



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

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**Statement**

By

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Counsellor**

**Syria (Chemical Weapons)**

United Nations Security Council

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Thank you, Mr. President and I also thank Under-Secretary-General Nakamitsu for her usual informative briefing.

Our goal to prevent the development, stockpiling, transfer or use of chemical weapons to better protect the future of humanity requires both the full implementation of Resolution 2118 and a committed partnership with the implementing body of the Chemical Weapons Convention – the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW). Sustained international cooperation is imperative and parties have an obligation to engage efficiently and constructively on all issues to make much needed progress on this dossier.

We however recognize that cooperation 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 endeavour to pursue consensus-based decisions to thwart polarization and divisiveness.

We continue to encourage and appeal for dialogue between the OPCW and the Syrian government to facilitate the timely provision of pertinent technical information and documentation and for the approval of required visas. These are not only necessary to enable the OPCW's deployments to Syria, but also to assist in finally resolving the gaps, inconsistencies and discrepancies contained in the initial declaration. In the interim, the proposed meeting between the Declaration Assessment Team and the Syrian delegation at OPCW Headquarters can serve as a steppingstone to advance the implementation of Resolution 2118 and fulfill the obligations encapsulated in the Chemical Weapons Convention.

On the point of dialogue, we are pleased to note the preparations being made for the in-person meeting between the OPCW Director-General and the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates of Syria to discuss relevant developments and the way forward. There are indeed many diverging views on this file, and it is our hope that the meeting will go a long way in finding common ground and making meaningful progress.

In closing, I reiterate Saint Vincent and the Grenadines' well-established principled position that the use of chemical weapons anywhere, by anyone and under any circumstances constitutes a reprehensible violation of international law. Allegations of the use chemical weapons ought to be given immediate attention and investigations should always be comprehensive and in keeping with international best practices to ensure that perpetrators of chemical weapons atrocities are not allowed to operate with impunity.

We therefore continue to support the important mandate of the OPCW to implement the provisions of the Chemical Weapons Convention and ensure that chemistry is only used for peace, progress, and prosperity. Further, we support all efforts to strengthen the Organization's capacity to ensure that the quality of its work remains of the highest standard.

Thank you.