



OPCW

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ICELAND

**STATEMENT BY MR THORBJORN JONSSON ON BEHALF OF THE
DELEGATION OF THE REPUBLIC OF ICELAND TO THE OPCW AT THE
TWENTY-SEVENTH SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE STATES
PARTIES**

Mr Chairperson,
Mr Director-General,
Distinguished colleagues,

Iceland aligns with the statement delivered by the representative of the European Union, but I would like to make use of the opportunity to make a few remarks in my national capacity. Firstly however, we would like to congratulate H.E. Ambassador Vusimuzi Madonsela for his nomination as Chairperson of the Twenty-Seventh Session of the Conference of the States Parties as well as to thank H.E. Ambassador Bård Ivar Svendsen for his able leadership of the Twenty-Sixth Session of the Conference of the States Parties. We would also like to thank the Director-General and the staff of the Technical Secretariat for their hard work and dedication to the OPCW.

We are now marking the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Chemical Weapons Convention (“the Convention”) and while the OPCW has achieved a lot during its existence and continues to play a crucial role in maintaining the rules-based international order, the threat of chemical weapons remains very real. We must not cease our efforts to uphold a total ban on chemical weapons.

This year the world has regrettably had to witness the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine. This is a direct attack on the rules based international order and multilateralism. Iceland strongly condemns this unprovoked, brutal and illegal aggression and we firmly support Ukraine’s independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity. Unfortunately, in the OPCW we see a campaign of disinformation and unfounded accusations against Ukraine. Iceland strongly rejects this abuse of a platform that should be built on mutual trust and transparency.

Moreover, Iceland remains fully committed to the fight against impunity for the use of chemical weapons and therefore once more calls on the Russian Federation to conduct an impartial and transparent investigation into the assassination attempt on the Russian citizen Alexei Navalny on Russian territory and to address the legitimate questions raised by 45 States Parties over a year ago under Article IX (2) of the Convention.



Once more we must call on Syria to fulfil its obligations in accordance with the Convention and Security Council resolution 2118. We urge Syria to cooperate fully and in good faith with the OPCW and to take the necessary steps to lift the suspension of its rights and privileges as a State Party to the Convention. Iceland continues to fully support the work Investigation and Identification Team and we look forward to its next report.

The current economic situation has put pressure on the biennial budget of the Organisation, and we would like to commend the Technical Secretariat for their efforts to balance out the necessary increases. Iceland therefore fully supports the OPCW Draft Revised Programme and Budget for 2023.

We welcome the continued commitment and efforts of the Director-General and the Technical Secretariat towards a more gender equal, diverse, and inclusive OPCW. We encourage further steps to promote gender equality and mainstream gender throughout the Organisation and in all aspects of its work and look forward to continued dialogue on this topic. On this note, engaging with all relevant stakeholders, including civil society, non-governmental organisations, and industry, and their participation in the Conference of the States Parties and the Review Conference, can only serve to increase the relevance of the OPCW's work.

In closing, please let me reiterate our steadfast support for the work of the OPCW and our full confidence in the Technical Secretariat and the Director-General.

I would kindly ask you, Mr Chairperson, to consider this statement as an official document of the Twenty-Seventh Session of the Conference of the States Parties and to post it on the OPCW external server and public website.

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