



*The Permanent Representation of Italy to the
Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons*

ITALY

**STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF ITALY TO THE OPCW
AT THE 102th SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

Mr Chairperson,

Italy wishes to express its sincere gratitude for your chairmanship of the 102nd Session of the Executive Council in your capacity as Chairman of the Executive Council together with the Technical Secretariat and the Director General.

We would like once again to emphasize our Country's full support and appreciation for the Organization, most notably in these trying times.

2023 will be a landmark year for the OPCW: which will be able to finally achieve its first and most important goal: the complete destruction of all declared Chemical Weapons stockpiles. Moreover, we will inaugurate the Centre for Chemistry and Technology – whose institution we fully supported. Last but far from least, the upcoming Fifth Review Conference of the CWC will hopefully pave the way for boosting and strengthening the role of this important Organization.

In this respect, we reiterate our condemnation of the unprovoked, unjustified and illegal Russia's war of aggression on Ukraine. We urge the Russian Federation to put an immediate halt to its military operations and withdraw all its troops from all the occupied territories of Ukraine.

Mr Chair,

Last January the OPCW released a report that found the Syrian regime responsible for the chemical weapons attack on Douma on April 7, 2018. For the ninth time, the use of chemical weapons has been independently attributed to the Syrian regime by UN and OPCW mechanisms. There must be accountability for these heinous crimes. We commend the IIT for its professionalism and impartiality. We urge Syria to immediately renounce its chemical program and fully adhere to the provisions of the CWC.

In the same vein, the Russian Federation is called upon to finally provide explanations and clarifications on the chemical aggression against Mr Navalny. We are still waiting for answers to the questions addressed to the Russian Federation under Article IX of the Convention.

Mr Chairperson,

The 5th Review Conference is a great opportunity for the OPCW and more in general for the international arms control and counter-proliferation domain. However, all Member States should approach the conference in good faith, so as for it to succeed. Italy looks forward to the Review

Conference as an opportunity for reaffirming that the use of Chemical Weapons is unacceptable by anyone, anywhere, at any time and under any circumstances.

I would kindly ask to consider this statement as an official document and post it on the Catalyst and on the OPCW public website.

Thank you Mr Chairperson