



OPCW

Conference of the States Parties

Twenty-Sixth Session
29 November – 3 December 2021

C-26/NAT.14
29 November 2021
ENGLISH only

**STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE EUROPEAN UNION
DELIVERED BY H.E. AMBASSADOR MARJOLIJN VAN DEELEN
SPECIAL ENVOY FOR DISARMAMENT AND NON-PROLIFERATION
AT THE TWENTY-SIXTH SESSION
OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE STATES PARTIES
UNDER AGENDA ITEM 9(D)**

Mr Chairperson,

I have the honour of speaking on behalf of the European Union.

Addressing the threat from chemical weapons use is a key item on the Executive Council agenda and is essential for upholding international norms related to chemical weapons use. The European Union once again underlines its strong concerns that the Russian Federation has not reacted to international calls, including those reiterated on the occasion of the last session of the Executive Council, to thoroughly and in full transparency investigate the assassination attempt on the Russian opposition politician Mr Alexei Navalny who was poisoned in Russia by a military chemical nerve agent of the novichok group in August 2020, a substance developed by Russia. The European Union has condemned the poisoning in the strongest possible terms. The poisoning has been confirmed, beyond doubt, by specialised laboratories in Germany, France, and Sweden, as well as by the OPCW.

The European Union calls on the Russian Federation to fully cooperate with the OPCW to ensure an impartial international investigation and is in this regard concerned that the Russian Federation appears to no longer consider a technical assistance visit to Russia relevant, despite the readiness of the OPCW Technical Secretariat to deploy its experts in order to help clarify the case. The European Union once again urges the Russian Federation, in full transparency and without further delay, to disclose and credibly explain the circumstances of the assassination attempt.

Impunity for the use of chemical weapons must not and will not be tolerated. Those responsible for the assassination attempts must be brought to justice. On 15 October 2020, the European Union imposed restrictive measures under its chemical weapons sanctions regime against six Russian individuals and one entity responsible for inducing and providing support to the poisoning of Mr Alexei Navalny with the toxic novichok nerve agent. Previously, the European Union has introduced sanctions on four senior officials from the Russian military intelligence service involved in the poisonings with novichok in Salisbury in 2018.

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

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