



OPCW

Review Conference

Fifth Session
15 – 19 May 2023

RC-5/NAT.25
15 May 2023
ENGLISH only

LUXEMBOURG

**STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR JEAN-MARC HOSCHEIT
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE GRAND DUCHY OF LUXEMBOURG
TO THE OPCW AT THE FIFTH SPECIAL SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE OF
THE STATES PARTIES TO REVIEW THE OPERATION OF THE CHEMICAL
WEAPONS CONVENTION**

Mr Chairperson,
Director-General,
Excellencies and dear colleagues,

Luxembourg congratulates you, H.E. Ambassador Henk Cor van der Kwast, on your election as Chairperson of the Fifth Special Session of the Conference of the States Parties to Review the Operation of the Chemical Weapons Convention (Fifth Review Conference). I would like to assure you and your team of our delegation's full support during your chairpersonship. We also commend you, H.E. Ambassador Lauri Kuusing, Chairperson of the Open-Ended Working Group, for your outstanding work in preparing the Chairperson's draft provisional text. Luxembourg would like to thank all those involved in the work of the OPCW for their remarkable efforts over the past year and assure the OPCW of our deepest confidence in its expertise, impartiality and professionalism in carrying out its mandate.

Luxembourg fully associates itself with the European Union's declaration. I would like to add a few remarks in my national capacity.

It is imperative for the OPCW to have adequate financial and human resources at its disposal to be able to fulfil its mandate. Therefore, Luxembourg calls upon all States Parties to the Convention to fulfil their obligations, to pay their assessed contributions, and to support the OPCW's tenure policy.

The use of chemical weapons anywhere, at any time, by anyone, and under any circumstances, is unacceptable. Any State or non-State actor who uses toxic agents, in violation of the Convention, must be held accountable. It is the States Parties' obligation to protect our international norms by countering the re-emergence of chemical weapons.

In this context, Luxembourg underlines the serious concerns about the use of chemical weapons in the twenty-first century, including the poisoning of the Russian opposition leader Alexei Navalny in 2020. Conversely, Russian authorities have failed to produce evidence in support of their allegations against Ukraine with regards to the use of chemical weapons. Luxembourg strongly condemns these unacceptable efforts to undermine the values and standards that the OPCW has defended over the last 25 years.



Furthermore, Luxembourg urges the Russian Federation to stop shielding the Syrian regime from accountability for its repeated use of chemical weapons.

My country strongly condemns the recurrent use of chemical weapons in Syria. Syria's violation of the Convention is well documented by investigations under existing mechanisms, including the third OPCW Investigation and Identification Team Report that was published this year. We deeply regret that Syria is neither acting in accordance with its obligations stemming from the Convention, nor complying with the measures put in place by the Executive Council.

We call upon all States Parties to demonstrate their support for the OPCW by standing together in defence of its values and principles, and by insisting on the implementation of the provisions of the Convention. Commitment will pay off - a major milestone within reach is the completion of the destruction of the last remaining declared chemical weapons by the end of this year. Another great achievement is the inauguration of the ChemTech Centre, which we welcome warmly. This new laboratory will enhance the OPCW's capacities in terms of verification and training, international cooperation and assistance. One of its key tasks is to further promote the implementation of the Convention and prepare the OPCW to face emerging challenges, including through the intensification of the verification regime.

We also wish to see gender equality further integrated into all dimensions of the OPCW's work and all aspects of the implementation of the Convention. We see progress in this regard. However, much remains to be done to improve the protection and care, as well as the mitigation of the asymmetric impacts on female victims of chemical attacks. Further research on the diverse and disproportionate effects of chemical attacks on women is essential. We encourage the OPCW and all State Parties to continue their efforts to ensure that gender issues are fully taken into account in all workstreams.

Mr Chairperson, Luxembourg would greatly appreciate an extension of non-governmental organisations (NGO) involvement in the Conference of the States Parties. We are convinced that a more inclusive approach with respect to NGO participation would further promote transparency and strengthen the collective effort against the use of chemical weapons.

I would kindly ask you to consider this Statement as an official document of the Review Conference and upload it to the OPCW external server and public website.

Thank you.

--- 0 ---