



OPCW

Conference of the States Parties

Twenty-Seventh Session
28 November – 1 December 2022

C-27/NAT.10
28 November 2022
ENGLISH only

ITALY

**STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF THE ITALIAN REPUBLIC TO THE
OPCW AT THE TWENTY-SEVENTH SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE
OF THE STATES PARTIES**

Mr Chairperson,
Director-General,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and gentlemen,

First of all, I would like to thank the Chairperson of Twenty-Sixth Session of the Conference of the States Parties H.E. Ambassador Bård Ivar Svendsen of Norway, for his work, and I would like to congratulate the Chairperson of Twenty-Seventh Session of the Conference of the States Parties H.E. Ambassador Vusimuzi Madonsela of South Africa on his election. Italy is ready to contribute to the full implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention (“the Convention”) and to the activities of the OPCW.

Mr Chairperson, this Conference cannot overlook the implications that the aggression by the Russian Federation on the territory and the people of Ukraine has had in terms of tragic loss of life, violation of human rights, breach of international law, and unjustified destruction of civilian infrastructure. Italy condemns in the strongest possible terms Russia’s unjustified and unprovoked aggression against Ukraine, which represents a blatant violation of international law and humanitarian principles, which are binding on all the States Parties to all armed conflicts. Italy would also like to highlight its unwavering support for Ukraine’s territorial integrity, full sovereignty and independence within its internationally recognised borders and demands that Russia withdraws all its troops and military equipment from the entire territory of Ukraine.

As we mark the twenty-fifth anniversary of the entry into force of the Convention, we reaffirm our shared commitment to rule out completely the possibility of the use of chemical weapons anywhere, at any time, by anyone, under any circumstance. Let me therefore refer to the Syrian regime’s failure to respect its international obligations under the Convention.

Unfortunately, the Syrian Arab Republic persists in its unwillingness to cooperate, and it is highly regrettable that, after the Twenty-Sixth Session of the Conference of the States Parties, no progress has been made on any of the open issues. The malicious use of chemistry cannot go unpunished, Syria must shed light on what happened on its territory, and it must do so through those instruments and mechanisms that it itself approved by joining the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons. The current stalemate is unacceptable, as is the



Syrian Government's attitude in not complying with OPCW and United Nations decisions and resolutions.

Ascertaining the truth about the use of chemical weapons in Syria is critical for chemical disarmament, as is shedding light on the poisoning of Mr Alexei Navalny. The Russian Federation continues to maintain an ambiguous attitude towards this affair, which is not conducive to shedding light on it. We therefore continue to urge the Russian Federation to ensure without further delay the disclosure of the circumstances of the assassination attempt against Mr Navalny.

Against such a complex backdrop, the OPCW is heading into crucial years on which the future of the Organisation as a quasi-universal table for disarmament and, above all, the future world order vis-à-vis the scourge of chemical danger. An ever-present danger despite the almost finalised destruction of all declared chemical weapons in the world. This is the reason why we have to remain vigilant and continue to oppose all attempts at questioning or undermining the impartiality, objectivity and transparency of the OPCW.

The Fifth Review Conference, the opening of the ChemTech Centre and this Conference of the States Parties must pave the way for creating a common framework for addressing the chemical danger. It is a challenge that must be met despite the critical juncture we are facing globally. In this context, Italy is ready to support the efforts of the OPCW for meeting these challenges. From actions aimed at revising the tenure policy in order to retain the experience of inspectors, to the Draft Revised Programme and Budget for 2023 for greater security and effectiveness of the Organisation; from a greater commitment to proper gender equality within the OPCW, to a review of the procedures and modalities of interaction of civil and industrial society with the OPCW and the field of disarmament and chemical security.

Italy supports all these endeavours and does so with a growing awareness of how an apparently stable security environment can be easily compromised.

Mr Chairperson, the ability to maintain peace and prosperity in this world and at this precise moment, also passes through The Hague through the work of this Conference of the States Parties. All States Parties have a responsibility to act in the common interest to prevent a seemingly latent but ever tragically present danger.

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

--- 0 ---