

# *More Than Half of Syria's Chemical Weapons Removed*

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Geneva, March 21st (RHC) More than half of Syria's chemical weapons, nearly a 53%, have been removed or destroyed, according to the joint mission of the UN and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW).

The UN Security Council unanimously adopted a resolution in September last year to rid war-torn Syria of its chemical weapons. Under the resolution, the OPCW was mandated to oversee the elimination of Syria's chemical materials, with a deadline established for the end of June this year.

The UN-OPCW Joint Mission has been tasked remove Syria's chemical arsenals in a timely and most secure manner possible.

Western powers have recently accused Damascus of not living up to its pledges remove its chemical weapons rapidly. While the Syrian government accused Western-backed rebels of hindering the transportation of chemical weapons by attacking the bases where the materials are stored.

Farhan Haq, Deputy Spokesperson for the UN Secretary-General, praised the destruction of the weapons and told the press:

"This represents important progress. The Joint Mission welcomes the momentum attained and encourages the Syrian Arab Republic to sustain the current pace."

Syria joined the 1992 Chemical Weapons Convention under an agreement brokered last year by Russia and the United States and said it would give up its reserves of these deadly substances.

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