



UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
STATEMENT ON AGENDA ITEM 9 (d)
ADDRESSING THE THREAT FROM CHEMICAL WEAPONS USE: SYRIA

Mr. Chair,

We have heard references to “politicization” over the last several days, so I would like to start by asking us all to think about what politicization is, and is not.

Calling on a country to uphold its obligations under the Convention is not politicization.

Asking the OPCW to carry out its mission is not politicization.

Politicization is attacking the OPCW when it reveals facts we do not like.

Politicization is arguing that some countries do not have to be held to the same standards of compliance as the rest of us because they claim

to lack documentation regarding chemical weapons they used in recent years.

When Syria acceded to the Convention, it committed to fully declaring and destroying its stockpile of chemical weapons.

What we need to ask ourselves is, are we satisfied with words on a piece of paper if a country never fully implements them?

There is no question Syria never fully declared and destroyed its entire chemical weapons stockpile.

Factually, what Syria declared does not align with subsequent evidence discovered by the UN and the OPCW.

What became of these chemical weapons, who had access to them, and where are they now?

Undeclared chemical weapons are a proliferation risk.

And let me be clear, Syria claiming it has no idea where the items or records are, nor the capacity to respond without assistance, is not a plausible answer.

If Syria had the capacity to develop, manufacture, and use chemical weapons, it has the capacity to tell us what happened to them and where they are.

Syria did not accidentally produce chemical weapons. The scale and scope of Syria's weapons program took a lot of time, money, resources, and people.

There is absolutely no way that all traces of documentation for such a large-scale effort, including the people that contributed to it, have disappeared. Syria has answers, and it is well beyond time it provided them to the international community.

Progress is generally defined as going somewhere. If you have two people in a race, and one is moving towards the finish line, and one is jogging in place, which one is making progress?

We acknowledge Syria has met with the OPCW, but that engagement has not responded to the OPCW's outstanding questions for ten years. This is not progress. This is not credible engagement. This is not good

enough. What is being asked of Syria is nothing more and nothing less than simply fulfilling its obligations under the Convention.

Once again, the United States commends the work of the OPCW Technical Secretariat and stands by the professionalism and dedication of its Syria Special Missions.

Thank you.