



STATEMENT OF THE EUROPEAN UNION
BY H.E. ULF MELGAARD
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF DENMARK TO THE OPCW
AT THE 109th SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL
(The Hague, 8-11 July 2025)

Agenda item 6(e): Addressing the threat from chemical weapons use

I have the honour of speaking on behalf of the European Union (EU).

Albania, Andorra, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Republic of Moldova, Monaco, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Norway, San Marino and Ukraine align themselves with this statement.

The European Union has taken note of the report of the third OPCW Technical Assistance Visit (TAV) to Ukraine which was shared with the States Parties on 20 June 2025 under reference S/2415/2025, and expresses deep concern about its findings. The results of the analysis of the samples conducted by two OPCW designated laboratories separately and independently from one another indicate that the grenades and samples collected contained the riot control agent CS, and/or its precursor and degradation products. We commend Ukraine for providing samples in accordance with international standards related to sample collection, preservation and transportation.

Taken together with the previous TAV reports, the results point to a pattern of riot control use as a method of warfare on the frontlines in Ukraine. Such use is prohibited under Article 1 of the Convention. In light of the reports, the European Union on 20 May 2025 introduced restrictive measures on three Russian entities involved in the development and use of chemical weapons. The entities sanctioned are the Radiological, Chemical and Biological Defence troops, the 27th Scientific Centre and the 33rd Central Scientific Research and Testing Institute of the Ministry of the Russian Federation, all belonging to the Russian Armed Forces.

Mr. Chairperson,

Almost 10,000 cases of use of ammunition containing toxic chemicals have been documented so far by Ukrainian authorities, resulting in more than 2,500 cases with symptoms of chemical injuries. In light of the seriousness of the situation and to enhance the global norm against the use of chemical weapons, the European Union calls for a timely attribution of the proven use of riot control agents as a method of warfare. We expect the Secretariat to take the necessary

steps to that effect as requested by a State Party and in line with the provisions of the Convention.

Mr. Chairperson,

The international community still awaits a credible response from Russia on the poisoning of Mr. Alexei Navalny in August 2020. Russia has not reacted to international calls for a thorough and transparent investigation into the assassination attempt with a nerve agent of the “Novichok” group, for which there can be no other plausible explanation than Russian State involvement and responsibility. The death of Mr. Navalny does not relieve the Russian Federation of its obligation to provide answers. Impunity for the use of chemical weapons must not and will not be tolerated. Those responsible for the assassination attempt must be brought to justice.

Since 15 October 2020, the European Union has introduced restrictive measures under its chemical weapons sanctions regime against Russian officials, experts and one entity for their involvement in the poisonings of Sergei and Yulia Skripal in 2018 and Mr. Alexei Navalny in 2020. We are ready to consider introducing further measures as appropriate. The EU has also introduced a ban on the export of chemicals to Russia that could be misused for manufacturing chemical weapons.

Thank you.

* * *