

**Security Council**

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Letter dated 5 October 2020 from the Permanent Representative of Nigeria to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Kindly find attached herewith the statement by Nigeria in respect of the Security Council Arria formula meeting on “Implementation of Security Council resolution [2118 \(2013\)](#): Upholding the Authority of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons” (see annex).

I would be grateful if the statement and its annex could be published and issued as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Tijjani **Muhammad Bande**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative



Annex to the letter dated 5 October 2020 from the Permanent Representative of Nigeria to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Statement by Ambassador Samson S. Iteboje, Deputy Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of Nigeria to the United Nations at the Arria formula meeting on the implementation of Security Council resolution [2118 \(2013\)](#): Upholding the Authority of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons

New York, 28 September 2020

Mr. President,

Permit me to express the gratitude of my delegation to you for organizing this Arria formula meeting and also to the briefers for the detailed brief on this important subject matter that bothers our collective security and world peace.

Nigeria views and condemns the use of chemical weapons in Syria and any part of the world as a violation of international law and a threat to international peace and security. Therefore, the use of such weapons in armed conflict is against the tenets of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction of 1993.

Nigeria has a principled position on the total elimination of chemical weapons and other weapons of mass destruction except for those meant for peaceful purposes. This has informed its commitment to all such enabling conventions and treaties in this regard. The use of chemical weapons is considerably prohibited by international humanitarian, criminal and customary laws as attested by an overwhelming membership of the United Nations as parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention with an expressed determination to abide by its provisions.

The Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) therefore bears the responsibility of ensuring that activities of the Organisation, including the work of the Fact-Finding Mission, the Identification and Investigative Team and the Declaration Assessment Team are impartial and transparent, and not politicized. The OPCW Fact-Finding Mission has repeatedly confirmed the use of chemical weapons in Syria. This is a serious concern to my delegation, as chemical weapons neither discriminate between combatants and civilians with highly devastating long-term effects on their victims. Therefore, identifying those responsible for chemical weapon attacks is pre-conditioned for holding its perpetrators to account with the appropriate sanctions to demonstrate that the violation of the Chemical Weapons Convention and the non-use norm does not go unpunished.

Mr. President.

The successful implementation of Security Council resolution [2118 \(2013\)](#) requires the full cooperation of the Syrian Arab Republic and OPCW. While the report of the International Investigative Team on the alleged use of chemical weapons by the Syrian Government remains a subject of contention between the members of the Security Council and other Member States. The Syrian Government, in keeping with its international obligations, could allow the OPCW teams, under improved guidelines, unfiltered access to further conduct their work on a comprehensive scale for a possible consensus conclusion.

Also, a consensus by the Security Council on the Syrian report would arguably be hinged on a fair, transparent and unbiased investigative process; it is therefore important to ensure adherence to these processes for a credible and acceptable report

by not just the Security Council membership but the generality of the United Nations membership as stakeholders of a world free of weapons of mass destruction and who have been seized with the subject matter overtime. The Security Council must therefore be unified on its position for the peaceful conclusion of the process to allow for the successful implementation of resolution [2118 \(2013\)](#).

Violators of the proliferation and use of chemical weapons must be sanctioned but only when all standard processes have been exhausted should military action be initiated to restore international peace and security as contained in Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations, a right that can only be exercised if the Permanent Five are united in enforcing compliance of the Chemical Weapons Convention.

I thank you.
