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**SWEDEN**

**STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR JOHANNES OLJELUND  
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE KINGDOM OF SWEDEN TO THE  
OPCW AT THE 100TH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

Mr Chairperson, Sweden is fully aligned with the statement of the European Union. I will add a few points in my national capacity.

As the Russian Federation's brutal and unprovoked aggression against Ukraine continues, Sweden reiterates in the strongest terms its condemnation of these actions and reaffirms its unwavering support for Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity. Russia's military attack is a flagrant violation of international law, including the United Nations Charter. It has caused untold suffering on the Ukrainian population and forced millions to flee their homes as civilian neighbourhoods are being bombed to rubble. Russia's aggression must end immediately, and peace must be restored within Ukraine's internationally recognised borders.

In this context, Sweden is appalled by Russian attacks on chemical industrial facilities in Ukraine, with severe risks for human and ecological disaster. Russian strikes are combined with disinformation campaigns and false accusations directed at Ukraine. It should be clear to the international community that Russia bears the sole responsibility for these actions and their consequences for the civilian population.

In times like these we are reminded of the importance of a rules-based international order and multilateral organisations. I would like to extend Sweden's warm thanks to Director-General Fernando Arias and the Technical Secretariat for their untiring and professional work in ensuring the implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention (the Convention), despite the very challenging circumstances.

I would also like to welcome Ambassador Ziad M. D. Al Atiyah as Chairperson of the Executive Council. I can assure you of the full support of the Swedish delegation in your new capacity. I further want to express Sweden's appreciation to H.E. Ambassador Lauri Kuusing for chairing and guiding the work of the Open-Ended Working Group for the preparation of the Fifth Special Session of the Conference of the States Parties to Review the Operation of the Chemical Weapons Convention (Fifth Review Conference). We salute his open and inclusive approach to the consultations and look forward to the work ahead under his capable leadership.

It is deeply regretful that the Syrian Arab Republic continues its stance of non-cooperation with the Technical Secretariat. The decision of the Conference of the States Parties at its Twenty-Fifth Session to suspend the voting rights and privileges of the Syrian Arab Republic was an appropriate response to a continued violation of the Convention. Only the Syrian Arab



Republic can take the steps needed to redress the situation. We urge the Syrian Arab Republic to reveal the full extent of its chemical weapons programme and to fully comply with the Convention. We call on the Syrian Arab Republic to fully cooperate with the Organisation and its Technical Secretariat.

Sweden remains determined that those responsible for the use of chemical weapons in the Syrian Arab Republic must be held accountable. It is of the utmost importance that the Declaration Assessment Team (DAT), the Fact-Finding Mission (FFM) and the Investigation and Identification Team (IIT) be given the necessary prerequisites to perform the tasks assigned to them. Sweden continues to support this crucial work through yearly financial contributions to the OPCW trust fund for Syria missions, with a contribution of SEK 1.5 million for 2022.

It is also deeply regretful that we, at yet another meeting, must conclude that Russian authorities have failed to respond to demands of the international community to disclose the circumstances around the assassination attempt on Alexei Navalny, and to fully cooperate with the OPCW to ensure an impartial international investigation. The questions that were put to the Russian Federation by 45 States Parties in October 2021 still remain unanswered.

Sweden reiterates that it is the responsibility of all States, including the Russian Federation, to ensure that the global ban on chemical weapons is respected, and that accountability for the use of chemical weapons must be established and upheld.

Mr Chairperson, women are still under-represented in all disarmament, non-proliferation, and arms control fora. It is our conviction that a gender equality perspective on all aspects of our collective work will strengthen international peace and security. We appreciate the efforts made by the Director-General and the Technical Secretariat to enhance the gender representation and diversity among staff, including through the gender and diversity audit, and look forward to further progress in mainstreaming gender throughout the Organisation and its external activities. I would like to take this opportunity to encourage States Parties to promote women's participation and strive towards gender-balanced delegations in future meetings, including at the upcoming Fifth Review Conference.

Lastly, I kindly ask that this statement be issued as an official document and placed on the public website. Thank you.

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