

CSP 26

Agenda 9d - Navalny

Thank you Mr Chair,

The United Kingdom fully supports the statement delivered by the Bulgarian Ambassador on behalf of 55 States Parties regarding the poisoning of Alexey Navalny in Russia.

It is well over a year since the incident in Tomsk. And it is now almost two months since a group of 45 States Parties submitted four questions, with reference to Article IX paragraph 2, of the Convention, to the Russian Federation. The questions were straight-forward and the Convention stipulates that requested clarifications should be provided within 10 days.

The response provided by the Russian Federation made no attempt to answer the four questions raised by the group of states and nor does the information provided answer the doubts and concerns sufficient to resolve the matter – the requirement set out in Article IX of the Convention.

It is not credible to suggest that the Russian Federation is unable to investigate the poisoning of a Russian citizen with a novichok nerve agent on Russian soil. And it is deeply regrettable than rather than answering the questions posed by 45 States Parties, Russia has returned to a familiar pattern of attacking other states and the Technical Secretariat.

The United Kingdom understands these assertions as an attempt to deflect attention from Russian state responsibility for the chemical weapons attack on Mr Navalny.

The United Kingdom recalls that the established facts of this case are:

- i) Mr Navalny fell ill and received initial medical treatment, in the Russian Federation. The Russian Federation had full access to the patient, affording the opportunity to recover biomedical samples of the kind which five separate laboratories later used to establish the presence of a cholinesterase inhibitor structurally similar to toxic chemicals added to the Chemical Weapons Convention Schedules in 2019.
- ii) The Russian Federation has still not accounted for how a chemical weapon came to be used on its territory.
- iii) The Russian Federation has stalled and effectively blocked the OPCW Technical Secretariat from deploying a technical assistance visit.
- iv) The Russian Federation has failed to investigate the poisoning of a Russian citizen by a chemical weapon and implausibly claims that any Russian investigation is dependent on first receiving information from other states.

It is time for Russia to face up to its obligations and answer the questions about this worrying incident of chemical weapons use on its territory.

Thank you Mr Chair