



101st Session
4 – 6 October 2022

EC-101/NAT.75
4 October 2022
ENGLISH and FRENCH only

FRANCE

STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF THE FRENCH REPUBLIC TO THE OPCW AT THE 101ST SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL UNDER AGENDA ITEM 6(G)

Mr Chairperson,

I am disappointed that this decision is still a subject of debate, four years after it was adopted, in accordance with all of the rules and procedures and with the provisions of the Chemical Weapons Convention (“the Convention”), by a very large majority of the States Parties.

1. The legitimacy of the decision cannot be called into question, because it was adopted by the most important political body of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW)—the Conference of the States Parties—during a special session attended by 152 States Parties.
2. We are told that this decision was taken by a minority of the States Parties. This is false.

A majority of two thirds present and voting was necessary to adopt this decision. A total of 106 States voted, meaning the required majority was 70 votes. Ultimately, 82 States Parties voted in favour of the decision, that is 77% of those present and voting. This represents more than three quarters of the votes cast.

3. Finally, this June decision is in accordance with the provisions of the Convention.

From the moment there is confirmation of an allegation of use of chemical weapons, a case of non-compliance with the Convention arises. Article VIII of the Convention clearly entrusts the Organisation with the role of ensuring compliance with the prohibition of use set out in Article I of the Convention, to which we are all parties.

It is in exactly the opposite case, that is, if we prevent the OPCW from taking up this matter, that the question of its legitimacy and credibility will arise.

The procedure for adopting this decision therefore cannot be contested, and neither can its merits.

We call on all States Parties to accept this reality and to accept a decision that has been adopted in compliance with all of the rules. I would also recall that the drafters of the Convention envisaged voting as a decision-making modality by granting each State Party one vote, under paragraph 17 of Article VIII, before referring to consensus, which is mentioned in paragraph 18 of Article VIII.



Be assured, we regret that consensus could not be reached on issues as serious as material breaches of the Convention. But we cannot stand idly by. The credibility of the Convention and its implementation are at stake.

My delegation would ask that this statement be considered as an official document of this session of the Executive Council and that it be posted on the public website and on Catalyst.

Thank you.

--- 0 ---