



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

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Statement

By

**H.E. Inga Rhonda King
Permanent Representative**

Syria (Chemical Weapons)

United Nations Security Council

8 December 2021

New York

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Thank you, Mr. President. I also thank High Representative Nakamitsu for her usual informative briefing.

To begin, I will reiterate Saint Vincent and the Grenadines' well-established position that use of chemical weapons anywhere and by anyone and under any circumstances constitutes an abominable violation of international law. Chemical weapons do not discriminate between combatants and civilians and their effects are horrifying. Chemical weapons atrocities cannot be ignored, and impunity cannot be encouraged through inaction. Perpetrators must be held accountable. The development and use of chemical weapons undoubtedly remain a threat to international peace and security.

Accordingly, all allegations of the use of these reprehensible weapons ought to be given immediate attention and investigations must be comprehensive, impartial, transparent and in keeping with international best practices. As such, the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) bears a great responsibility as the implementing body of the Chemical Weapons Convention. Its findings must be capable of withstanding rigorous scrutiny to promote and sustain international cooperation. The Organization must therefore be free of politicization. Further, the Conference of State Parties should pursue, as far as is possible, consensus-based decisions and make efforts to prevent polarization and divisiveness among states parties.

We deeply regret and remain concerned by the continued long-term lack of movement on this dossier. For far too long the gaps, inconsistencies and discrepancies in the initial declaration have remained unresolved. Yet, we are hopeful that dialogue between the parties will cultivate a spirit of cooperation to make much needed progress on all issues, including those related to the approval of visas for OPCW personnel. For this reason, we believe that the proposed in-person meeting between the OPCW Director-General and the Syrian Minister of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates is necessary and will assist in finding common ground and a constructive way forward. It should therefore be prioritized.

We welcome the agreement on the extension of the Tripartite Agreement between the OPCW, UN Office for Project Services and the Syrian Arab Republic. This is demonstrative of the type of cooperation and positive engagement needed in every aspect of this dossier.

We reaffirm our unwavering support for the OPCW's mandate. The Organization must remain committed to being a well-functioning multilateral body and to upholding its own high standards, which merited the award of the Nobel Peace Prize in 2013. Likewise, the international community must remain committed to achieving the collective vision of a world free of chemical weapons. As such, political quarrels must be set aside, and we must unite to ensure that applied science and technology are only used for peace, progress and prosperity of all humanity.

Thank you, Mr. President.