

**STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR NEILAS TANKEVIČIUS
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE REPUBLIC OF LITHUANIA TO THE
OPCW AT THE 109TH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL
THE HAGUE, 8–11 JULY 2025**

Let me express our appreciation to H.E. Ambassador Andrés Terán Parral of Ecuador for his effective leadership of the Executive Council during his tenure as Chair. We also warmly welcome H.E. Ambassador Thomas Schieb of Germany as the new Chairperson and pledge our full support for his guidance of the Council's work. My delegation also reaffirms its full confidence in OPCW Director-General, Ambassador Fernando Arias, and the Technical Secretariat (TS).

Lithuania aligns itself fully with the statement delivered on behalf of the European Union. Allow me to add the following remarks in my national capacity.

We remain deeply concerned by the increasing number of reported instances (around ten thousand) involving the use of RCA by the Russian Federation as a method of warfare—an act explicitly prohibited under the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC). Equally troubling are the allegations regarding the use of the choking agent chloropicrin against Ukrainian forces.

In this light, Lithuania wishes to yet again thank all the 58 States Parties to the Convention, who put their signatures under the Joint Statement On the Support to the Full Implementation of the Provisions of the Chemical Weapons Convention, including the Prohibition of the Use of Riot Control Agents as a Method of Warfare that was circulated at the last Conference of State Parties (CSP) in November 2024.

Since the last CSP, TS has produced two additional TAV reports, which demonstrate clearly that the aggressor continues to defy the main principles and provisions of the UN Charter, the CWC and the international law. Lithuania wants to offer its appreciation to the Director General for his leadership and for the Technical Secretariat for the professional work done in implementation of this demanding task. Lithuania also recognizes the efforts of Ukraine and other countries in creating all the necessary conditions for the Technical Secretariat to conduct its work.

In light of the conclusions contained in all the three reports as well as the increasing number and gravity of cases where RCAs have been used, my delegation reiterates its call for the immediate attribution of all the confirmed cases. Given the work done, the previous precedent in case of the Syrian Arab Republic as well as enormous expertise accumulated in the process, Lithuania calls on the Technical Secretariat to continue the work and wants to offer its full support in this regard.

Lithuania also calls on the full accountability of the perpetrator. In this environment, Lithuania cannot imagine that Russia, which yet again runs for a seat at the Executive Council, would be able to become or would enjoy other countries' support in an effort to become a member of the Executive Council again. In addition to posing reputational threat to the organization, this would also undermine the integrity of the CWC and put its implementation at risk.

This is why, in the context of an ongoing discussion on the implementation of the current rules governing the elections of the members of the Executive Council, Lithuania supports maintaining and strengthening the role of the regional groups in the process of selection of candidates, as defined in paragraph 23 of the Convention. My delegation wishes to thank all the countries who have also expressed their support for this approach.

Despite repeated and legitimate concerns raised by the international community, Russia has yet to provide a credible explanation in accordance with Article IX, paragraphs 2 and 3 of the Convention. Instead, it continues to evade accountability, sow lies and disseminate disinformation.

Furthermore, the international community still awaits a credible response from Russia regarding the poisoning Navalny and Skripal. Therefore, we urge Russia to permit an independent and transparent international investigation into both his attempted assassination with a Novichok nerve agent.

My delegation commends the cooperation extended by the Syrian transitional authorities to the OPCW and encourages continued efforts to ensure Syria's full and prompt return to compliance with the Chemical Weapons Convention. We acknowledge the Secretariat's briefings and in-country activities with appreciation, and we look forward to the swift and effective implementation of the next steps aimed at the complete elimination of Syria's chemical weapons program. This is essential to mitigate proliferation risks and to ensure accountability for those responsible.

Lithuania remains committed to addressing the issue of sea-dumped chemical weapons and recalls the broad support for United Nations General Assembly Resolution 65/149, adopted in 2010 under Lithuania's initiative. This resolution encourages international cooperation and awareness of the environmental risks posed by chemical munitions dumped at sea.

We urge all States Parties, particularly those in the Baltic Sea region, to actively engage in addressing this shared concern.

Lithuania reaffirms its strong support for the OPCW and its mission and remains dedicated to achieving a world free of chemical weapons.

We respectfully request that this statement be made as an official document of the One-Hundred-Ninth Session of the Executive Council and published on the Catalyst platform and the OPCW website.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson,