



OPCW

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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

**STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
TO THE OPCW AT THE TWENTY-FIFTH SESSION
OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE STATES PARTIES
IN EXERCISE OF THE RIGHT OF REPLY TO THE STATEMENT
BY THE DELEGATION OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION TO THE OPCW**

The United States is deeply troubled by the disinformation propagated in the Russian Federation's national statement. The United States' guiding principles at the OPCW are an unwavering support for the Organisation and its subsidiary bodies, as well as a deep commitment to the effective implementation of the Convention. We denounce Russia's continued attempts to undermine the important work of the OPCW, and we condemn Russia's flagrant violation of the Chemical Weapons Convention.

The Russian Federation claims to have a commitment to constructive work, but its words do not match its actions. Russia is actively resisting and obstructing efforts by the OPCW and concerned States Parties to improve the international security environment. Russia's extensive effort to build false narratives using baseless counteraccusations is transparent.

Regarding the poisoning of Alexey Navalny, rather than accept responsibility for its actions, the Russian government offers only denials and counteraccusations—as was the case following Russia's use of a novichok nerve agent in Salisbury. There is no plausible explanation for Mr Navalny's poisoning other than Russian involvement and responsibility. Russia has provided only wildly imaginative alternative theories in an attempt to sow doubt; however, the facts are quite clear: only Russia has the motive, means, and record to conduct this sort of attack, which took place on Russian territory. The United States calls on Russia to comply with its international obligations by fully declaring and eliminating its chemical weapons programme, including its novichok stocks.

Predictably, as an obvious attempt to distract States Parties, Moscow has accused the United States and our allies of a litany of grievances. Moscow's false narrative follows a familiar script: blame the West and undermine the credibility of the mechanisms and institutions involved in investigating chemical weapons attacks.

Russia has repeatedly launched assaults on the credibility, impartiality, and independence of the OPCW, the Fact-Finding Mission, the OPCW-United Nations Joint Investigative Mechanism and, now, the Investigation and Identification Team. Russia's ongoing efforts to undermine OPCW investigations into chemical weapons use, including the Investigation and Identification Team's work to attribute responsibility for attacks in Syria, must cease.



The OPCW is a professional international organisation, working hard to fulfil its mandate—to ensure the implementation of the prohibition on chemical weapons production, stockpiling, and use. The OPCW Technical Secretariat does not have a political agenda. The United States and the broader international community strongly support the independent investigation mechanisms of the OPCW, which have been consistent in their investigation methodologies and have conducted business in an impartial and highly proficient manner.

The disinformation Russia continues to disseminate is clearly a diversionary tactic employed to discredit the OPCW, the United States, Germany, and the broad representation of countries that have demanded accountability for chemical weapons attacks. Russia's unfounded alternative theories of chemical weapons use in Syria, Salisbury, and Siberia hold no basis in fact and cannot hide the truth. The use of chemical weapons cannot occur with impunity and States Parties will not be distracted by Russia's disinformation.

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