First Committee
72nd UN General Assembly

Statement by
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Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Explanation of Vote


United Nations, New York
1 November 2017
Mr. Chairperson,

We fully align ourselves with the statement made by the US on behalf of 40 states, including Israel, and would like to make a few comments in our national capacity.

Mr. Chairperson,

A few days ago, the latest report by the OPCW-UN Joint investigative mechanism (JIM) was submitted to the SC. This year’s findings show once again that the use of chemical weapons is widespread in Syria. The JIM found that the Syrian regime is responsible for the release of Sarin at Kahn Shykhun on April 4th, an attack that killed dozens of people, among them many children. This year’s report also found ISIS responsible for the use of sulfur mustard in Um Hush on September 2016.

This latest report adds to the 2016 reports which also found the Syrian regime responsible for 3 additional cases of use of chemical weapon, along with one incident attributed to ISIS.
Mr. Chairman,

What we have been witnessing in Syria is the consistent and unacceptable pattern of use of chemical weapons by the Syrian regime. These are not isolated and unauthorized incidents but a premeditated modus operandi on the part of this regime against its own population. It is an ongoing disregard of all international norms. The Syrian regime should be held accountable for the use of these weapons and for enhancing the threat of proliferation of such despicable capabilities throughout the region.

More than 4 years have passed since resolution 2118 was adopted in the Security Council. The resolution called on Syria to fully cooperate with the OPCW, to declare and destroy its chemical capabilities. However, 4 years have passed and we continue to see the Syrian regime repeatedly using its capabilities against its own people. 4 years have passed and the gaps, inconsistencies and discrepancies identified by the Technical Secretariat of the OPCW regarding Syria’s declarations, are yet to be fully addressed.

In this point in time it is evident that the residual chemical capabilities of Syria, including R&D must be fully dismantled. Any other course of action will allow the
Syrian regime to continue its shameful pattern and to eventually rehabilitate its chemical weapons program.

Finally, Mr. Chairperson

Israel for its part voted in favor of L.26 due to our long-standing support of this resolution and the goals and purposes of the CWC which we signed in 1993. Israel maintains a close dialogue with the OPCW and is party to the 1925 Geneva Protocol.

I Thank you.