



Norwegian statement at the 104th session of the Executive Council, By H.E. Ambassador Bård Ivar Svendsen, Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of Norway to the OPCW

Mr. Chair,

Mr. Director-General,

Distinguished Colleagues,

Norway aligns itself with the statement made by H.E. Consuelo Femenia, Permanent Representative of Spain to the OPCW, on behalf of the European Union. I would like to add the following in my national capacity.

This summer marked a watershed in the history of the OPCW and in global disarmament efforts. The destruction of all declared chemical weapons in the world was completed. This was indeed a great cause for celebration. This does not mean, however, that the OPCW or we as States Parties can rest on our laurels. Because undeclared chemical weapons still exist, and the repeated use of such weapons has been unequivocally documented in recent years.

Mr. Chair,

Norway has repeatedly called on the Syrian Arab Republic to comply with its obligation as a State Party to cooperate with the OPCW and enable the Technical Secretariat to fulfil its mandate. We reiterate our call today. It is paramount that the Syrian Arab Republic undertakes the measures necessary to lift the suspension of its rights and privileges as a State Party to the Chemical Weapons Convention.

Likewise, we continue to urge the Russian Federation to provide credible answers to how – and under what circumstances – Russian citizen Alexei Navalny was exposed to a Novichok agent in August 2020. The attack on Mr. Navalny is a flagrant violation of the CWC and international law. We reiterate our call to the Russian Federation to comply with its obligations as a State Party and facilitate a proper investigation of this matter. The use of riot control agents as a method of warfare is prohibited under Article I of the Convention. We are alarmed at the increasing number of reports that the Russian Federation makes use of such agents. Russia's brutal war of aggression against Ukraine represents a conspicuous breach of international law, it undermines multilateralism, it

damages trust in instruments of non-proliferation and disarmament, and it inflicts immense suffering on the people of Ukraine. Norway continues to condemn Russia's warfare in the strongest possible terms.

Mr. Chair,

The scope and magnitude of the OPCW's tasks and activities remain formidable. The Technical Secretariat needs a solid and predictable financial base to be able to carry out its work. At the same time, most States Parties are faced with financial challenges that require strict budgetary discipline. Norway supports the adoption of a budget for 2024-2025 which will enable the OPCW to carry out its vital work including inspections, international co-operation, and assistance. Norway calls on all States parties to meet their obligations and pay their assessed contributions in full and on time.

Mr. Chair,

Norway attaches great importance to the participation and involvement of civil society actors in OPCW conferences and events. They provide valuable input in terms of expertise and technical knowledge. Norway greatly appreciates the current ongoing dialogue on how cooperation with civil society can be improved.

Mr. Chair,

Let me conclude by reiterating Norway's confidence in the impartial and diligent work of DG Arias and the Technical Secretariat of the OPCW. Thank you.