



GERMANY

**JOINT STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF FORTY-NINE MEMBER STATES
OF THE OPCW DELIVERED BY THE DELEGATION OF THE FEDERAL
REPUBLIC OF GERMANY TO THE OPCW
AT THE NINETY-NINTH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL
UNDER AGENDA ITEM 7(E)**

I have the honour of speaking on behalf of 49 States Parties, namely Albania, Andorra, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Cook Islands, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Liberia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, the Marshall Islands, Montenegro, the Netherlands, New Zealand, North Macedonia, Norway, Poland, Portugal, the Republic of Korea, Romania, San Marino, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and the United States of America.

In recent days, we have witnessed Russia invading its neighbour Ukraine in gross violation of international law. We strongly condemn the military aggression by the Russian Federation against the territorial integrity, sovereignty, and independence of Ukraine. This unprovoked and completely unjustified attack on the democratic state of Ukraine was preceded by fabricated claims and unfounded allegations.

We find it particularly intolerable that Russia, as part of the propaganda that prepared this attack, made the unsubstantiated claim that Ukraine was preparing aggressive action in the Donbas region which would have been contrary to its obligations under the Chemical Weapons Convention. I refer to a statement by Russian Defence Minister Shoigu on 21 December, in which he claimed that “for the purpose of carrying out acts of provocation, reserves of an unidentified chemical component have been delivered” to eastern Ukraine. Repetitions of this false allegation and further insinuations about chemical weapons in Ukraine have been made in Russian state media and by Russian-backed separatists. In this context, we note with concern Note Verbale No. 61219/30-196/50-3 of the Permanent Representation of Ukraine to the OPCW dated 27 February 2022.

We strongly condemn Russia’s behaviour. We consider it unacceptable to levy such false accusations against Ukraine, a State Party in good standing.

This behaviour is in stark contrast to Russia’s continued refusal to investigate the well-documented use of a chemical weapon on its territory in the poisoning of the Russian opposition leader Mr Alexei Navalny. It is Russia, not Ukraine, which is not fulfilling its obligations. We recall that Russia is obliged under Article VII of the Convention to criminalise



the use of chemical weapons on its territory by natural and legal persons, and consequently to investigate and punish any suspected use of chemical weapons on its territory.

We reaffirm our commitment to upholding the Convention, to supporting the work of the OPCW, and to bringing to account those who use chemical weapons.

I request this statement to be considered as an official document of this session of the Executive Council and to be posted on Catalyst as well as on the OPCW public website.

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