

Explanation of vote on amendment L.29

Resolution on the situation of human rights in Syria

Thank you Mr President.

Australia supports the UK intervention in Relation to L29.

Australia too opposes the amendment proposed by the Russian Federation in L.29

The proposed amendment talks about ‘the facts of use, making and stockpiling’.

But it is for expert bodies to decide such attribution. Last week, with the support from over three-quarters of the Convention on Chemical Weapons states, the Director-General of the OPCW was given the mandate to develop options to do just this.

The Russian Federation voted against last week’s decision in the Hague, as did Syria.

Russia has also blocked the continuation of the OPCW-Joint Investigative Mechanism in the Security Council.

It is unconscionable that we remain without a formal international mechanism able to attribute responsibility for chemical weapons use in Syria, because of the intransigence of some states.

This amendment is a distraction from the urgent task of ensuring that those who use, enable or shield the use of chemical weapons are brought to account.

For this reason we will vote no on the amendment L 29 and will urge all members to do so