



OPCW

Executive Council

100th Session
5 – 7 July 2022

EC-100/NAT.26
5 July 2022
ENGLISH only

SLOVAKIA

**STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR JURAJ MACHÁČ
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC TO THE OPCW
AT THE 100TH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

Mr Chairperson,
Director-General,
Excellencies,
Ladies and gentlemen,

The Slovak Republic fully aligns itself with the statement delivered by H.E. Ambassador Kateřina Sequensová, Permanent Representative of the Czech Republic to the OPCW, on behalf of the Member States of the European Union and aligned countries.

The Slovak Republic takes this opportunity to extend its sincere congratulations to H.E. Ambassador Ziad Al Atiyah of Saudi Arabia for his appointment as Chairperson of the Executive Council. We stand ready to provide you, Mr Chairperson, all necessary support during the term of your mandate. Moreover, the Slovak Republic wishes to appreciate a skilful leadership of OPCW Director-General Fernando Arias. Together with members of Technical Secretariat, they have always demonstrated their high level of professionalism, impartiality and dedication in fulfilment of their mandates as set forth by the Chemical Weapons Convention (the Convention).

Firstly, the Slovak Republic, as clearly stated in its national declaration during the Ninety-Ninth Session of the Executive Council, condemns in the strongest possible terms the continuing shameless aggression of the Russian Federation against our neighbour – the sovereign, free and democratic Ukraine. The Russian behaviour constitutes a flagrant violation of international law, including its cornerstone – the United Nations Charter. Together with the innumerable losses of life and destruction of Ukraine, we find it as totally unacceptable and unpardonable. The Slovak Republic requests the Russian Federation to cease immediately its military campaign on the territory of Ukraine and to withdraw its occupation forces, including its mercenaries, from the entire territory of Ukraine. We urge the Russian Federation to fully comply with its international obligations and honour its commitments, especially the Budapest Memorandum of 1994 and the United Nations General Assembly resolutions of 2 March and of 24 March 2022, where the vast majority of the world has clearly raised its voice against an unprovoked aggression against Ukraine. Furthermore, the Slovak Republic reiterates its condemnation of hybrid and disinformation campaigns of the Russian Federation against Ukraine, especially those related to the dissemination of false allegations and accusations related to the Convention. It should be clear that Ukraine is a responsible partner that cherishes its commitments within the OPCW.



Secondly, it is highly regrettable that the dossier of Alexei Navalny still constitutes an unresolved issue related to the use of chemical weapons. Nearly two years has passed, and the Russian Federation has still not provided satisfactory information that would shed light on such a heinous assassination attempt by the chemical nerve agent from the novichok group against its national citizen, despite all international calls including within the OPCW. On this occasion, we wish to commend an excellent work made by Germany, France, Sweden and the OPCW itself that have proven beyond any doubt that Mr Navalny was exposed to a chemical weapon.

Thirdly, Syria as a Member State of the OPCW still fails to fulfil its obligations as set forth by the Convention and relevant decisions of the policy-making organs. The Slovak Republic urges the Syrian Arab Republic to substantially change its attitude and to start to fully cooperate with the OPCW. Since its accession to the Convention and becoming an OPCW Member State, the attitude of the Syrian authorities cannot be considered as satisfactory. On the contrary, Syria continuously hampers all activities of the Technical Secretariat in this regard.

Fourthly, on 29 April 2022 we commemorated the twenty-fifth anniversary of the entry-into-force of the Convention. Thanks to the OPCW and its tireless activities a verified destruction of 99% of chemical weapons stockpiles have been successfully carried out. Therefore, the smooth functioning of the OPCW and the continuation of its activities should be considered as one of the most successful contributions within the global framework of disarmament of non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Furthermore, the Slovak Republic takes this opportunity to commend an effort which has been made so far by H.E. Ambassador Lauri Kuusing of Estonia, Chairperson of the Open-Ended Working Group in the preparation of the Fifth Special Session of the Conference of the States Parties to Review the Operation of the Chemical Weapons Convention (Fifth Review Conference). We call upon all Member States and all relevant stakeholders to provide him all the necessary assistance, so that the Fifth Review Conference enables tangible results.

Lastly, as one of the co-sponsors of business continuity initiative led by Germany, the Slovak Republic once more again urges all Member States to support this endeavour. COVID-19 pandemic has clearly demonstrated our fragility. Therefore, in order to ensure a smooth functioning of the Executive Council in the future, we encourage all Member States to reach a consensus on this issue.

I kindly ask that this statement be designated an official document of this Council's session and posted on both the external server and the public website.

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