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STATEMENT BY

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AMBASSADOR AND PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF GHANA ON
BEHALF OF THE A3, COMPRISING GABON, GHANA AND
MOZAMBIQUE**

**UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL CONSULTATIONS ON
THE MIDDLE EAST (SYRIAN CHEMICAL WEAPONS PROGRAMME)**

5th January, 2022 (AM)
Security Council Chamber,
United Nations,
New York

Mr. President.

1. I have the honour to deliver this joint statement on behalf of the A3, comprising Gabon, Mozambique and my own country Ghana.
2. We thank High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Ms. Izumi Nakamitsu, for her briefing and acknowledge the participation in this meeting of the representatives of the Syrian Arab Republic, Islamic Republic of Iran and Turkiye.
3. We welcome the 111th monthly report of the OPCW and the submission of the 109th report of the Syrian Arab Republic.
4. Not surprisingly, as has been the case in recent times, there has not been much development on the file since our last meeting. This lack of progress towards definitive resolution of the issue, notwithstanding the monthly meetings on the file, continues to be a matter of concern to us.

Mr. President,

5. Considering the threat posed by chemical weapons to international peace and security, the Council ought to take appropriate and effective measures in accordance with international law to bring finality to the issue as soon as practicable.
6. To do so, the OPCW need to verify the accuracy and completeness of the declarations by the Syrian National Authorities. The cooperation of the Syrian Arab Republic is therefore sine qua non to the success of the work of the OPCW as it seeks to verifiably and definitely eliminate all of the country's chemical weapons programme.

Mr. President,

7. We acknowledge the efforts of the Syrian National Authorities, including its concurrence to the extension of the Tripartite Agreement to facilitate the execution of the mandate of the Secretariat of the OPCW as well as the welcome it has given to the intention of the Secretariat to send a reduced team to conduct limited in-country activities for a week this month.
8. But we believe that much more remains to be done by the country to demonstrate greater level of commitment to the elimination of its chemical

weapons programme. It is our view that constructive cooperation with the Secretariat of the OCPW in line with resolution 2118 (2013) and the Chemical Weapons convention, will help resolve the following lingering issues, among others:

- i. The organization of the next round of consultations with the Declaration Assessment Team (DAT);
- ii. The 20 outstanding issues that have been pending for some time now;
- iii. The issue of detection of a Schedule 2.B.04 chemical at the Barzah facilities in November 2018;
- iv. Full declaration of all chemical weapons and their production facilities in the country's possession, including those not intended for purposes prohibited under the Convention.

Mr. President,

9. While we regret the Secretariat's inability to hold a meeting with the Syrian National Authorities in November last year owing to the latter's request for financial sponsorship of its officials, we urge the two sides to mutually reconcile their positions on the matter to be able to organize the meeting at a future date as soon as possible.
10. Particularly, we underscore the importance of the proposed high-level in-person meeting between officials of the Syrian Arab Republic and the OPCW, as such dialogue and consultations among key players of the two sides could foster the needed momentum and speed up the process towards conclusive resolution of the outstanding issues.
11. In this regard, we urge the two sides to expedite action on the preparations for early convening of the meeting to help break the current deadlock.

Mr. President,

12. In concluding, the A3, collectively, reiterates its call for enhanced and constructive engagement between the OPCW Technical Secretariat and the Syrian National Authorities, to urgently address all outstanding issues, that constrain meaningful progress in the full implementation of resolution 2118 (2013).

I thank you for your attention.