

**Statement by the Ambassador H.E. Mr. Neilas TANKEVIČIUS, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Lithuania to the OPCW at the General Debate of the 30th Conference of the States Parties to the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW)**

**Mr. Chairperson,**

Lithuania aligns itself fully with the statement delivered on behalf of the European Union and wishes to add several remarks in its national capacity.

At the outset, we pay tribute to His Excellency Ambassador Almir Šahović of Bosnia and Herzegovina for his effective leadership of the 29th Conference of States Parties. We also warmly welcome His Excellency Ambassador Agustín Vásquez Gómez of El Salvador as Chairperson of this 30th Conference and assure him of Lithuania's full cooperation and support.

We express our appreciation to His Excellency Ambassador Thomas Schieb of Germany for his professional guidance of the Executive Council, and we congratulate Her Excellency Ambassador Sabrina Dallafior Matter on her appointment as the next Director-General of the OPCW. Lithuania looks forward to working closely with her in strengthening the Convention and its implementation.

**Mr. Chairperson,**

This year marks the 28<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the entry into force of the Chemical Weapons Convention. This milestone reminds us how much progress humanity has made – but also how fragile that progress remains.

The re-emergence of chemical weapons use, the misuse of toxic chemicals, and the ongoing unjustified and illegal full-scale war of aggression against Ukraine by the Russian Federation represents a direct threat to the very foundations of international law and the disarmament architecture built over decades.

Lithuania is deeply alarmed by the credible and consistent reports of Russia's use of riot control agents as a method of warfare against Ukrainian forces, in blatant violation of the Convention. Three separate OPCW Technical Assistance Visit (TAV) reports have confirmed the presence of such agents in samples collected from the frontlines in Ukraine. These reports, based on rigorous international standards of investigation, analysis and chain of custody, clearly demonstrate a systematic pattern of prohibited chemical use.

Despite these findings, Russia continues to deny responsibility, distort facts and spread disinformation – instead of providing a credible explanation as required under Article IX of the Convention. Such behaviour undermines trust, erodes the authority of the OPCW, and poses a grave threat to the global norm against chemical weapons.

Lithuania strongly condemns these violations. We call for the timely attribution of responsibility and for full accountability of those behind these acts. Lithuania wants to thank all the State Parties who expressed their support to 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“. It will be delivered in the coming days.

**Mr. Chairperson,**

The Russian Federation's unjustified and illegal full scale war of aggression against Ukraine, now in its fourth year. Lithuania reaffirms its unwavering support for Ukraine's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders, and for its inherent right of self-defense.

We will continue, together with our EU and international partners, to provide Ukraine with political, humanitarian, financial, and military assistance, whatever victory takes, for as long as it takes.

Russia's actions have consequences beyond Ukraine. A State Party that deliberately violates the Chemical Weapons Convention and wages a war of aggression against another State Party cannot be a member of or seek membership in the Executive Council of this Organization.

*This is why Lithuania's decision who to support in the EC elections for the 2026–2028 term is so clear: a firm "no" to an aggressor and "yes" to those committed to uphold the Convention.*

**Mr. Chairperson,**

We commend the Technical Secretariat and Director-General Ambassador Fernando Arias for their professionalism and dedication. We support the draft Program of Budget for 2026–2027 and encourage continued progress on gender equality, geographical balance, and engagement with civil society. We also underline the importance of innovation and new technologies in strengthening verification and ensuring the Organization remains fit for purpose.

On Syria, Lithuania strongly welcomes renewed efforts by the Syrian transitional authorities to cooperate with the OPCW. We commend the Secretariat for its continued deployments, including the eight missions conducted so far and its efforts to establish a permanent presence in Damascus.

**Mr. Chairperson,**

Lithuania also draws attention to the legacy issue of chemical weapons dumped at sea. These weapons pose environmental and security risks that are only growing with intensified human activity and hybrid threats at sea, including sabotage of critical undersea infrastructure. Lithuania will continue promoting international dialogue on this issue, building on the United Nations General Assembly Resolution 65/149, initiated by Lithuania in 2010.

**Mr. Chairperson,**

Lithuania remains unwavering in defending the integrity of this Organization and in ensuring that chemical weapons never again become a tool of war, intimidation, or occupation. The continued use of toxic chemicals by a State Party - Russia - demands not silence, but unity and action. Let me conclude by reiterating: the use of chemical weapons by anyone, anywhere, under any circumstances, must not go unpunished. Lithuania will continue to stand firm — with our partners and allies — in support of accountability, justice, and a world free of chemical weapons.

We respectfully request that this statement be made as an official document of the Thirtieth Session of the Conference of State Parties and published on the Catalyst platform and the OPCW website

Thank you.