



IRELAND

**Statement by Mr. Frank Groome, Deputy Permanent Representative of
Ireland to the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons**

At the One Hundredth and Sixth Session of the Executive Council

9 – 12 July 2024

Chairperson, Director-General, Deputy Director-General, Distinguished delegates,
Ireland aligns itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the European Union.

I will add the following in my national capacity.

I would like to begin by thanking Chairperson, H.E. Ambassador Andrés Teran Parral of Ecuador and the Vice-Chairpersons of the Executive Council for their leadership in guiding the preparatory work for this session.

Chair,

Ireland remains deeply concerned by the continued reports alleging the use of Riot Control Agents, as well as the use of the choking agent chloropicrin as a method of warfare by Russia in Ukraine. Russia, unfortunately, has yet to provide a credible response to requests made by State Parties under Art. IX to clarify these serious allegations of treaty violations. The international community also still awaits a credible response from Russia on the poisoning of Alexei Navalny in August 2020.

In a worrying and persistent pattern, instead of openly engaging with the TS and addressing these allegations via the relevant provisions in the Convention, Russia has sought to avoid and deflect responsibility by accusing others of wrongdoing. Russia's approach threatens to undermine the integrity of the Convention and valuable work of the OPCW. We once again call upon Russia to offer a credible explanation to the Article IX requests and also to engage with the TS to enable an impartial, comprehensive and, transparent investigation into these serious violations of the CWC.

Chair,

The use of chemical weapons by Syria, as well as its continued failure to fulfil its basic legal obligations threatens to cause serious damage to the aims of the CWC and undermines international security. The initial declarations provided by the Syrian authorities are still insufficient and marred with errors, as repeatedly shown by the DAT.

We thank the TS for their technical briefing on 2 July. We remain deeply concerned that new issues have been uncovered, which demonstrates Syria's lack of meaningful cooperation beyond facilitating basic visits of the TS to their country. We call on Syria to be forthcoming, to fully cooperate with the organisation and show its compliance to the CWC by providing all relevant information to the TS so that they can close this aspect of the Syrian chemical file once and for all.

Chair,

Six years ago, and against the backdrop of the threat posed by chemical weapons use in Syria and elsewhere, States Parties voluntarily voted in favour of mandating the DG to create a mechanism within the TS with the capability and capacity to attribute responsibility for the use of chemical weapons. Today, the work of the IIT is a fundamental and legitimate part of the OPCW's mandate and a crucial step in the process to end impunity and ensure accountability for the use of chemical weapons in Syria and elsewhere, no matter the

perpetrator in question- state or non-state actor. We call on all States to put aside the division and stand behind the Convention as it seeks to fulfil its mandate.

Ireland reiterates its full support for the professional and impartial work undertaken by the Technical Secretariat on the Syrian file, including the work of the FFM, IIT, and DAT.

We urge Syria to fulfil without any further delay its legal obligations.

Chair,

Ireland reiterates the importance of enhancing the OPCW's engagement with civil society organisations. We commend the leadership of Germany and Ecuador on the issue. Civil society organisations meaningfully contribute to the work of the OPCW and help to enrich our discussions. We welcome the consultative process of open engagement with States Parties to date and will continue to support all efforts designed to improve engagement and refine the existing accreditation processes where possible.

Chair,

We welcome the commitment demonstrated by the DG to gender equality within the organisation and we continue to encourage the TS to incorporate a gender perspective into all aspects of their work. To this end, we reiterate our full support of the gender statement to be delivered by Mexico later during this session.

Chair,

Lastly, Ireland would like to take this opportunity to express its full confidence in the work of the TS, and the effective leadership of the Director General Arias. We fully support the TS' ongoing work in Syria, its commitment to continuing to monitor the situation in Ukraine; providing training and equipment as required, and we once again welcome the DG's statement to monitor the situation in Gaza and any allegations of chemical weapons use. The OPCW is only as effective as the cooperation and commitment it receives from States. It is therefore the responsibility of all States Parties to stand firmly behind the Convention and work of the OPCW.

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

Thank you.