



OPCW

Conference of the States Parties

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ENGLISH and FRENCH only

NEW ZEALAND

**JOINT STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GOVERNMENTS OF AUSTRALIA,
CANADA, AND NEW ZEALAND DELIVERED BY H.E. AMBASSADOR
SUSANNAH GORDON PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF NEW ZEALAND TO
THE OPCW AT THE TWENTY-SEVENTH SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE OF
THE STATES PARTIES UNDER AGENDA ITEM 9(D)**

Mr Chairperson,
Mr Director-General,
Distinguished colleagues,
I have the honour of speaking on behalf of the Governments of Australia, Canada, and my own, Aotearoa New Zealand.

Along with other States Parties, we are pleased to join together this week to focus our collective efforts on excluding the possibility of use of chemical weapons, and on promoting compliance with the Chemical Weapons Convention (“the Convention”). The Convention is an essential pillar of the international disarmament architecture and the rules-based international order on which we all rely. Its obligations rest on all States Parties without reservation.

Regretfully, over recent years we have witnessed a series of gross violations of the Convention, additional threats of violation, as well as relentless disinformation campaigns that have sought to undermine both the Convention and the Technical Secretariat of the OPCW. We condemn these developments.

We must not forget that many outstanding questions remain on the poisoning of Mr Alexei Navalny in 2020 with a nerve agent of the novichok family. The use of a chemical weapon against Mr Navalny is an affront to the global rules and norms that we have collectively committed to uphold, and must be addressed.

We remain deeply concerned that the Russian Federation has not credibly responded to questions from 45 States Parties under paragraph 2 of Article 9 of the Convention in October 2021. Despite having the opportunity, we consider that the Russian Federation, on whose territory the attack took place, has not yet adequately addressed or investigated the circumstances of the incident. Equally, the Russian Federation has not provided any confidence to States Parties about how it will prevent future uses of chemical weapons on its territory.

The Governments of Australia, Canada, and Aotearoa New Zealand therefore continue to reiterate our call on the Russian Federation to cooperate fully with the international community and the OPCW to provide answers and clarify what took place.

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