



**STATEMENT BY H.E. JURAJ PODHORSKÝ,  
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC  
TO THE OPCW,  
AT THE 109<sup>th</sup> SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL  
(The Hague, 8 to 11 July 2025)**

*Agenda item 5 – General debate*

Mr. Chair,

Slovakia aligns itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the European Union.

In my national capacity, I wish to make some additional comments and observations.

I would like to congratulate H.E. Mr. Thomas Schieb of Germany on assuming the Chairmanship of the Executive Council and assure him of Slovakia's full support.

Slovakia commends H.E. Ambassador Fernando Arias, Director-General of the OPCW, for his leadership of the Organisation, demonstrated by ably guiding the Organisation through challenging times. His leadership, impartiality, determination and commitment to the achievement of the goals of the Chemical Weapons Convention should serve as a benchmark for the deliberations on the selection of the new Director-General.

Mr. Chair,

At the outset, I wish to address the challenges to the global non-proliferation regime for chemical weapons.

Slovakia is deeply concerned by the reports of systematic use of Riot Control Agents as a method of warfare by Russia in its continued war of aggression against Ukraine, which is a clear violation of the UN Charter and other basic norms of international law. Its use at the battlefield is in direct contravention of the explicit prohibition contained in Art. I para 5 of the CWC. There have also been numerous reports on the use by Russian armed forces of the choking agent chloropicrin.

In spite of repeated calls by a group of States Parties under Art. IX para. 2 and para. 3, Russia has so far failed to provide any explanations or clarifications. These clarifications are necessary, particularly in the context of the OPCW reports of 18 November 2024, 14 February 2025 and, most recently, on 20 June 2025, which confirmed the use of CS in the zone of combat

in Ukraine. We commend the work of the OPCW on this issue and echo the calls expressed by other delegations regarding the timely attribution of these instances of CW use. The perpetrators of chemical weapons use should not be granted impunity.

Against this backdrop, the strengthening of protection and detection capabilities of Ukraine is imperative. Slovakia supports the provision of assistance to Ukraine from the dedicated trust fund set up under Art. X CWC which it has also contributed to. Slovakia has further facilitated, as a transit State Party, the provision of assistance to Ukraine within the framework of Technical Assistance Visits. We further reiterate our readiness to support any future TAVs to Ukraine.

Mr. Chair,

Turning to the Syrian chemical weapons programme, Slovakia welcomes the willingness of the new Syrian leadership to bring the country back to the path of real cooperation with the OPCW and to uncover the full extent of the Assad regime's chemical weapons programme and verifiably destroy it. It is our sincere hope that the activities of the Technical Secretariat, building on the rich expertise of the Syria Missions (DAT, FFM, IIT) will achieve this goal. At the same time, it is crucial to take all measures to secure the sites relevant for the Syrian CW programme in order to mitigate the risk of proliferation.

Mr. Chair,

There have been reports on the possible use of chemical weapons in other parts of the world, as underlined by several requests made in June 2025 under Art. IX para. 4 of the Convention. Slovakia reiterates in this regard the need to strictly adhere to all norms stipulated by the CWC, including the procedures for clarification under Art. IX.

I wish to kindly request the issuance of this statement as an official-series document of the session, as well as its posting on the OPCW public website.

I thank you.