



REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA

STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR JOŽEF DROFENIK, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF SLOVENIA TO THE OPCW AT THE 109TH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

General Debate

Mr. Chairperson, Mr. Director-General, Distinguished Delegates,

Let me begin by expressing Slovenia's appreciation to H.E. Ambassador Thomas Schieb of Germany for assuming the Chairmanship of the Executive Council, and we assure him of our full support. We also extend our gratitude to Ambassador Andrés Terán Parral of Ecuador for his dedicated leadership during his term. We reiterate our confidence in the Director-General, Ambassador Fernando Arias, and commend the professionalism and commitment of the Technical Secretariat.

Slovenia aligns itself with the statement delivered by the European Union and wishes to offer the following remarks in its national capacity.

Mr. Chairperson,

Slovenia fully supports the objectives of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and reaffirms its firm commitment to its full, effective, and universal implementation. The CWC remains a cornerstone of the international disarmament and non-proliferation architecture, and the OPCW plays an indispensable role in safeguarding the global norm against chemical weapons.

In this context, Slovenia condemns in the strongest terms any use of chemical weapons, by anyone, anywhere, under any circumstances.

Slovenia expresses serious concern regarding the findings of the OPCW's Technical Assistance Visits to Ukraine, which confirm a pattern of use of riot control agents in the ongoing Russian aggression against Ukraine. We comment Ukraine for professional approach in collection samples and at the same time, we urge Russia to fully cooperate with the OPCW and provide credible and timely explanations under the procedures outlined in Article IX of the Convention.

Equally, Slovenia joins the European Union in calling for a full, independent, and transparent investigation into the death of Mr. Alexei Navalny and the attempted

assassination with a Novichok nerve agent in 2020. Impunity for chemical weapons use must end, and those responsible must be held to account.

Mr. Chairperson,

Turning to the Syrian Arab Republic, Slovenia welcomes the increased cooperation by the Syrian transitional authorities with the OPCW. We support efforts to clarify the full extent of Syria's chemical weapons programme and to ensure the destruction of any remaining stocks. We commend the work of the OPCW Fact-Finding Mission and the Investigation and Identification Team, which play a crucial role in accountability and justice for victims of chemical weapons attacks.

We further welcome the decision by the Director General to set up the Office of Special Missions (OSM) in Damascus, which will streamline the OPCW's capabilities to address cases of chemical weapons use and strengthen investigative capacities across the Secretariat.

Mr. Chairperson,

Slovenia attaches great importance to international cooperation and capacity-building under Article XI of the Convention. In particular, we welcome the work of the OPCW Africa Programme and its alignment with other international efforts, including the EU CBRN Centres of Excellence. Such initiatives are vital to enhancing global chemical safety and security.

In conclusion, Slovenia reaffirms its unwavering support for the OPCW and its vital mission. Let us continue working together to uphold the global norm against chemical weapons, ensure justice for victims, and prevent any future use of these abhorrent arms.

Thank you.