

Statement by Poland
at the 66th meeting of the Executive Council
(The Hague, 12 December 2024)

Mr Chairperson,
Director-General,
Distinguished delegates,

Poland fully aligns itself with the statement delivered by Hungary on behalf of the European Union. I wish to stress a few points in my national capacity.

The fall of Bashar al-Assad's regime gives hope that things will change for the better for the people of Syria. The stabilization of Syria is of highest importance in order to create the conditions for a peaceful reconciliation of the Syrians and reconstruction of the country.

Naturally, we are all concerned about the impact of the latest developments in Syria on possible proliferation or use of chemical weapons. In this context, we welcome the public declarations of the new Syrian leadership denouncing the use of chemical weapons under any circumstances and stating their interest in identifying possible chemical weapons depots and coordinating with international organisations to secure them. Poland calls on the new authorities of Syria to meet in full Syrian obligations under the CWC, engage in cooperation with the OPCW and support efforts to hold accountable those who used chemical weapons in the past.

Poland thanks Director General Ambassador Fernando Arias for his valuable update and thoughts. There is a great opportunity for opening a new chapter of co-operation between the Technical Secretariat

and Syria, but that depends first of all on the security situation on the ground and on the willingness of the new Syrian authorities to engage positively in clarifying all outstanding issues related to Syria's chemical weapons programme and its initial declaration.

The Technical Secretariat must be able to strengthen its engagement with Syria, too. That might require not only additional funds, but also the return of inspectors to Syria and rehiring some of the previous staff for that purpose as it was done in 2013 when OPCW was overseeing the destruction of declared chemical weapons stockpiles. We trust in the good judgement of the Director General and the Technical Secretariat has Poland's full support.

I kindly ask to consider this statement as an official document of this meeting and post it on the OPCW external server and public website.

Thank you.