
CHEMICAL WEAPONS WATCHDOG SAYS IRAQ ELIMINATED ARMS STOCK

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Baghdad (IraqiNews.com) The world chemical weapons watchdog declared on Tuesday that Iraq had met its obligations toward the eradication of its chemical arms, granting Baghdad a certificate of recognition in that regard.

On its website, the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons said the Director-General of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), Ambassador Ahmet Üzümcü, congratulated the Government of Iraq on the completion of the destruction of the countrys chemical weapons remnants. The statement explained that the declaration came during todays visit of the Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research of Iraq, H.E. Dr Abdulrazzaq Al Jaleel Essa.

I welcome this notable achievement and congratulate the Iraqi Government for their efforts in ensuring the proper destruction of these dangerous chemicals and for fulfilling its obligations deriving from the Chemical Weapons Convention, Üzümcü said.

According to OPCWs website, Iraqs initial declaration, submitted in March 2009, referred to remnants of chemical weapons stored in two storage bunkers at the Al Muthana site.

Owing to the hazardous conditions within the bunkers, Iraq was not able to conduct a detailed on-site inventory immediately after the initial declaration. Destruction activities started in 2017, once the on-going security situation had been addressed, it said.

In November 2017 and February 2018, OPCWs Technical Secretariat confirmed that the four former chemical weapons production facilities in Iraq were completely destroyed, said the organization.

It added that one former chemical weapons production facility in Iraq remains subject to inspection until 2028, which will be used for activities not prohibited by the OPCW as part of a joint plan with Iraq.

OPCW, enforcing the 1997, 192-signatory Chemical Weapons Convention, oversees the global efforts to permanently eliminate chemical weapons.