



Brussels, 23 June 2014  
140623/02

## STATEMENT

### by the Spokesperson on the removal of chemical weapons from Syria

*"The EU welcomes the announcement today by Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) that the remaining 8% of the Syrian chemicals have been removed from the country and loaded on board the Danish vessel Ark Futura. This removal, although overdue, is certainly good news. International pressure and the concerted efforts by OPCW and the Joint OPCW-UN Mission have finally yielded results. Our special appreciation goes to the OPCW Director-General Ambassador Uzumcu and his staff, as well as to the Special Coordinator Mrs Sigrid Kaag and the Joint Mission staff for their relentless efforts carried out in particularly difficult and dangerous circumstances. The importance of the elimination of the threat of the chemical weapons has already been underlined by granting OPCW the Nobel Peace Prize.*

*The EU has contributed with significant funds to the Syrian chemical weapons operation and wishes to express its appreciation to all the Member States that have contributed in kind or financially and in particular those that they have made available commercial vessels and their escort. Today's development marks the fulfillment of the main goal of this operation: the removal of the entire chemical weapons stockpile from Syria, so that the risk of having them used again is eliminated. But there is still work to be done. The removed chemicals should be destroyed according to the OPCW Executive Council Decisions, in full respect of the relevant international norms and procedures and in taking all necessary measure for the protection of the environment.*

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*At the same time, we have to maintain pressure on Syria to ensure that the chemical weapons programme is completely and irreversibly dismantled, including the remaining production facilities. Last but not least the work of the Fact Finding Mission on the recent allegations of the use of chlorine should continue. The perpetrators of such horrific acts should be held accountable. The situation in Syria continues to be extremely critical from a security and humanitarian point of view. The EU urges all parties to help revive the political track as there can be no military solution to this conflict."*

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