



**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, Madam President and we join others in congratulating Ireland for assuming the presidency. We wish you the very best and you can count on our support. We also commend India for a well-organized and successful presidency last month.

I begin by restating Saint Vincent and the Grenadines' well-established position that the use of chemical weapons anywhere, by anyone and under any circumstances constitutes a reprehensible violation of international law. Perpetrators of chemical weapons atrocities should not be allowed to operate with impunity and must be held accountable. For this reason, we continue to support the mandate of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW). Further, we support all efforts to strengthen the Organization's capacity to ensure that the quality of its work remains of the highest standard.

We are cognizant that the COVID-19 pandemic has created various impediments to the work. However, we remain concerned by the overall lack of progress on this file. The issue of the unresolved gaps, discrepancies and inconsistencies in the original declaration remains and we are hopeful that continued dialogue between the parties will assist in making meaningful progress. In this regard we take note of the forthcoming round of consultations. It is our hope that these consultations will yield tangible results. We also look forward the convening of the in-person meeting between the OPCW and Syria to discuss relevant developments and the way forward.

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

As the implementing body of the Chemical Weapons Convention, the OPCW, plays a critical role in safeguarding international peace and security. The importance of the Organization's efforts aimed at eliminating and preventing the re-emergence of chemical weapons, as well as the promotion of the peaceful uses of chemistry, can never be overstated.

Successful implementation of both the Convention and Security Council Resolution 2118 requires sustained international cooperation. However, this becomes severely strained where trust deficits exist. As such, the OPCW must continuously strive to ensure that its internal structure and all activities are characterized by integrity, transparency and non-politicization. Further, States Parties to the Convention should engage constructively and pursue consensus-based decisions to thwart polarization and divisiveness. In all discussions political quarrels ought to be set aside and the collective vision of achieving a world free of chemical weapons must remain at the forefront.

Thank you.