



**STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF AUSTRALIA, CANADA AND NEW ZEALAND (CANZ) AT THE THIRTIETH
SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE OF STATES PARTIES
AGENDA SUBITEM 9(D): ADDRESSING THE THREAT FROM CHEMICAL WEAPONS USE**

Thank you, Chair. I have the honour of delivering this statement on behalf of Canada, Australia and New Zealand - CANZ.

At each session of the Executive Council this year, Russia has taken the floor to claim that Executive Council sessions are dominated by States Parties condemning its actions in Ukraine, and its attack using Novichok agents on Sergei and Yulia Skripal and on Alexei Navalny. Russian delegates claim that they are not given “equal time” to make their case. But Russia, as an observer at Council, speaks more than any other state party apart from the Chair – more than any member or observer of the Council.

State Parties have a responsibility to speak out when the Convention is clearly violated.

CANZ will change how we speak about Russia when Russia changes its behaviour: when Russia improves its compliance the Convention.

CANZ remains deeply concerned by the regular and credible reports of chemical weapons use in the Russian Federation’s illegal and unprovoked war of aggression against Ukraine. We see a clear and escalating pattern of use of riot control agents on Ukraine’s frontlines. Three reports from Technical Assistance Visits by the Technical Secretariat confirmed the presence of riot control agents and degradation products in samples collected near Ukrainian sites under attack by Russian forces. In July, German and Dutch intelligence services published their conclusions that Russia is pursuing an expanding and large-scale programme of producing and using chemical weapons.

CANZ supports Ukraine’s formal request for the Director General to establish an independent and impartial mechanism to investigate cases of alleged use of chemical weapons in Ukraine, and to identify those responsible. Attribution is not optional—it is integral to the Organisation’s mandate.

Russia used chemical weapons agents in the attempted assassinations of Sergei Skripal and Alexei Navalny. Russia denied this and asked for, then declined, OPCW assistance to investigate the poisoning of Mr Navalny.

It should be untenable for a State Party that is credibly under investigation for chemical weapons use to hold a seat on the Executive Council.

Chair, the reported use of chemical weapons against Ukraine is not limited to a few isolated incidents, but is part of an escalating pattern. Russia can decide not to use riot control agents in warfare. It can withdraw from Ukrainian territory.

We reject Russia’s attempts to deny, distract, and disinform.

CANZ condemns, in the strongest possible terms, the use of chemical weapons anywhere, by anyone, under any circumstances. This includes any Russian use.

Russia's actions undermine this Organisation and erode the global prohibition against chemical weapons use we are all bound to defend.

Thank you, Chair.