Statement by Turkey
Thematic Debate on Other WMD of the First Committee
74th Session of the United Nations General Assembly
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Mr. Chairman,

Proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems continues to endanger international security. The risk of acquisition of these weapons by non-state actors is a matter of deep concern. Turkey attaches great importance to the collective efforts aimed at reversing this alarming trend. We fully support arms control and non-proliferation treaties as well as the export control regimes as a means to prevent such proliferation.

We reiterate our firm conviction that the use of chemical weapons by anyone, anywhere and under any circumstances is a crime against humanity, a violation of the 1925 Geneva Protocol, the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and Security Council resolutions.

Turkey condemns in the strongest terms the use of chemical weapons that has re-emerged decades after the entry into force of these important international documents and with no accountability. The case of Syria is a matter of particular concern in this regard.

Following the non-renewal of the mandate of UN-OPCW Joint Investigative Mechanism, the decision at the Fourth Special Session of the Conference of the State Parties of the CWC to put in place arrangements to identify the perpetrators for the use of chemical weapons in Syria was a critical step to fill a void. The implementation of this decision remains an urgent priority. In this context, we welcome the establishment of the Investigation and Identification Team this year and support the IIT’s efforts towards identifying the perpetrators of the chemical weapons attacks in Syria.

The cooperation between the OPCW Secretariat and the International, Impartial ad Independent Mechanism (IIIM) is also significant for the efforts to combat impunity towards the chemical weapons use in Syria. We also commend the ongoing work of the Independent International Commission of Inquiry, which continues to contribute substantively to investigating the use of chemical weapons in this country.

We reiterate our strong support for the important work of the Fact Finding Mission (FFM) and the Declaration Assessment Team (DAT). We stress once again our full trust in the professionalism, impartiality and objectivity of the findings of the FFM Reports, including regarding the incident of use of a toxic chemical as a weapon in Douma last year.

On the other hand, we are also concerned about the remaining gaps, inconsistencies and discrepancies in the declaration of the Syrian regime regarding its chemical weapons program and stockpiles and urge the regime to fully cooperate with the OPCW in accordance with its obligations pursuant to the CWC.
On this occasion, we reiterate our strong support for the CWC as an essential pillar of the international disarmament and counter proliferation architecture. We would like to join others in their call towards the universalization of the Convention and invite the remaining four States to become party to it.

Mr. Chairman,

Turkey reiterates its support to the Biological and Toxins Weapons Convention, as the main framework regarding the use of these substances and efforts towards its universalization.

We look forward to the forthcoming meeting of States parties as an opportunity to look at ways to strengthen the Convention and to ensure its relevance.

Thank you.