



*The Permanent Representation of Italy to the
Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons*

ITALY

**STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF ITALY TO THE OPCW
AT THE 101th SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

Mr Chairperson,

I would like to thank you and the Technical Secretariat for having carefully led the delicate organisation of this 101st Executive Council.

It is a privilege for me to attend it as Vice Chairperson under your wise leadership.

This is the third Executive Council meeting since Russian Federation troops crossed the border into Ukraine. Nothing has changed since then. Now, as then, there is an aggressor State and there is an aggressed State. We, as a free, democratic country that repudiates war and violence, now, as then, stand with the multitude of countries calling on Russia to withdraw its troops from the entire territory of Ukraine and fully respect Ukraine's territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence within its internationally recognized borders. .

We continue to be concerned about the risk of dangerous escalation, including, unfortunately, the threat of the use of chemical aggressors as well as the danger of tragic accidents in the chemical industrial districts in the south-east of Ukraine.

Our country calls on Russia to disclose without further delay the circumstances of the assassination attempt against Mr. Navalny. Italy, together with many other States, is still waiting for the Russian Federation to give the answers required under the terms of Article IX of the Convention.

Mr. Chairperson,

Italy takes this opportunity to once again side with the Technical Secretariat in its handling of the Syrian dossier. Beyond any proclamation, Syria's determination to refuse a DAT inspector a visa to enter the country, contrary to the provisions of the Convention and Resolution UN2118, is the plastic representation of a willingness to not cooperate in the search for the truth about the use of Chemical Weapons in the country. By joining this organization, Syria has accepted the terms of the Convention and the decisions of the Conference of States Parties. It is its full responsibility to follow those principles to which it has adhered.

Mr Chairperson,

the difficult times of the Syrian conflict, the pandemic, the economic crisis and the war in Ukraine must not cause us to lose our way towards our goals, and indeed must give us new energy in the pursuit of a free and peaceful world, finally free of the threat of weapons and chemical aggressors.

This hope finds new energy in the good auspices with which 2023 presents itself. In the coming year, the destruction of chemical weapons stockpiles will be completed, the Technical Centre for Chemistry

will come into operation, and the 5th Review Conference will provide a formidable opportunity to make the Convention more effective and more relevant to our troubled times.

We enthusiastically welcome the progression in the field of International Cooperation and Assistance and support the revision to the budget for 2023. A necessary revision that the Technical Secretariat has managed to keep from burdening the States Parties.

Our appeal to all nations is to look forward, to support one another and not fight, and to work to push away the impending shadows of the future by contributing to and pursuing our goal, a world free of chemical hazards and war.

I would kindly ask to consider this statement as an official document and post it on the Catalyst and on the OPCW public website.