syrian Arab Republic to maintain its commitment and determination to ensure the removal and in-country destruction of the final 7.5 per cent of its declared chemical weapons material and to the timely completion of other remaining activities. This would permit the Syrian Arab Republic to adhere to



remaining timelines in accordance with its obligations under Security Council resolution [2118 \(2013\)](#) and relevant decisions of the OPCW Executive Council.

### **Activities towards the elimination of the chemical weapons programme of the Syrian Arab Republic**

Following military confrontations in the north of the Latakia region that began on 21 March 2014, the Syrian Arab Republic authorities informed the Joint Mission of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and the United Nations for the Elimination of the Chemical Weapons Programme of the Syrian Arab Republic that the security situation necessitated the diversion of military forces and the redeployment of security assets previously dedicated to safeguarding the security of chemical weapons material during the course of transport and loading operations at the port of Latakia. In view of this development, the Syrian Arab Republic postponed scheduled movements.

During the initial part of the reporting period, the Syrian Arab Republic continued packing and loading chemical weapons material at storage facilities in preparation for movement to Latakia. At the same time, Syrian personnel conducted internal movements consolidating material from sites deemed vulnerable to attack, by moving them to safer locations. At the request of the Joint Mission, the Syrian Arab Republic also carried out concurrent activities required prior to the closing of each of the 12 chemical weapons storage facilities and 18 production facilities. These activities included the decontamination of containers with chemical residue and the destruction of remaining standard buildings and equipment. Syrian personnel also destroyed all remaining containers that had previously held sulphur mustard. These operations were subsequently verified by the Joint Mission.

Consequently, by the end of the reporting period, the Joint Mission had verified the closure of 11 of the 12 declared storage facilities, and five of the six production facilities that were not currently under review at the OPCW Executive Council. Notably, the modalities of destruction for the remaining 12 production facilities are currently under review by the OPCW Executive Council.

Following the resumption of chemical weapons material removal operations on 4 April 2014, the Syrian Arab Republic conducted a total of 18 movements until 24 April 2014. During that period, the Syrian Arab Republic reiterated its concerns over the security risks posed by ongoing military confrontations in the north of the Latakia region. Accordingly, the authorities decided to limit the size of each convoy. Nevertheless, the Syrian Arab Republic achieved the removal of all declared chemical weapons material with the exception of material held at one site where the Government had determined it would not be possible to undertake removal operations owing to the prevailing security situation. Some 7.5 per cent of declared chemical weapons material now remains at this one site in the Syrian Arab Republic. This includes high priority and other chemicals, as well as a small percentage of isopropanol, which is to be destroyed in country. The Syrian authorities have recommitted to the removal and destruction of the remaining stockpile as soon as the security situation permits.

Any further postponement in the completion of chemical weapons material removal operations will delay the commencement of outside country destruction activities. This, in turn, could delay full elimination of the chemical weapons programme as set out in the relevant decisions of the OPCW Executive Council and

Security Council resolution [2118 \(2013\)](#). Furthermore, postponement in the completion of removal operations increases direct and indirect costs to Member States participating in the maritime effort. An early commencement of out-of-country destruction is imperative. The Joint Mission engaged with the Syrian Arab Republic on a continuous basis to provide recommendations to its Syrian counterparts and helped to facilitate progress in the furtherance of Security Council resolution [2118 \(2013\)](#). The Special Coordinator of the Joint Mission remained in close contact with senior Syrian officials, underscoring the critical importance of the timely removal of chemical weapons material.

The Joint Mission maintained its operations throughout the reporting period. It conducted sampling and analysis of chemical weapons material and carried out verification and inspection activities, including final inspections of storage and production facilities. Verification and inspection were carried out physically at sites where security conditions were favourable, and remotely, using surveillance camera equipment, where security conditions did not permit. During the removal operations, Joint Mission personnel carried out additional verification and inspection activities at the port of embarkation prior to loading the containers onto the cargo vessels.

The Joint Mission continued outreach activities with representatives of contributing Member States, including those assisting in maritime operations. During the reporting period, the Special Coordinator visited Egypt and met with diplomatic representatives in Damascus, Beirut and Nicosia. The Joint Mission continued its engagement with the World Health Organization (WHO), helping to strengthen the hazard response capability of the Syrian Arab Republic, including managing and responding to chemical accidents and mass casualty incidents involving toxic materials.

## Conclusion

As the Syrian conflict continues, significant progress has been made towards the elimination of the chemical weapons programme of the Syrian Arab Republic, which must reach its successful conclusion as quickly as possible

It is the responsibility of the Syrian Arab Republic to complete the removal of its entire stockpile of chemical weapons material and ensure the full elimination of its chemical weapons programme on its territory. The continuing volatility of the security situation only underscores the importance of expediting the removal of remaining chemical weapons material and the destruction of remaining parts of its chemical weapons programme.

I call once more upon Member States to use their influence on all the parties to the Syrian conflict to abstain from any activity that could directly or indirectly have an impact on the completion of chemical weapons material removal operations and remaining in-country destruction activities, including the safety and security of Joint Mission personnel.

I am concerned about recent reports of allegations regarding the use of toxic chemicals during the course of the conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic. All necessary steps should be taken to establish the facts surrounding these allegations.

A number of Member States have provided significant funds and in-kind contributions towards the removal and destruction of chemical weapons material from the Syrian Arab Republic. This support will be required a while longer to

complete remaining removal operations. There may be an additional requirement to support possible destruction activities related to production facilities currently under review in the OPCW Executive Council.

Once again, I wish to express my appreciation to the Special Coordinator and the staff of the Joint Mission for working under hazardous and challenging circumstances inside the Syrian Arab Republic. The safety and security of the Joint Mission is ultimately the responsibility of the Syrian Arab Republic. It remains among my highest concerns. The Joint Mission shall continue to assess the security situation and review its presence on the ground. It shall do so in order to minimize risks and undertake its remaining mandated activities as quickly and safely as possible.

In the face of the tragedy that has befallen the Syrian people, the timely completion of the elimination of the chemical weapons programme of the Syrian Arab Republic will make a modest, but hopefully meaningful, contribution to peace and security in the country and the wider region.

I would be grateful if you would bring the present letter and its annex urgently to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) **BAN Ki-moon**

**Annex**

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 23 March 2014 to 24 April 2014 and also covers the reporting requirements of Executive Council decision EC-M-34/DEC.1, dated 15 November 2013.

(*Signed*) Ahmet Üzümcü

**Enclosure**

**Note by the Director-General**

**Progress in the elimination of the Syrian chemical weapons programme**

1. In accordance with subparagraph 2(f) of the decision by the Executive Council (hereinafter “the Council”) at its Thirty-Third Meeting (EC-M-33/DEC.1, dated 27 September 2013), the Technical Secretariat (hereinafter “the Secretariat”) reports 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 submitted to the Security Council through the Secretary-General. This is the seventh such monthly report.

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 this 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. This report is therefore submitted in accordance with both above-mentioned Council decisions and includes information relevant to their implementation during the period from 23 March to 24 April 2014.

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

4. In accordance with subparagraph 1(c) of EC-M-33/DEC.1, the Syrian Arab Republic is required to complete the elimination of all chemical weapons material and equipment in the first half of 2014. Previous reports have described the progress made by the Syrian Arab Republic against intermediate completion dates established under paragraphs 2 and 3 of EC-M-34/DEC.1 for the removal and destruction of Syrian chemical weapons outside its territory. Progress achieved within the current reporting period by the Syrian Arab Republic in fulfilling its obligations is described below:

(a) As at the cut-off date of this report, a total of 18 movements of chemicals from chemical weapons storage facilities (CWSFs) to the port of embarkation at Latakia had taken place. During the period under review, there was a hiatus in movements attributed by the Syrian authorities to the security situation near Latakia. On this subject, the Syrian Arab Republic addressed a number of communications that have been made available to States Parties as OPCW protected documents. Removal activities recommenced on 4 April 2014 and, as at the cut-off date of this report, seven movements had taken place during the period under review. Even though the target date of 31 March 2014 for the effective destruction of Priority 1 chemicals set by subparagraph 3(a) of EC-M-34/DEC.1 was not met, the result of these significant movements is that 96.45% of declared Priority 1 chemicals and 81.09% of declared Priority 2 chemicals (making a combined total of 92.03% of Priority 1 and 2 chemicals) planned for destruction outside the Syrian Arab Republic

have now been removed from Syrian territory. In addition, a total of 93.1% of the declared isopropanol has been verified as destroyed on Syrian territory;

(b) Pursuant to sub-paragraph 2(a)(iv) of EC-M-34/DEC.1, the Syrian Arab Republic was requested to destroy, not later than 1 March 2014, the residue in containers previously containing mustard agent. As previously reported, 87% of such containers had been destroyed as at that date. During the period under review the Syrian authorities destroyed the remaining 41 empty containers;

(c) As reported previously, pursuant to subparagraph 2(b) of EC-M-34/DEC.1, the target date for the destruction all of the Syrian Arab Republic's chemical weapons production facilities (CWPFs) was not later than 15 March 2014. During the reporting period, the Syrian Arab Republic carried out further destruction activities at declared CWPFs. As previously reported, the eight mobile CWPFs were already destroyed and verified in December 2013. During the reporting period, the Syrian Arab Republic continued the destruction of equipment and buildings at several of the 18 remaining declared CWPFs. Activities relating to the destruction of aircraft hangars and underground structures at 12 of the CWPFs are awaiting a decision by the Council on the combined plans for destruction and verification;

(d) Pursuant to paragraph 19 of EC-M-34/DEC.1, the Syrian Arab Republic is required to submit a monthly report to the Council regarding activities on its territory related to the destruction of its chemical weapons and CWPFs. The fifth such report was submitted to the Secretariat on 15 April 2014 and made available to the Council (EC-M-40/P/NAT.3, dated 17 April 2014);

(e) On 16 April 2014, the Syrian Arab Republic submitted an amendment to its initial declaration clarifying a previous amendment submitted on 7 March 2014 and providing exact numbers of quantities of declared chemicals; and

(f) In accordance with subparagraph 1(e) of EC-M-33/DEC.1 and paragraph 7 of resolution 2118 (2013), the Syrian Arab Republic shall cooperate fully with all aspects of the implementation of the decision and the resolution. The Syrian authorities have continued to extend the necessary cooperation to the OPCW-United Nations Joint Mission in the Syrian Arab Republic (hereinafter "the Joint Mission") in the conduct of its activities during the reporting period.

#### **Activities carried out by the Secretariat with respect to the Syrian Arab Republic**

5. Effective cooperation with the United Nations in the context of the Joint Mission has continued with close coordination between the two organisations and between the offices in The Hague, New York, Damascus, and Cyprus. As at the cut-off date of this report, 12 OPCW staff members had been deployed as part of the Joint Mission in Damascus and Latakia, and one logistics officer in Beirut.

6. The Director-General and the Special Coordinator of the Joint Mission, Ms Sigrid Knag, have maintained regular contact. The Director-General has continued to meet with senior representatives of the States Parties offering to host a destruction facility or otherwise providing assistance with transport or destruction of Syrian chemical weapons, and to communicate regularly with senior officials from the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic. As requested by the Council at its Seventy-Fifth Session (paragraph 7.12 of EC-75/2, dated 7 March 2014), the Secretariat has continued to provide weekly information briefings to States Parties in The Hague on behalf of the Director-General.

7. As in prior reporting periods, Joint Mission personnel in the Syrian Arab Republic have been heavily involved in verifying the packing and loading of chemicals prior to their transportation to the port of embarkation at Latakia. As previously reported, activities at the relevant CWSFs included verifying the chemicals against the initial declaration, taking an inventory of the chemicals loaded into each shipping container, conducting sampling on a random basis, and sealing the containers. Upon the arrival of the containers at Latakia, the inventory documents for each shipping container were checked, the integrity of the seals was confirmed, and the contents of the containers were verified on a random basis. As at the cut-off date of this report, all declared chemicals in the Syrian Arab Republic, except for those chemicals consolidated at one site near Damascus, had been transported to Latakia.

8. As the movement of chemicals to Latakia has progressed, Joint Mission personnel have verified the closure of CWSFs. As at the cut-off date of this report, 11 out of the 12 declared CWSFs had been verified as empty. For seven of these facilities, final inspection reports had been sent to the Director-General. Final inspection reports for another four CWSFs were submitted to the Syrian authorities for their comments, while the remaining CWSF is pending verification. Joint Mission personnel also verified the destruction, described above in subparagraph 4(b), of the remaining 41 empty containers that had previously contained mustard agent. As requested by paragraph 21 of EC-M-34/DEC.1, the Secretariat can therefore confirm to the Council that the requirement of subparagraph 2(a)(iv) of EC-M-34/DEC.1 has been fulfilled.

9. Joint Mission personnel have also visited several CWPFs to verify the destruction activities carried out by the Syrian Arab Republic, which are described in subparagraph 4(c) above. For five such facilities, Joint Mission personnel verified the destruction of equipment and buildings and submitted final inspection reports to the Syrian authorities, two of which have already been transmitted to the Director-General. Verification of destruction activities at one more CWPF is pending the review by Joint Mission personnel of information provided by Syrian personnel. Verification of destruction activities at the remaining 12 CWPFs is pending a decision by the Council on the combined plans for destruction and verification. Final inspection reports for the eight mobile CWPFs were submitted during an earlier reporting period.

10. On 22 April 2014, a team of technical experts from the Secretariat travelled to Damascus to meet with Syrian authorities as part of continuing efforts to streamline and complete the data regarding the initial declaration submitted by the Syrian Arab Republic in October 2013, and subsequent amendments, as well as the verification work.

11. As reported previously, the Secretariat, as required by paragraph 13 of EC-M-34/DEC.1, has developed a draft facility agreement for Syrian CWSFs and submitted the draft to the Syrian authorities for their comments, which are still pending.

12. OPCW personnel have conducted pre-operational visits to commercial facilities selected pursuant to paragraph 24 of decision EC-M-34/DEC.1 or sponsored by States Parties pursuant to paragraph 7 of decision EC-M-36/DEC.2. Thus, visits took place in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the Ellesmere Port High Temperature Incinerator which has been sponsored by

this State Party to carry out the destruction of priority 1 chemicals, and to the Marchwood Military Port, which will be used for the receipt of the chemicals. Pre-operational visits were also conducted in Finland to the Ekokem Riihimäki waste treatment and disposal facility, selected for the disposal of priority 1 and 2 chemicals through the solicitation process conducted by the OPCW, and to the port of Hamina Kotka. During the visits, OPCW personnel reviewed all practical aspects related to the receipt, transportation, temporary storage, and destruction/disposal of the Syrian chemicals at those facilities, and discussed practical arrangements to ensure the adequate verification of these activities in accordance with the approved facility arrangement or agreement (see EC-75/DEC.3 and EC-75/DEC.4 respectively, both dated 5 March 2014). Visits are also planned to relevant facilities in Germany and the United States of America.

13. On 10 April 2014, the United States of America and the OPCW co-hosted a visit by international media and NGOs aboard the vessel MV Cape Ray, while it was anchored at the port of Rota in Spain. The purpose of the visit was to demonstrate the extensive safety and security measures that have been put into place to guard against any risk to the operating personnel and to the environment during the destruction operations. The Secretariat will shortly facilitate a conference call to provide interested parties with information on the removal and destruction operations. A similar conference call was held in January 2014.

#### **Supplementary resources**

14. As reported in the previous monthly reports, several States Parties are providing assistance and resources for the purposes of the transportation, removal, and destruction of Syrian chemical weapons. All equipment requested by the Syrian Arab Republic has now been provided, either through the Joint Mission or under bilateral arrangements, and all the elements necessary for the removal of chemical weapons from the territory of the Syrian Arab Republic and their subsequent destruction are now in place.

15. During the reporting period, the governments of Belgium and Germany announced that they would make available naval vessels to provide security to the MV Cape Ray once neutralisation operations begin on board.

16. As at the cut-off date of this report, the balance in the Syria Trust Fund for the Destruction of Chemical Weapons stood at EUR 47.5 million. Contributions have been received from Australia, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, the Czech Republic, the European Union, Finland, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, the Republic of Korea, Slovakia, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. This includes the contributions that were originally made to the first OPCW Trust Fund for Syria and which have, at the request of the donor, subsequently been transferred, in part or in whole, to the Syria Trust Fund for the Destruction of Chemical Weapons. A further contribution of EUR 2 million is expected from Italy, and India has committed to contribute approximately EUR 736,000.

### **Conclusion**

17. Following the resumption of movements of chemicals on 4 April 2014, significant progress has been made and only a small quantity of chemicals remains to be removed from the territory of the Syrian Arab Republic. The Syrian Arab Republic has reiterated its commitment to completing the removal process as per the schedule that it had provided, according to which the process of removal is to be completed by 27 April 2014. It is important that the remaining materials be removed as soon as possible so that the next phase of the destruction of chemicals removed from the Syrian Arab Republic can commence. This will go a long way to ensuring that the plans for the elimination of the Syrian chemical weapons programme by the middle of 2014 remains on track.

18. The Syrian Arab Republic's willingness to engage in consultations relating to the accuracy and completeness of declarations covering its chemical weapons programme is a positive step. The success of this endeavour would constitute an important confidence-building measure regarding adherence by the Syrian Arab Republic to its commitments under the Convention, the decisions of the Council, and United Nations Security Council resolution [2118 \(2013\)](#).

19. Recent allegations of use of toxic chemicals in several parts of the Syrian Arab Republic are a source of serious concern. The OPCW has been in touch with the Syrian authorities with a view to exploring possibilities of establishing the facts surrounding these allegations.

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