

Norwegian statement at the 100th session of the Executive Council,

By H.E. Ambassador Bård Ivar Svendsen,

Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of Norway to the OPCW

Mr. Chair,

Mr. Director-General,

Distinguished Colleagues,

Norway wishes to align itself with the statement made by H.E. Ambassador Katerina Sequensova, Permanent Representative of the Czech Republic to the OPCW, on behalf of the European Union.

I would like to add the following in my national capacity.

We meet in the shadow of Russia's unprovoked and illegal military attack on Ukraine. In addition to being a blatant breach of international law, this attack damages trust in instruments of non-proliferation and disarmament. Norway condemns Russia's actions and we reiterate our support for Ukraine's territorial integrity, sovereignty, and independence within its internationally recognised borders

We also condemn the Russian campaign of disinformation in spreading unfounded allegations against Ukraine regarding chemical weapons while risking exposure of the Ukrainian population to toxic chemicals through attacks against civilian industrial facilities. We reiterate that Ukraine is a responsible member of the Chemical Weapons Convention and in full compliance with the Convention.

Norway remains steadfastly confident in the work of the Technical Secretariat of the OPCW. We firmly reject any efforts to discredit its important work. Following the Russian aggression on Ukraine, Norway has aligned itself with EU sanctions against Russia, including the ban on export of chemicals that could be misused for the manufacturing of chemical weapons.

Mr. Chair,

The use of a Novichok nerve agent against the Russian citizen Alexei Navalny happened almost two years ago. Navalny was exposed to a Novichok agent before falling gravely ill, as has been confirmed by a number of independent laboratories. This represents a blatant violation of the CWC and international law. We once more call on the Russian Federation to disclose in a comprehensive and transparent manner the circumstances of this chemical weapons attack.

Mr. Chair

The Syrian Arab Republic's recurrent violations of its obligations under the CWC continue to be a matter of great concern. More than a year has now passed since the 25th session of the Conference of States Parties made an important decision in response to the first reports from the Investigation and Identification Team (IIT) on the use of chemical weapons in Syria. The decision to suspend Syrian voting rights and other privileges according to the CWC was both timely and necessary. In order to reverse the decision, Syria needs to resolve the pending issues, declare the full extent of its chemical weapons programme, and return to full compliance with the Convention.

We are not much closer to this goal today than we were when the decision was made. The Declaration and Assessment Team (DAT) is still unable to conduct its important work inside Syria. We regret Syria's continuous lack of cooperation in

issuing visas to all OPCW staff members, in clear breach of UN Security Council resolution 2118 (2013).

Norway commends the rigorous work by the OPCW TS in Syria, and we look forward to receiving the next report by the IIT. We reiterate our demand that Syrian authorities must cooperate fully with all branches of the Technical Secretariat of the OPCW, as well as with its policy making organs.

Thank you.