Mr. Chairperson,

Israel has voted in favor of resolution L.63 entitled "Implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and Their Destruction".

Israel's ongoing support of this resolution is consonant with its signature of the CWC in 1993, its strong support of the goals and purposes of this significant treaty as well as the close dialogue and contacts Israel maintains with the OPCW.

Mr. Chairperson,

The removal from Syria and the destruction of declared chemical weapons is indeed an important achievement with significant regional security ramifications.

At the same time, it is important to recognize that the work has still not been concluded and the threats emanating from Syria, including those pertaining to residual chemical capabilities, are still valid in many respects. The chemical weapons issue is part of the greater, unfolding, human tragedy whereby hundreds of thousands have been killed, injured and displaced in Syria.

Mr. Chairperson,

Since Syria's accession to the CWC, dozens of incidents have been reported where chemicals have been used against the civilian
population. The OPCW's Fact-Finding Mission has reported the gathering of information which constitutes "compelling confirmation" that toxic chemicals were used as a weapon, "systematically and repeatedly," in three villages in northern Syria. The Fact Finding Mission reported, with a high degree of confidence, that the toxic chemical used was chlorine either in pure form or in a mixture. Additional information is still being investigated.

These repeated incidents of use of chemicals undermine the basic premise of the CWC and further erode the norm against the use of chemical weapons. It is especially worrying when it is done by a state that has undertaken to join the CWC and to commit itself to implement and abide by the obligations stipulated in the Treaty.

Mr. Chairperson,

The remainder of residual chemical weapons capabilities in Syria is of great concern in itself, due to the ongoing instability of this country and the extensive presence of terrorist groups and other non state actors. The international community must remain vigilant regarding these threats and foil any non compliance as well as dangers of proliferation. Until Syria completely and accurately fulfills all of its obligations pertaining to chemical weapons, the international community must continue to insist that all outstanding questions are fully addressed.

Thank you