

STATEMENT BY H.E AMBASSADOR LUCIAN FĂTU
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF ROMANIA TO THE OPCW
AT THE ONE HUNDREDTH AND FIRST SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

Mr. Chairperson, Director-General, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Romania fully supports the European Union statement delivered by the Czech Presidency in the general debate, on behalf of the Member States of the EU and aligned countries. In addition, I wish to emphasize a few issues from the national perspective.

Unfortunately, the context we are navigating into is far from being an easy one. The ongoing Russian aggression against Ukraine is generating enormous consequences in terms of our security, of economic and social policies. Romania, as clearly stated in its national declarations during the last two sessions of the Executive Council, has not stopped condemning Russian Federation's premeditated, unjustified and unprovoked military aggression on Ukraine. And we will continue to do this and not only at the level of declarations, but also through concrete measures. Specific measures, such as facilitating the export of Ukrainian grains and enhancing the transit capacity at the border crossing points, must remain in our constant focus. In this context, we underline once more the strategic importance of Romanian ports, which already proved by their role in ensuring safe transit for Ukrainian grains.

We should not forget that the Russian Federation's aggression against Ukraine is a violation of our values, a serious violation of international law and international commitments, including in connection with the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on their Destruction (the Convention).

In this context, we need to renew the appeal for Russian Federation to stop its premeditated, unjustified and unprovoked aggression. We must continue to condemn all Russian disinformation campaigns, notably regarding allegations of provocations using chemical agents in Ukraine. Such provocations, including „false flag” actions, would be irresponsible and could have grave humanitarian consequences.

A message of solidarity and unity is very much needed in this context, as well as a clear signal of support for the rules-based multilateralism. In this difficult context, the States Parties to the Convention must protect international law and the Convention even more strongly.

Romania recognizes and supports the important role of the OPCW in the multilateral architecture that underpins the rule of law and advances towards the rule-based order. We can only thank again to the Technical Secretariat, the Director-General and all those to contribute to the continuation of the OPCW's work. Romania has full confidence in their expertise, professionalism and impartiality.

This clear signal of support for order based on multilateralism and the rule of law must be emphasized in all spheres of our activity. For this reason, Romania strongly condemns the use of

chemical weapons in the Syrian Arab Republic and is among States Parties requesting the Syrian Arab Republic to cooperate with the OPCW. The Syrian Arab Republic needs to resolve the pending issues, declare the full extent of its chemical weapons programme, and return to full compliance with the Convention.

Let us be clear and reiterate: the use of chemical weapons, anywhere, at any time, by anyone, under any circumstances, is entirely unacceptable.

This belief was also the basis of Romania's actions regarding the assassination attempt on the Russian opposition politician, Mr. Alexei Navalny. Romania reiterates its strong concerns that the Russian Federation has not reacted to international calls, including those made on the occasion of the 100th session of the Executive Council and during the 26th Conference of States Parties in December 2021, for a thorough and transparent investigation into the assassination attempt on the Russian opposition politician Mr. Alexei Navalny. Romania once again joins the states that urge the Russian Federation to reveal without delay the circumstances of the assassination attempt against Mr. Navalny.

Next year will be an extremely important one: the Fifth Review Conference will take place. It will be an opportunity to consider how to ensure the continued relevance of the Convention as a key instrument of the international non-proliferation and disarmament regime. It will also be an opportunity to pay attention from the perspective of a common vision on countering the re-emergence of chemical weapons and safeguarding the global non-use norm. In this context, we cannot forget the importance of the operationalization of the Centre for Chemistry and Technology – the ChemTech Centre, which will significantly enhance the capabilities and status of the OPCW as a global leader in the effort to rid the world of chemical weapons. Romania financially supported the existence of this centre and will continue to be involved in this initiative.

Not least, Romania co-sponsors Germany's initiative on Executive Council business continuity and we will continue to support this much-needed démarche.

I would kindly ask you to consider this statement as an official document and published on the external server (Catalyst) and the public website of the OPCW.

Thank you.