



OPCW-UN Joint Mission in Syria



Lattakia, New York

07 January 2014

Statement by the Special Coordinator, Ms. Sigrid Kaag

FIRST REMOVAL OF CHEMICAL WEAPONS MATERIALS FROM THE SYRIAN ARAB REPUBLIC

The Joint Mission confirms that further progress has been made towards the removal and elimination of the Syrian Arab Republic's chemical weapons programme. A first quantity of priority chemical materials was moved from two sites to the port of Lattakia for verification and was then loaded onto a Danish commercial vessel today. The vessel has been accompanied by naval escorts provided by Denmark and Norway, as well as the Syrian Arab Republic. This movement initiates the process of transfer of chemical materials from the Syrian Arab Republic to locations outside its territory for destruction.

The vessel has now left the port of Lattakia for international waters. It will remain at sea awaiting the arrival of additional priority chemical materials at the port. Maritime security is being provided by naval escorts from the People's Republic of China, Denmark, Norway and the Russian Federation.

The Joint Mission encourages the Syrian Arab Republic to continue its efforts to complete the removal of chemical materials as soon as possible in a safe and timely manner. Noting the complexity of the operation and the security situation in the country, the Joint Mission will continue to assist the Syrian Arab Republic in fulfilling its obligations under UN Security Council resolution 2118 (2013) and the decisions of the OPCW Executive Council.

The Joint Mission continues to coordinate with Member States, in particular the Syrian Arab Republic, to mobilize resources and undertake all the necessary steps towards the complete removal and elimination of the Syrian Arab Republic's chemical weapons programme.