

STATEMENT BY H.E. MARCIN CZEPELAK
HEAD OF THE DELEGATION
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE REPUBLIC OF POLAND TO THE OPCW
THE 99TH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL
The Hague, March 8-11, 2022

*Madam Chairperson,
Director-General,
Distinguished Delegates,*

Let me start with expressing Poland's full support for Ukraine and her people in these darkest days of Europe's history since the Second World War. We stand united and in solidarity with the Ukrainian nation in their rightful and just fight against the Russian aggressor to defend their country, their freedom, their families and their homes.

Madam Chairperson,

Poland fully supports the EU statement delivered by the French Presidency in the General Debate. There are many important issues directly related to the CWC and OPCW, which we should be normally discussing today in this session of the Executive Council. But these are not normal times.

The Russian Federation, which typically blames everyone for politicizing our discussions, has made a political decision, which has dire consequences for the whole world, for peace and security. The Russian Federation has decided to attack Ukraine violating fundamental principles of international law and the rule based global security order.

Following the horrific experience of the Second World War, the international community pledged that something so horrible would not happen again. For that purpose the UN security system was created, which was to ensure that a major military conflict would not be possible. The global security system in

which there should be no place for brutal force and human tragedy. The global security system in which the Organization for the Prohibition and non-Proliferation of Chemical Weapons plays an important role.

The unprovoked, premeditated and barbaric Russian attack on Ukraine is an attack on this system and on us all. It is an attack on the world we know, the world built on the international law, democratic values, free choice and good neighborly relations. The Russian invasion on Ukraine ordered by President Putin is a blatant violation of basic commitments, principles and obligations aimed to build lasting peace by forbidding the use of force or its threat, by promoting disarmament, by controlling proliferation of weapons of mass destruction or by eliminating entire types of weapons, as in case of the Chemical Weapons Convention.

By invading Ukraine, the Russian Federation has trampled on all these efforts, the UN charter and the international law and has proved yet again to the entire world that the Russian Federation does not care about its obligations and at very best it treats the international law *a la carte*.

By invading Ukraine, the Russian Federation has proved without doubt that it does not act in good faith in international relations, questioning its true role in all international fora, including here at the OPCW. It showed how far the words of Russian diplomacy differ from the real intentions and real actions Russia undertakes. As one might recently hear in one of the latest meetings of the UN Security Council, suddenly there were questions if the words of Russian leaders and diplomats had the value of the “hole in the pretzel”.

Trust and good faith approach are essential for the work of the OPCW and for the implementation of the CWC, which is heavily based on common purpose, on verifiable and trustworthy declarations. But how can we trust the Russian Federation?

For weeks Russian diplomacy was saying that Moscow had no intentions of attacking anyone, that it was simply a Western hysteria, that Russia was not gathering its troops next to Ukraine, that they were there, but just for exercises.

The problem is that in this very hall we also heard that Russia had nothing to do with poisoning of the Scripals or Alexei Navalny, that if Novichoks existed then in Western laboratories, but not in Russia, that all questions about the undeclared Russian chemical weapons program was simply a Western hysteria.

Can you see the pattern? It is high time to draw conclusions.

I ask that this statement be made an official document of the Council and published on the external server and the public website of the OPCW.

Thank you, Madam Chairperson.