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UKRAINE

**STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR MAKSYM KONONENKO
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF UKRAINE TO THE OPCW
AT THE 101ST SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL
UNDER AGENDA ITEM 6(G)**

Mr Chairperson,
Director-General,
Excellencies,
Ladies and gentlemen,

I am honoured to be a part of today's discussion on the threat of chemical weapons usage.

The Russian Federation has made repeated completely false allegations that Ukraine has used or is planning to use chemical weapons. They have made ridiculous statements about plans involving other States Parties. None of these are true; so far Russia has just spammed the Technical Secretariat of this Organisation with statements and verbal notes but has not offered no evidence in support of allegations.

Russia is failing to reach its goals on the battlefield and is becoming increasingly desperate. The successful Ukrainian counter-offensive along the entire front line of the country clearly showed how confused the Russian army was during its forced departure from the temporarily occupied territories. In one month of the war, Ukrainian Armed Forces liberated more than 10,000 km² of Ukrainian territory, five times more territory than Russia captured in three months of its offensive.

As Russia becomes more desperate, there is a very high threat of them resorting to desperate measures. There is no doubt that Russia intended to destroy the Ukrainian people by any means, including quite possibly chemical weapons. I underline that the investigations on some incidents, inter alia, testing of samples in order to detect chemical substances is currently underway and Ukraine will be ready to provide the OPCW with the results of the investigations as soon as possible.

We have reasonable concerns to be worried and be vigilant due to the previous track record of the Kremlin regime, who is accustomed to using 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. Ukraine has complete trust in the OPCW's leadership and applauds the Technical Secretariat's professional efforts in the Syrian Arab Republic. We fully support the efforts of the DAT (Declaration Assessment Team), FFM (Fact-Finding Mission), and IIT (Investigation and Identification Team).



Ukraine is in a very close contact with the Secretariat in order to discuss the implementation of the Chemical Weapons 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.

Implementation of 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 several generations from enjoying it. Ukraine is a strong supporter of the Chemical Weapons Convention and an active member of the OPCW.

We appreciate the OPCW's commitment to upholding the norm against chemical weapons and to providing us with technical assistance, especially in the field of chemical safety and security, in line with the Convention together with the financial support received from many States Parties.

We are grateful to the OPCW for all relevant assistance, including advice and coordination. We are also grateful for the OPCW international cooperation projects and programmes to provide specialised and logistical support and training.

We also remain very grateful to those States Parties that have already offered protective assistance to Ukraine, and we would like to encourage other States Parties to provide advice and assistance as provided for in Article X.

Being deeply concerned about the use of chemical weapons by Russia as aggressor and terrorist State on our territory, we ask the OPCW and its Member States to monitor the situation in Ukraine very closely and, if necessary, intervene without delay. In the worst case, I urge you to make Russia pay a high price for any possible violation of the Chemical Weapons Convention.

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.

Thank you for your attention.

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