



**STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF AUSTRALIA, CANADA, AND NEW ZEALAND (CANZ) AT THE ONE HUNDRED AND SEVENTH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

**AGENDA SUBITEM 6(C): ELIMINATION OF THE SYRIAN CHEMICAL WEAPONS PROGRAMME**

Thank you Chair. I have the honour of taking the floor on this agenda item on behalf of Canada, Australia and New Zealand.

Canada, Australia, and New Zealand once again call on Syria to cooperate in good faith with the Technical Secretariat and fully declare and eliminate its chemical weapons programme as required of all States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention. And we commend the Technical Secretariat for its excellent and dedicated work in fulfilling its mandate with respect to Syria - a clear mandate in furtherance of the object and purpose of the Convention to which all States Parties have committed themselves.

Last month the Declaration Assessment Team (DAT) held the twenty-eighth round of consultations with Syria regarding their Initial Declaration. And yet, despite all the time, energy and resources expended over twenty-eight rounds of talks, we are today once again reminded of the significant gaps, inconsistencies, and discrepancies identified by the Technical Secretariat in Syria's initial declaration. It is unacceptable that, after more than a decade, Syria's initial declaration still cannot be assessed as accurate and complete. The 19 outstanding issues in Syria's declaration, which include two recently identified new issues, are not minor omissions or insignificant gaps, but represent serious and substantive discrepancies and inconsistencies. In last week's briefing by the Technical Secretariat, the key phrase in a remark on the majority of these issues was that they were "of serious concern". The Secretariat is concerned by these outstanding issues, Canada, Australia and New Zealand are concerned, and all States Parties should be as well.

Thank you, Chair.

I kindly ask you to consider this CANZ statement as an official document of the 107th Session of the Executive Council, and post it on the OPCW external server and public website.