

## **Agenda Item 6(g) Addressing the Threat of CW Use**

Mr Chair,

The United Kingdom fully supports the joint statement delivered by the Romanian Ambassador and we're grateful for the statement provided earlier by the Director-General.

German, French, Swedish and now OPCW, analysis has confirmed that Alexei Navalny was poisoned with a nerve agent from the Novichok group. These are laboratories of the highest international standing. There can be no doubt of the seriousness of the situation we are dealing with.

This is not a bilateral issue between Russia and Germany. The prohibited use of a chemical weapon in a State Party is a matter of concern for all States Parties. We fully support Germany in seeking technical assistance from the Technical Secretariat. It is exactly what the OPCW is for.

The last confirmed use of a Novichok nerve agent was in my country in 2018. It cost a British national her life and left four others desperately ill. We had hoped that the international outcry condemning Russia's responsibility for that despicable act would help ensure that we never saw a repeat. We called on Russia then to declare the full extent of its Novichok programme and uphold its obligations under the Convention.

Less than three years later we find ourselves dealing with another assassination attempt using a Novichok nerve agent. Again Russia has a clear case to answer.

It is for Russia to carry out a full, transparent investigation, to set out clearly how this attack happened; and to explain what steps it is taking to address it. Russia must tell the truth about what happened to Mr Navalny and ensure those responsible are held to account.

In the weeks since this appalling event we have seen no credible attempt by Russia to address this serious crime. Instead, Russia has attacked Germany for helping save the life of one of its own citizens and publicly denigrated the work of this organisation.

The role of this Council is to promote the effective implementation of, and compliance with, this Convention. We should all be deeply concerned that the hard-won prohibition against the use of chemical weapons is yet again in jeopardy.

The United Kingdom will continue to work with Germany and the wider international community to ensure that there are consequences for this appalling breach of the norm against chemical weapons use. We must stand together in order to ensure a world free of these terrible weapons.

Thank you Mr Chair