



OPCW

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**STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE EUROPEAN UNION DELIVERED BY
H.E. AMBASSADOR LUIS VASSY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE
FRENCH REPUBLIC TO THE OPCW
AT THE NINETY-NINTH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL UNDER
AGENDA ITEM 6**

I have the honour of speaking on behalf of the European Union.

Madam Chairperson,

The European Union condemns in the strongest possible terms the Russian Federation's unprovoked and unjustified military aggression against Ukraine. Through its illegal military actions, Russia is flagrantly violating international law and the principles of the United Nations Charter, undermining European and global security and stability. Russia bears full responsibility for this act of aggression and for all the destruction and loss of life that it will cause. It will be held accountable for its actions. The European Union demands that Russia immediately cease its military actions, unconditionally withdraw all its forces and military equipment from the entire territory of Ukraine, and fully respect Ukraine's territorial integrity, sovereignty, and independence within its internationally recognised borders.

In this context, the European Union wishes to denounce the baseless statements by Russian officials regarding allegations of provocations with chemical components in Ukraine. These statements are unjustified and form part of a Russian strategy of disinformation and information manipulation, which we condemn.

The Permanent Representation of Ukraine sent Note Verbale No. 61219/30-196/50-3 to the Technical Secretariat on 27 February 2022.

The European Union Member States responded collectively to that note verbale by expressing their deep concerns about the information according to which the Russian armed forces may be preparing "false flag" operations against Ukraine, using chemicals, including blowing up industrial tanks with chemicals, which would expose the population to dangerous chemicals.

Such provocations or false accusations from Russia would be reckless and could have grave humanitarian consequences, for both the Ukrainian people and the environment. In case of any incident, Russia alone would bear responsibility.

The European Union underscores the absolute prohibition on the use of chemical weapons under any circumstances and further emphasises that those who use chemical weapons will be held to account.



While on the subject, let me point out that the manipulation of information and provocations in the chemical sphere weaken the Chemical Weapons Convention and our Organisation.

I thank you and would ask that this statement be considered as an official document of this session of the Executive Council and that it be posted on Catalyst and on the OPCW public website.

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