



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

ITALY

**STATEMENT BY THE ITALIAN AMBASSADOR HE GIORGIO NOVELLO
AT THE 66th MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

Mr Chair,

Italy fully align itself with the EU statement delivered by the Hungarian Ambassador.

In my national capacity I would like to express my gratitude to the Director-General for his immediate actions in trying to reach out to the new Syrian authorities and having organized this special meeting of the Executive Council.

The situation in Syria remains deeply concerning for many reason, among all with regard to the status of the country's chemical weapons program. Italy is gravely concerned about the fate of Syria's chemical weapons stockpiles. The safekeeping of these weapons is a matter of global security. The international community cannot allow these weapons to fall into the hands of dangerous state or non-state actors.

It is imperative to ensure the integrity of any remaining chemical weapons and chemical weapons production facilities in Syria. Ensure their prompt and thorough destruction must remain a priority for the international security.

To this end, it is essential the Technical Secretariat continues its activities in Syria, together with the new authorities for the final elimination of the chemical weapons program left by the previous regime.

At the same time, we must not forget the past. The work of the “Investigation and Identification Team” (IIT) remains of utmost importance, and both the new Syrian authorities and the international community must recognize and support its efforts. Accountability for past chemical weapons crimes is paramount.

Italy has full confidence in the Director General’s ability to manage this crisis with the highest standards of professionalism, transparency, and expertise. We are ready to support the Technical Secretariat in its work and we call on Syria to comply with the Convention marking a significant break with the old regime.

Thank you.