

**Statement of Estonia at the OPCW 105th Session of the Executive Council (The Hague,
5 to 8 March, 2024)**

Mr Chair,

Estonia fully aligns itself with the statement of the European Union. In our national capacity, I thank the Chairperson for his commitment to guiding the work of the Executive Council. I commend the unwavering leadership of the OPCW Director-General. Estonia has full confidence in the professionalism, impartiality and technical expertise of the Technical Secretariat and its Investigation and Identification Team.

Estonia calls for strong enforcement of the Chemical Weapons Convention to prevent the re-emergence of such weapons and ensure accountability for their use. We condemn the Syrian regime's use of chemical weapons, independently attributed to them by the UN and OPCW, as a stark example of their indiscriminate brutality. Alongside the EU, we demand that the regime declare and destroy its chemical weapons stockpiles in accordance with international obligations and fully cooperate with the OPCW.

Mr Chair,

We have surpassed two years since Russia launched its illegal, unprovoked and unjustified full-scale war of aggression against the sovereign nation of Ukraine. Estonia condemns in the strongest possible terms Russia's acts of aggression and we acknowledge Ukraine's right to self-defense against the aggressor state. Russia will be held fully accountable for all destruction and crimes perpetrated. There will be no tolerance for impunity for the perpetrators.

Regrettably, the information presented by Ukraine, but also available from Russian information sources, adds to growing concerns that in this war of aggression, Russia is resorting to the use of Riot Control Agents as a means of warfare. This would constitute a blatant violation of the Chemical Weapons Convention. We call on Russia to adhere to its obligations under the Chemical Weapons Convention and refrain from using any form of chemical weapons on the battlefield. It is imperative that Russia fully cooperate with the OPCW to address and alleviate all concerns related to the use of chemical weapons. We join other Participating States in reminding to the Russian Federation that it still has not provided a substantive answer to several questions posed in accordance with Article IX, paragraph 2 of the Convention.

Mr Chair,

We stand with the European Union in expressing outrage over the sudden and unexplained death of Mr. Alexei Navalny while in isolated imprisonment in Siberia. The tragic passing of Mr. Navalny does not absolve Russia from the need for a thorough and transparent investigation into his poisoning with a nerve agent from the "Novichok" group. We call for a full,

independent and transparent investigation into the circumstances of Mr. Navalny's reported death in custody.

Estonia would kindly ask you to consider this statement as an official document and post it on the OPCW external server and public website.
