

(Check against delivery)

**INTERVENTION OF H.E. AMBASSADOR FERNANDO CARRERA, MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF
GUATEMALA IN THE SECURITY COUNCIL MEETING ON THE SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST (SYRIA)
NEW YORK, 27 SEPTEMBER 2013**

Mr. President:

My delegation has been lamenting for eighteen months that the Security Council was incapable of stepping up to one of the bloodiest and painful internal conflicts of our times. I refer, of course, to the situation in Syria, and, incidentally, to its impact on its neighbors, as to its painful humanitarian cost. Despite that in two occasions we came together to produce resolutions 2042 (2012) and 2043 (2012), subsequently the internal divisions we all are aware of prevented further progress.

Because of this, the fact that there appeared a point of convergence between the Russian Federation and the United States over one aspect – the rejection of the use of chemical weapons – should be welcomed, and we congratulate Minister Sergey Lavrov and Secretary of State Kerry for their initiative that gave way to the framework agreement of 14 September. We also appreciate their efforts in codifying that agreement so that both the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) and this Security Council could act today. We believe that this step is highly significant, for its intrinsic value, and because it oxygenates the atmosphere to renew efforts to solve the underlying problem: to end the violence, resolve the humanitarian situation, and meet the demands of the Syrian population. For those reasons, we have persistently backed the Final Communiqué of the Action Group for Syria of 30 June 2012 and the need to carry out an International Conference with a view to its implementation.

This also explains why my delegation co-sponsored Resolution 2118 (2013) just adopted, which establishes the mechanism for the verification and destruction of chemical weapons in Syria, accountability, the urgency of a political transition process and the question of compliance. The adoption of this resolution is of vital importance considering that the last resolution this Council adopted on the situation in Syria was in April 2012.

That said, we would like to emphasize the following points:

- First, we understand the sensitivity that exists around this particular situation and the urgency that it demands. That is why we joined consensus over it, even though we would have preferred to have a greater opportunity to participate in its development.
- Second, it is necessary to look forward and commit ourselves to ensure the strict implementation of resolution 2118 (2013). We recognize, therefore, the importance that the cooperation between the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) and the United Nations will have, particularly in terms of personnel access and safety, operational support, privileges and immunities, and sufficient financial resources to properly carry out their duties.
- Third, and consequently, we trust that we can set the date for the International Conference – the so-called Geneva 2 Conference – shortly and that a transitional Government with full executive powers can be established under the mutual consent of all parties, and that they engage constructively in the search for stability and reconciliation. We believe that it is essential that it be an inclusive government, and that it take advantage of the positive aspects of the institutions developed over decades by the Syrian State.

Finally, having said the above, we can only reaffirm our commitment to the objectives contained in the Charter of the United Nations and the Final Communiqué of the Action Group for Syria of 30 June 2012, and express our hope that a cease fire will be reached in the short-term. Thank you very much.