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**RUSSIAN FEDERATION**

**STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR A. V. SHULGIN  
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION TO THE  
OPCW AT THE NINETY-NINTH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL  
IN EXERCISE OF THE RIGHT OF REPLY TO THE STATEMENTS OF UKRAINE  
AND A NUMBER OF OTHER COUNTRIES**

First and foremost, I would like to address those delegations that do not think within the confines of the bloc mentality, but instead are dedicated to the integrity and effectiveness of our specialised, essentially technical Organisation. The subject of the situation in Ukraine, which was brought up as if on command in the statements of the delegations of certain States Parties and the European Union, does not fall within the mandate or the competencies of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW). These politicised statements delivered under a fabricated pretext once again demonstrate the aim of these countries to turn the OPCW into an arena for settling political scores. This is absolutely unacceptable. We call for a decisive end to this trend.

I will not mention the level of cynicism involved when the States that bombed Yugoslavia, Iraq, Libya, Syria, and Afghanistan (and this long list only covers the last decades—I could go on) give these hypocritical lectures on violating international law and the United Nations Charter.

As regards the Note by the Ukrainian side, dated 27 February 2022, this is nothing more than a farce, the aim of which is to put on a political show in The Hague, instead of acting within the framework of the Chemical Weapons Convention. There is no doubt that it was the statement of the United States Secretary of State, delivered on 17 February 2022 at the United Nations Security Council, alleging that Russia was preparing a diversion with the use of chemical weapons, that inspired Ukraine to plant this disinformation.

The duplicitous position of the Western patrons of the Kiev regime cannot withstand any criticism. Devoted to the interests of Ukrainian nationalists, they are also shamelessly attempting to silence Russia as it warns of the true threat. The Russian Federation is operating exclusively on proven intelligence. It is possible that it is our warnings that have thus far saved the lives of innocent people who have become the pawns in the geopolitical games of the United States and its allies.

Now the Western camp, using the model perfected in the Syrian Arab Republic, is essentially giving its full indulgence to the extremist Kiev nationalist: basically, do what you want, we will just lay the blame on Russia. This kind of complicity is the height of audacity and cynicism. While recognising the severity of the situation, we assert that from here on out, the responsibility for this kind of provocation in Ukraine lies with the United States and its Euro-Atlantic allies.



In conclusion, I would like to avail myself of this opportunity to comment on the proposal made by some of the delegations to pay respects to those who have died in the last several days. This is just and fair. But the question arises: why don't you want to pay respects to the victims among the peaceful population of Donbas who lost their lives in the conflict in Ukraine that began in 2014? They included the elderly, women, and children. The names of the children were carved out in the tragically well-known "the Alley of Angels" memorial in Donetsk. And why are you silent about those who were burned alive in the Trade Unions House in Odessa?

I have many more questions. Why did you not react so fervently to the numerous messages from Damascus about the preparations of chemical provocations in Syria? Or do the lives of Syrians mean nothing to you? Perhaps there are some kind of elite, even privileged nations? Europe faced this kind of phenomenon once before, and it ended with a horrific tragedy for the entire international community. It would seem as though not everyone has learned the lesson.

Now about the ostensible poisoning of the Russian blogger, Mr Navalny. The Russian Federation regrets to note that it has not received any rational answers from Great Britain, Germany, France, or Sweden—or from the Technical Secretariat—to the questions posed in line with paragraph 2 of Article IX of the Convention. Without that, it will not be possible to confirm or deny the existence of a crime in the incident that took place with Mr Navalny. We will continue to press the substantive information to be provided to us to help establish the truth of what took place.

In turn, the Russian Federation has submitted exhaustive information related to the request of "concerned" States. We have given every detail of the steps taken by our country to explain all of the circumstances of what happened with the blogger. Moreover, we thoroughly addressed in-depth the reasons for the technical assistance that was not provided by the Secretariat. However, all of our efforts are invariably met with refusal to cooperate. As practice has shown, our opponents are not interested in the truth. Western countries, within the framework of their strategy to restrain Russia in every way within the different international organisations continue to use the hubbub around Mr Navalny as a pretext for launching new attacks. This tactic of theirs is awkwardly disguised as concern about compliance with the Convention.

The time for unfounded accusations is over. If there are facts and evidence, put them forward and we will get to the bottom of it—we are prepared to do so. If not, then stop putting on this political circus within the OPCW.

I request that this statement be distributed as an official document of the Ninety-Ninth Session of the Council and published on Catalyst and the OPCW website.

Thank you for your attention.

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