



**Permanent Mission of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines
to the United Nations**

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Statement

By

**Ms. Diani Jimesha Prince
Counsellor**

Syria (Chemical Weapons)

United Nations Security Council

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Thank you, Mr. President and I also thank High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Ms. Nakamitsu, for her briefing.

I would like to begin by reiterating Saint Vincent and the Grenadines' position that the use of chemical weapons anywhere, by anyone and under any circumstances constitutes an abominable violation of international law. Chemical weapons do not distinguish between combatants and civilians and they cause unnecessary human suffering. Impunity for their use must not be encouraged through inaction and perpetrators of chemical weapons atrocities must be held accountable.

Accordingly, allegations of the use of chemical weapons should never be dismissed. Further, investigations must be conducted thoroughly and in accordance with best practices to ensure that all findings are capable of withstanding rigorous scrutiny. In this regard, the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons bears a tremendous responsibility and must therefore take measures to make certain that its facets and activities are impartial, independent and free from politicization. Indeed, this is the only way to enable states parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention to have full confidence in the Organisation's capacity and for the Organisation to remain an effective multilateral body.

There is no question that there are many diverging views on this issue, however, for progress to be made and for there to be full implementation of Resolution 2118, it is imperative that there is trust, unity and cooperation. These elements must therefore be cultivated through a commitment to constructive and inclusive dialogue and the pursuit of consensus-based decisions to prevent further polarization and divisiveness.

We are pleased to note that positive engagement on this file continues despite the impediments created by the COVID-19 pandemic, and we look forward to the full resumption of all previously scheduled deployments. Until then, we commend the determination to conduct the important work as efficiently and effectively as is possible in the present circumstances.

The clarification of all outstanding issues regarding the initial declaration remains essential and we recognize the continued efforts of both Syria and the Technical Secretariat towards achieving a final resolution.

We welcome the agreement on a six-month extension of the tripartite agreement between the OPCW, The United Nations Office for Project Services and Syria. The agreement remains relevant and demonstrates the spirit of cooperation, which is needed in every aspect of this file.

As previously stated, we have taken note of the 9 July Executive Council decision regarding Syria. We will continue to follow this matter closely and we await the impending report. We further look forward to a substantive discussion on the issue at the Conference of States Parties in November.

Mr. President,

Our commitment to ensuring that applied science is only used for peace, progress and the prosperity of all humanity must never waiver. The development, stockpiling, transfer or use of chemical weapons must be prevented and the norm against this reprehensible form of warfare must be preserved.

I thank you.

