



**OPCW**

**Executive Council**

Ninety-Ninth Session

8 – 10 March 2022

EC-99/NAT.39

8 March 2022

ENGLISH only

**SLOVAKIA**

**STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR JURAJ MACHÁČ  
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC TO THE OPCW  
AT THE NINETY-NINTH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

Madam Chairperson,  
Mr Director-General,  
Distinguished Ambassadors,  
Ladies and gentlemen,

The Slovak Republic fully aligns itself with the statement delivered by H.E. Ambassador Luis Vassy, Permanent Representative of France to the OPCW, on behalf of the Member States of the European Union and aligned countries.

Firstly, the Slovak Republic, in the strongest possible terms, condemns the shameless military aggression of the Russian Federation against free and democratic Ukraine. The Russian behaviour constitutes a flagrant violation of international law. Moreover, the Russian Federation has ruthlessly violated its commitments. After the annexation of the Crimean Peninsula in 2014, we are all, especially Ukraine, once again experiencing the behaviour that has to be condemned by the whole international community.

Such a blatant behaviour of the Russian Federation has clearly showed us the necessity of the rules-based international order with an unquestionable role of international organisations and bodies.

On this occasion, I want to commend an excellent and skilful leadership of H.E. Ambassador Fernando Arias, OPCW Director-General. Together with the staff of the OPCW Technical Secretariat, their role is irreplaceable in the implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention (“the Convention”). Due to their high level of professionalism, impartial performance of duties conferred by the Convention, and dedication, there is no place for any questioning of the conduct of their competences.

Secondly, the Slovak Republic welcomes the release of two OPCW Fact-Finding Mission reports on the use of chemical weapons in Marea and Kafr Zeita. We are deeply concerned that the OPCW missions confirmed another usage of chemical weapons. The role of the OPCW Fact-Finding Mission is crucial in the complex process of attribution of responsibility. Therefore, the Slovak Republic expresses its full support to the OPCW Investigation and Identification Team in order to identify the perpetrators of these heinous acts.



Moreover, nothing has changed in the behaviour of the Syrian Arab Republic, which still hampers the OPCW from carrying out its duties in accordance with the Convention and pertinent United Nations Security Council resolution. We urge the Syrian Arab Republic to change its attitude and to provide all assistance to the OPCW and its staff in accordance with its commitments stemming from its membership in the United Nations and in the OPCW.

Thirdly, on 4 March 2022, we commemorated the fourth anniversary of a reprehensible use of a chemical nerve agent by the Russian Federation against Mr Sergei Skripal and his daughter Yulia in Salisbury. Despite the excellent work of British authorities and journalists from Bellingcat, the perpetrators have never been brought to justice due to the non-cooperation of the Russian authorities.

When celebrating the twenty-fifth anniversary of the entry into force of the Convention in late April, we will still bear in mind that the perpetrators, who used the chemical weapons, have not yet been punished.

More than two years after the Salisbury attack, another chemical attack took place. In August 2020, Mr Navalny was poisoned on the territory of the Russian Federation by a chemical nerve agent which was confirmed by laboratories in Germany, France, and Sweden. The endeavour of the OPCW and its Technical Secretariat to shed light on this chemical attack has been the subject of a flagrant non-cooperation of the Russian Federation until this day.

Fourthly, the Slovak Republic is one of the co-sponsors of the business continuity initiative. In our national capacity, we would like to appeal to all members of the Executive Council to support this initiative originally introduced by Germany. The COVID-19 pandemic has clearly demonstrated that the twenty-first century is not immune to vis major circumstances. We need to be fully prepared to cope with any unprecedented situation in future.

Lastly, the Slovak Republic wishes to show its appreciation for all the work which has been done so far by the Director-General and the OPCW Technical Secretariat in preparation for the construction of the future Centre for Chemistry and Technology, financially supported also by the Slovak Republic. This cutting-edge facility will provide the OPCW with even higher level of capacities that will be of benefit for all nations in the world.

I would kindly ask that this statement be designated as an official document of the Ninety-Ninth Session of the Executive Council and posted on the OPCW's public website and the external server.

--- 0 ---