



*The Permanent Representation of Italy to the
Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons*

ITALY

Agenda item 9 (d): Addressing the threat from chemical weapons use – SAR

Mr Chair,

Italy fully aligns itself with the statement given by the Hungarian delegation on behalf of the European Union.

I wish to take the floor in my national capacity to express Italy's deep concern over the Syrian Arab Republic's continue lack of cooperation with the Technical Secretariat.

It is well known that independent UN and OPCW investigative mechanisms have identified Syria as the perpetrator of chemical attacks against its own population. These attacks, besides openly violating the Chemical Weapons Convention, represent a crime against humanity that cannot be tolerated.

To this serious background we must add the reports of the latest Declaration Assessment Team (DAT) missions, which have uncovered evidences of chemical agents that were never declared by Syria. This evidences extends the series of unresolved issues in the Syria's Initial Declaration, which dates back eleven years. This declaration, as we know, continues to be incomplete and inconsistent, generating a situation that undermines confidence in Syria's effective adherence to the Convention and in the non-proliferation safeguards to which we are all committed.

In this context, Italy considers it crucial that all States Parties fully support the mechanisms created by the OPCW on the Syrian case. We would like to highlight the extraordinary work carried out by the Investigation and Identification Team (IIT). The IIT has demonstrated a high level of professionalism, independence and transparency, providing a clear path to appoint responsibility for the chemical attacks in Syria. It is crucial that the IIT receives the full support of all States Parties in order to continue its mission of justice and truth.

Mr Chair,

we are once again here to strongly urge Syria to fully cooperate with this Organization. We reiterate the need for Damascus to fully adhere to the Chemical Weapons Convention, providing all answers and documents needed to finally close the Initial Declaration.

After eleven years of ambiguities, uncertainties and omissions, the situation has become unsustainable. This is a matter of international security and respect for fundamental human rights: we cannot allow any further delay.

Mr Chair,

Let me emphasize that the Syrian issue is not just a technical challenge regarding compliance with the Convention, but an issue that touches the heart of our common humanity and global security. Every chemical attack in Syria is not only a crime against the Syrian people, but a strike against the non-proliferation architecture and a danger signal to all nations.

Allowing violations to go unpunished the risks is to encourage other actors to follow the same path, undermining decades of progress achieved in banning chemical weapons. We must not allow this to happen. It is a collective responsibility to ensure those responsible are held accountable and that respect for the Convention is fully restored

Italy, in line with its values of transparency, legality and respect for international law, will continue to strongly support the action of the OPCW, the DAT, FFM and IIT mechanisms and the work of the Director-General and the entire Technical Secretariat on Syria.

We trust that all States Parties will do the same and not consider Syrian impunity as an option.

Thank you Mr Chair.