



## Security Council

Distr.: General  
13 February 2020  
English  
Original: Arabic

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### **Identical letters dated 12 February 2020 from the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council**

On instructions from my Government, I should like to convey to you the statement that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates of the Syrian Arab Republic issued on 11 February 2020 with regard to the briefing by the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) on the OPCW internal investigation into the leaking of information from the Duma report.

A few days ago, the OPCW Technical Secretariat held a briefing on the findings of its internal investigation into the leaking of sensitive information from the report of the Fact-Finding Mission on the Duma incident (April 2018).

The delegations of States that attended the briefing were surprised that the Technical Secretariat had decided to take a different approach to the manner in which it addressed this serious and sensitive issue. It chose to simply recite its pre-prepared position and did not allow any States parties to make any remarks or ask questions. The meeting became a recital of a position that must be accepted by the audience.

The position of the Syrian Arab Republic, which is shared by many States parties, is that the aim of the briefing was to divert attention from the real issues, namely, the manipulation of the final report on the Duma incident by the investigative team, the team's distortion of the facts and the ongoing efforts to promote the false and illogical assessment set out in the report, an assessment that is supported by the United States of America and a group of Western States that have consistently used the Organisation as a tool to achieve their political objectives and justify their aggression against the Syrian Arab Republic.

The briefing by the Technical Secretariat failed to answer the fundamental question of the extent to which the information in the report aligns with the reality on the ground. Syria underscores that the failure of the Technical Secretariat to enter into a discussion with the States parties demonstrates that the Technical Secretariat continues to avoid addressing the irrefutable facts presented by some OPCW experts as to the extent of the fraud and manipulation that took place in the preparation of that report by the Fact-Finding Mission. The failure to enter into a discussion also demonstrates that the Technical Secretariat is attempting to avoid discussing the recent leaks and the sensitive information that came to light not long ago.

The information that the Technical Secretariat presented in its briefing was simply an episode of a public relations show that was orchestrated by Western States, in order to cover up recent revelations and hide the fact that the conclusions that the



Technical Secretariat reached are unscientific and far removed from the opinions of important OPCW experts.

This approach that the Technical Secretariat has adopted confirms the feeling among a large number of the States members that the Organisation is no longer operating normally, that its internal situation is deteriorating sharply and that it is drifting away from its objectives.

The Technical Secretariat needs to change its approach and not bow to pressure from the United States and its allies aimed at politicizing its work and manipulating the reports prepared by its teams. In addition, the Technical Secretariat desperately needs to assert its neutrality, independence, objectivity and integrity, in order to ensure confidence in the reports that its investigative teams will issue in the future.

I should be grateful if the present letter could be issued as a document of the Security Council.

*(Signed)* **Bashar Ja'afari**  
Ambassador  
Permanent Representative

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