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SPAIN

**STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF THE KINGDOM OF SPAIN TO THE
OPCW AT THE TWENTY SEVENTH SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE
STATES PARTIES**

Mr Chairperson,

Please allow me to first congratulate you on your appointment as Chairperson of this Conference, and to welcome the efforts made to ensure a substantive discussion. Spain aligns itself with the statements that have been delivered by the delegation of the European Union.

Since February, we have been witnessing Russia's unjustified aggression against Ukraine, which undermines the common principles of the United Nations, and the consequences of which will have repercussions affecting peace and security at the global level.

Spain urges the Russian Federation to immediately, completely, and unconditionally cease its military actions and withdraw its troops. Russia must fully respect the territorial integrity, sovereignty, and independence of Ukraine within its internationally recognised borders.

Likewise, we urge the Russian Federation, as a State Party to the Chemical Weapons Convention, to prevent any use, transfer, or stockpiling of chemical weapons or any other type of weapon of mass destruction with grave consequences for the entire region. We also call for the cessation of the Russian disinformation operations aimed at attributing the responsibility for incidents with chemical agents to the Ukrainian forces.

Spain reiterates its strongest possible condemnation of the use of chemical weapons and its total commitment to the implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention. We support the extraordinary work of the OPCW and its response to the use of chemical weapons, including in the identification of the recurring use of said weapons or any contribution to the development thereof, which cannot remain unpunished.

Through its Technical Secretariat, it has played an indispensable role in ensuring the effective implementation of the Convention, and Spain recognises its professionalism and impartiality. We reiterate our firm support for the various reports that the Investigation and Identification Team has presented, and look forward to future reports.

It has been 25 years since the entry-into-force of the Chemical Weapons Convention, and the OPCW has achieved one of its most important goals with the verified destruction of 99% of chemical weapons stockpiles declared by possessor States. In spite of the progress made in this area, the re-emergence of the use of chemical weapons is a critical threat to international peace and security.



Putting an end to impunity and guaranteeing accountability is critical for safeguarding the integrity of the provisions set out in the Convention and preventing the re-emergence of chemical weapons. Spain supports the efforts of the International Partnership against Impunity for the Use of Chemical Weapons to guarantee accountability for the perpetrators of attacks involving chemical weapons in Syria.

In recent years, the world has borne witness to the catastrophic use of chemical weapons in Syria and northern Iraq since 2013, which has resulted in hundreds of victims—including children. Chemical weapons have also been used in other scenarios. More than two years have passed since Alexei Navalny suffered poisoning with a chemical novichok agent in the territory of the Russian Federation. Spain once again reiterates to the Russian Federation that it must respond to the questions that have been addressed to it under the framework of paragraph 2, Article IX of the Convention, and that it must cooperate with the Technical Secretariat towards that end.

We also condemn the Syrian Arab Republic's continued violation of its obligations as a State Party to the Convention, and we vehemently condemn the use of chemical weapons by the Syrian Air Forces. In order to restore its rights and privileges under the Convention, we urge Syria to resolve the outstanding issues in its declaration and to declare the full scope of its chemical weapons programme to return to full compliance with the Convention by fully cooperating with the Technical Secretariat of the OPCW.

Beyond the full implementation of the obligations set out in the Chemical Weapons Convention, Spain remains dedicated to strengthening and guaranteeing the effectiveness of other tools of non-proliferation.

Collaboration among States Parties within the OPCW, the chemical industry, civil society, and other multinational organisations, including the European Union, INTERPOL, the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe, and the bodies of the United Nations such as the UNODA, the UNODC, and the UNOCT, is fundamental in preventing the production, acquisition, and undue use of industrial, pharmaceutical, and explosive chemical products as weapons, including within the anti-terrorism field.

I would like to conclude by reiterating Spain's very firm commitment to the cause of the eradication of chemical weapons, their prevention, and their condemnation. We hope that the Fifth Review Conference will serve as an opportunity to ensure maximum compliance with the Convention and the work of the OPCW as a key instrument in the international non-proliferation regime, and in fields such as assistance, prevention, and experience in the identification of chemical agents.

My delegation requests that this statement be considered an official document of the Twenty-Seventh Session of the Conference of the States Parties and published on the Organisation's servers and website.

Thank you.