

Statement by H. E. Ambassador Eshagh Al Habib
Deputy Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations
On “the Implementation of UNSCR 2118: Upholding the Authority of the OPCW”
At the United Nations Security Council Arria-Formula Meeting
New York, 28 September 2020

In the Name of God, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful,

Mr. Chairman,

I thank the Permanent Missions of Russia and China for organizing this meeting.

As the main victim of the large-scale, most systematic and frequent use of chemical weapons in contemporary history, the Islamic Republic of Iran continues to condemn in the strongest possible terms the use of chemical weapons by anyone, anywhere and under any circumstances.

Likewise, as an active country in the negotiations of the chemical weapons convention and a party thereto, Iran is a genuine strong advocate of promoting the balanced, full, effective and non-discriminatory implementation of the Convention as well as upholding the integrity and authority of the OPCW.

Historical cases have taught us that the authority of no instrument or institution can be upheld without strict adherence of all parties and participants to the rules of the game, and the CWC and OPCW are not exceptions.

Partial implementation or discriminatory application of treaties as well as the exploitation of international institutions or abuse of their process act like a poison pill for their authority and effective performance. This is more dangerous regarding conventions and organizations on non-proliferation and disarmament as they relate to the security of nations.

The living example is the politicization and polarization of the OPCW following the consideration, by that Organization, of the Syrian chemical weapons dossier, initiated by a group of the CWC’s States Parties to further their politically-motivated objectives.

To that end, Western countries first accused Syria of the use of chemical weapons and later abused the OPCW to develop purportedly technical reports and pseudo-legal justification to supposedly substantiate it.

They first used the unprofessional and yet biased work of the Fact-Finding Mission that was based mostly on unauthorized and open sources. Later, they followed their objective through the non-consensual decision on the establishment of the so-called attribution mechanism, the Investigation and Identification Team (IIT). While such a proposal had required the amendment of the

Convention, it was adopted by the affirmative vote of even less than half of the States Parties and also in the absence of the representatives of 87 States Parties.

Now, to advance their goal, they are referring to a technically defective report of the IIT, prepared without on-site investigation or due regard to the chain of custody.

Such unproductive policies and destructive practices of Western countries have divided the States Parties, and by turning the Organization into a battlefield of unfruitful disputes among the Member States, have adversely affected the efforts for the full and effective realization of the Convention's object and purpose.

For instance, it now deflects the attention from the very purpose of the Convention, namely the elimination of chemical weapons, which is yet to be realized due to blatant failure by the sole major Possessor State Party.

All these events happened against the backdrop that in 2014, the head of the Joint Mission to Eliminate Chemical Weapons in Syria, presenting her final report to the Security Council, confirmed that Syria has fulfilled all its commitments and that its entire chemical stockpiles have been destroyed. Later, the OPCW confirmed the destruction of the entire chemical stockpile of Syria and all its 27 production facilities.

Likewise, they also continue to ignore the Syrian government's significant cooperation with the OPCW and the UN, including providing over 80 monthly reports and large amount of information it provided to the OPCW. Such cooperation is still going on.

Despite that, the Security Council has held over 80 monthly meetings on the subject with no result, as such meetings are only used to demonize Syria based on unsubstantiated allegations.

To avoid further erosion of the OPCW's credibility and undermining of the CWC's authority and effectiveness, this trend needs to discontinue. We need to do whatever in our power to restore the OPCW's real position and focus on promoting the CWC's full, effective and non-discriminatory implementation.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.