



REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA

STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR JOŽEF DROFENIK, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF SLOVENIA TO THE OPCW AT THE 105TH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

Agenda item 7 (e) – Addressing the threat from chemical weapons use

Mr. Chairperson, Director-General, distinguished colleagues,

Slovenia fully subscribes to the statements made on behalf of the European Union. In addition, we offer the following remarks:

Two years have passed since the beginning of the full-scale invasion of Ukraine by the Russian Federation, in contravention of international law. Since then, Ukraine reports having documented more than 800 cases of Russian forces using ammunition loaded with toxic chemicals, mostly riot control agents. More than 800 cases. This is not the occasional case of a local commander making an error of judgement, but a clear pattern of violations of international law by the Russian forces in their war of aggression.

Let's recall that using riot control agents as a method of warfare is expressly prohibited under the Chemical Weapons Convention. Once again, we call on Russia to ensure that this prohibition is fully respected, and on the international community to ensure that crimes committed in and against Ukraine do not go unpunished.

We welcome the assistance offered to Ukraine by the OPCW, and call on the Technical Secretariat to continue to closely monitor the situation.

Mr. Chairperson,

We were shocked and saddened by the untimely death of Mr. Aleksei Navalny in Russian custody. We join the calls for a credible and impartial investigation into the circumstances of his death, bearing in mind the previous assassination attempt on his life using a targeted chemical weapon.

Finally, Mr. Chairperson, I would like to briefly address the conflict in the Middle East. Our hearts break over the humanitarian catastrophe in Gaza, including the carnage against civilians scrambling for food aid last week. We condemn the disproportionate use of force against civilians and reiterate our call for an immediate ceasefire, protection of civilians & sufficient humanitarian aid delivery across all Gaza. We also call on Israel to promptly ratify the Chemical Weapons Convention.

I ask that this statement be considered as an official document, and posted on Catalyst and the OPCW public website.

Thank you.