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UKRAINE

**STATEMENT BY MS KATERYNA BILA
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OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF UKRAINE
AT THE TWENTY-SEVENTH SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE
OF THE STATES PARTIES UNDER AGENDA ITEM 9(D)**

Mr Chairperson,
Director-General,
Distinguished delegates,

Implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention (“the Convention”) is one of the most important areas of our State’s policy in the field of arms control and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. This issue is under the close oversight of the President of Ukraine and the Ukrainian Government. That being said, I can assure you that Ukraine would never use any chemicals as a means of warfare. Ukrainians will never allow a Chernobyl-type disaster to happen again, which can pollute our earth and deprive future generations from enjoying it.

The continued Russian missile terror against the population of Ukraine and the destruction of energy infrastructure and chemical industry facilities have heightened our concerns about Russian hostile intentions. The shelling poses a serious threat of release of large quantities of toxic chemicals.

We are deeply concerned by evidence coming to light of Russian military forces using riot control agents against Ukraine defensive units. Each State Party undertakes not to use riot control agents as a method of warfare as stated under Article 1 of the Convention. Ukrainian authorities continue to gather facts related to all potential violations of the chemical weapons convention. The Technical Secretariat and the States Parties will be informed about the progress of the investigation in due course.

I would like to stress that in the case of continued battlefield losses, or a complete collapse of the Russian army, we remain concerned that Russia may yet resort to employing chemical weapons. They have done so in the recent past, including in the poisoning of Alexei Navalny. Previous Russian chemical weapons attacks have involved chemicals that are easily concealed. Russia has also used incapacitating agents (Dubrovka Theatre) before. As confirmed by Main Operational Department of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, Brigadier General Oleksiy Hromov, the Russian armed forces have chemical weapons, they have radiation, chemical and biological defence troops in Ukraine and we cannot rule out “limited use” of chemical weapons by the Russian army.



We also have valid reasons to be concerned and vigilant because of the previous track record of the Kremlin regime who is accustomed to use chemical weapons to eliminate its political opponents and achieve foreign political goals. In this regard we strongly condemn the use of chemical weapons by the Russian Federation in Salisbury and on Russian territory against Alexei Navalny.

Unfortunately, a few countries, most notably Russia, continue to threaten the international prohibition on the use of chemical weapons. In light of recent Convention violations, we must stand strong in our efforts to hold those guilty accountable and to defend and uphold the Convention and our common security. We once again urge Russia and the Syrian Arab Republic to fulfil their duties. We must also engage all new and developing threats as we look to the future.

Ukraine is a strong supporter of the Convention and reserves the right to seek further support and assistance from the OPCW in accordance with Article VIII and Article X of the Convention. We are in very close contact with the Technical Secretariat of the OPCW in order to discuss the challenges posed by Russia's illegal invasion, which are relevant to the implementation of the Convention. Discussions also include the threat of chemical weapons use and assistance and protection support from the OPCW Technical Secretariat as well as from States Parties to the Convention.

We appreciate the OPCW's commitment in upholding the norm against chemical weapons and in providing us with technical assistance, especially in the field of chemical safety and security, in line with the Convention. We are also grateful for the OPCW international cooperation projects and programmes to provide specialised and logistical support and training.

Ukraine is also grateful to the States Parties to the Convention that have provided us with assistance and detection equipment, alarm systems, protective equipment, decontamination equipment, medical antidotes and treatments and advice on using these protective measures.

Let me express my appreciation for all the statements of support from OPCW Member States about the situation in Ukraine. We are very grateful for the strong international support.

A world free of chemical weapons is our common goal. This is only achievable with our unwavering commitment to fully implement the Convention. While remaining a strong supporter of the OPCW and the Convention, Ukraine will continue to do all of these things.

I ask that this statement be designated an official document of this session of the Conference of the States Parties and posted on both the external server and the public website.

Thank you for your attention.