



Briefing to the Security Council on the Implementation of Security Council Resolution 2118 (2013)

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Mr. President,
Distinguished Members of the Security Council,

I thank Council members for the opportunity to brief you once again on the implementation of Security Council resolution 2118 (2013) on the elimination of the chemical weapons programme of the Syrian Arab Republic.

Since the last consideration of this matter by the Council, and consistent with established practice, the Office for Disarmament Affairs has been in regular contact with counterparts in the OPCW Technical Secretariat on activities related to resolution 2118. In addition, I held a meeting earlier this week with his excellency Ambassador Ibrahim Olabi, Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations, which was also joined virtually by his excellency Ambassador Mohamad Katoub, Syria's newly appointed Permanent Representative to the OPCW.

Mr. President,

Since the Council's last meeting on this matter, the OPCW and the Syrian Arab Republic have continued to engage on how to eliminate any remnants of the chemical weapons programme developed by the previous government. Given the significant challenges to overcome in these efforts, I welcome the continued progress that has been made since the Council's last meeting.

As previously reported, since 2014, the OPCW Technical Secretariat has not been able to confirm that the declaration submitted by the previous government was accurate and complete, because of the insufficient and inaccurate information it contained. The OPCW Technical Secretariat had reported 'serious concern' over the declaration's issues as it involved large quantities of potentially undeclared

or unverified chemical warfare agents and chemical munitions. The new Syria Government has been working with the OPCW Technical Secretariat to obtain clarifications on the full extent and scope of the programme developed by the previous Government and ensure Syria's long-term compliance with the Chemical Weapons Convention.

In this month's report, the OPCW Technical Secretariat reiterates that in addition to the 26 declared chemical weapons-related sites, information made available to the OPCW suggests that there are more than 100 other sites that may have been involved in the previous government's chemical-weapons related activities. As part of its work on this matter, the OPCW Technical Secretariat plans to visit all these locations, taking into account security and other relevant considerations.

Mr. President,

With support and facilitation from the Syrian Government, OPCW teams have deployed in March, April, June, August, September, October and November 2025, and the overall number of locations visited since March 2025 now stands at 19. Of these, four were locations previously declared, while 15 were suspected chemical weapons-related locations. The OPCW has also conducted interviews with former chemical weapons experts, collected six samples, and collected over 6,000 documents from the visited locations.

Based on the information gathered through the OPCW's deployments in 2025, at least two locations visited by the OPCW could be declarable under the CWC. The OPCW is planning further activities to determine the full scope of chemical weapons-related activities conducted at these two facilities and their subsequent declarativity.

I am also encouraged to hear that further deployments are being prepared. In meetings held in October and November 2025, the Syrian Government and the OPCW Technical Secretariat discussed the possibility of visiting several high-priority chemical weapons-related locations in the coastal and northern areas close to Latakia. Subsequently, through two notes verbales dated 11 November 2025, the Syrian Government shared reports of the visits that their reconnaissance teams had conducted at two locations suspected of containing remnants of undeclared chemical weapons. The OPCW Technical Secretariat is analysing these reports and will coordinate further activities, including possible visits to these locations, with the Syrian Government.

However, it must be emphasized that some of the sites to be visited are located in dangerous areas, involving significant risk to teams on the ground, including Syrian and OPCW personnel. The OPCW Technical Secretariat has provided the Syrian Government with a list of operational requirements to be conducted before any such visits by the OPCW teams can take place. The Syrian Government has informed the OPCW that they would share these operational requirements with their national and international partners, coordinate necessary activities, and provide feedback as soon as the necessary work is completed to ensure safe deployments to these locations.

Mr. President,

Additional concrete steps in the last reporting period that should be highlighted include that, in November 2025, the newly appointed Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to the OPCW presented his credentials to the OPCW Director-General and the Syrian National Authority has been re-established.

I also welcome the re-establishment of the continuous presence of the OPCW Mission in the Syrian Arab Republic, as the OPCW Technical Secretariat secured accommodation and office space in October 2025 in an existing secured location that already meets United Nations safety and security requirements.

Mr. President,

As has been previously reported, there are significant challenges ahead, and consistent support from the entire international community will be critical to efforts to rid Syria of all chemical weapons. The OPCW Director-General has noted that the tasks ahead will likely be more complex than those carried out 11 years ago and the destruction of Syria's declared chemical weapons programme.

In November 2025, the OPCW Director-General sent a letter to members of the Executive Council along with a needs and gaps assessment prepared by the OPCW Secretariat. This assessment shall inform those States Parties and other partners willing to support the Syrian Arab Republic as to what needs to be provided so that the activities in the Syrian Arab Republic may come to a successful end.

I have been informed that the OPCW Technical Secretariat has been supporting and advising the Syrian Arab Republic, and other States Parties, with regard to the plans for destruction of any identified chemical weapons and related remnants. Destruction might need to be carried out on-site where conditions require. The recent decision of the Executive Council on expedited on-site destruction (EC-110/DEC.1, dated 8 October 2025) authorises such a measure and constitutes a positive step forward.

Mr. President,

The OPCW Technical Secretariat remains committed to delivering on its mandate to verify the full implementation by the Syrian Arab Republic of all declaration requirements under the Chemical Weapons Convention, decisions by OPCW policy-making organs, and Security Council resolutions.

I would also reiterate that the commitment of the new Government of Syria to fully and transparently cooperate with the OPCW Technical Secretariat is both welcome and commendable. I also commend the efforts of the Syrian teams on the ground, whose work involves significant physical risk.

Mr. President,
Distinguished Members of the Security Council,

As I have previously emphasized, there is currently a critical opportunity to obtain long-overdue clarifications on the full extent and scope of the Syrian chemical weapons programme and to rid the country of all chemical weapons.

I once again urge the members of this Council to unite and show leadership in providing the support that this unprecedented effort will require.

The United Nations stands ready to support and will continue to do our part to uphold the norm against the use of chemical weapons – anywhere, at any time. I thank you very much for your attention.