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**ALBANIA**

**STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR ADIA SAKIQI  
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE REPUBLIC OF ALBANIA TO THE  
OPCW AT THE TWENTY-SEVENTH SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE  
OF THE STATES PARTIES**

Mr Chairperson,  
Director-General,  
Distinguished delegates,

The Republic of Albania would like to express our appreciation to Chairperson of the Twenty-Sixth Session of the Conference of the States Parties, H.E. Ambassador Bård Ivar Svendsen of Norway, and Chairperson of the Executive Council, H.E. Ambassador Ziad Al Atiyah of Saudi Arabia, for their tireless efforts and leadership in executing their duties.

We would also like to extend our warm congratulations to H.E. Ambassador Vusumuzi Madonsela of South Africa for his election as the Chairperson of the Twenty-Seventh Session of the Conference of the States Parties. Your Excellency, you have our support in leading us through the works of the session.

We take this opportunity to thank the OPCW Director-General Fernando Arias for his leadership, and we reiterate our entire tenacity in the OPCW Technical Secretariat, its objectivity, expertise and well-established technical mastery in implementing the Chemical Weapons Convention (“the Convention”) and tasks assigned by the States Parties. The Republic of Albania, serving as a non-permanent member of the United Nations Security Council, strongly supports the draft resolution of 13 October 2022, discussed in the United Nations General Assembly First Committee, concerning the steps that have to be undertaken in achieving the common goal of a world without chemical weapons. We align with the United Nations in this matter and emphasise that it is crucial to protect our international security environment and minimise the threat of nuclear weapons during these difficult times.

The Republic of Albania strongly condemns the ongoing war waged by Russia in Ukraine, a flagrant violation of the United Nations Charter. We want to emphasise that the war initiated by Russia is a threat to our values and freedom. Russia has utilised its propaganda to spread unsupported allegations about the development of chemical weapons against Ukraine and has committed a punishable act of aggression. Russia’s invasion of Ukraine is a violation of its territorial integrity and of the United Nations Charter and we urge Russia to withdraw its troops from the territory of Ukraine.



Concerning the Syrian Arab Republic, the Republic of Albania aligns itself with the statement by European Union (EU) and has supported its decision in deferring Syria from their right to vote. We emphasise that it is crucial for all States Parties to respect the Convention's international obligations and it is evident that Syria has failed to do so, as they have not declared the chemical weapons programme and refuse to cooperate with the Organisation. Another pressing issue is the issuing of visas for OPCW's officials, and we urge the Syrian Arab Republic to issue them without delay, as it is a breach of the United Nations Security Council resolution 2118. The Republic of Albania applauds the Director-General's ongoing initiatives to communicate with Syria and urges Syria to respond in a constructive manner. In this light, it is worth acknowledging and appreciating the undertaken investigations by OPCW-UN Joint Investigative Mechanism (JIM), the Investigation and Identification Team (IIT), the OPCW Declaration Assessment Team (DAT) and the Fact-Finding Mission (FFM).

Furthermore, the Republic of Albania aligns itself with the EU statement on the Navalny matter and urges Russia to promptly disclose the specifics of the attempted assassination. We view this as the only remedy to address the threat posed by the use of chemical weapons. By specialised laboratories in Europe and as well as by the OPCW, Mr Navalny's poisoning in Russia in August 2020 by a military-grade nerve agent has been proven beyond a reasonable doubt.

The Republic of Albania agrees with the Director-General's proposed adjustment to the program and budget for 2023, which enables the Organisation to carry out its essential activity, including collaboration and assistance initiatives.

Furthermore, the Republic of Albania aligns itself with the EU statement about the inspector's matter and supports the re-hiring procedure. We comprehend that the Team Leader's required tenure will experience a large turnover in the Inspectorate Division in 2023 and we understand that such a development would affect the Organisation's operating capabilities. That is why, the Republic of Albania supports the selection of re-hiring inspectors, as a temporary remedy, which is justifiable and necessary. This necessity is related to the inspectors' core contribution, quality expertise and knowledge that they provide.

The Republic of Albania also aligns itself with the joint statement on gender and fully supports the incorporation of gender equality within the Organisation. We anticipate onward progression in this direction, as women continue being a minority at OPCW. The Republic of Albania is thankful for the work carried out thus far from the Director-General and emphasises that continuing efforts are required from all States Parties to improve gender integration.

Additionally, we also align with the EU on the joint statement concerning accreditation of non-governmental organisations (NGOs), as we believe that it is highly important to promote inclusion whilst collaborating with these organisations. The Republic of Albania supports their participation as NGOs play a critical role in developing society and promoting citizen affiliation.

Lastly, the Republic of Albania would like to emphasise the very important work that will occur next year at the Fifth Review Conference. We strongly believe that this Conference will provide a possibility to act on improving the Convention's implementation as a crucial component to maintain technological and economic developments, as well as international peace and security. We urge all States Parties to give their contribution in this planning process, in order to achieve a mutual vision for combating the resurgence of chemical weapons. In this regard, I would like to express our appreciation to the Chairperson, H.E. Ambassador Lauri

Kuusing of Estonia, for guiding the intricate work in a transparent and inclusive manner with the intention of achieving consensus.

The Republic of Albania will continue to actively provide its support, in order to meet the fundamental objective of the OPCW - a world without chemical weapons.

Dear Chairperson, please accept this statement as an official document of the Twenty-Seventh Session of the Conference of the States Parties and post it on the OPCW external server and public website.

Thank you.

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