



**STATEMENT OF CANADA TO THE THIRTIETH SESSION OF
THE CONFERENCE OF THE STATES PARTIES
TO THE CHEMICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION (CWC)**

DELIVERED BY H.E. MR. HUGH ADSETT, AMBASSADOR OF CANADA TO THE
NETHERLANDS AND PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF CANADA TO THE
ORGANISATION FOR THE PROHIBITION OF CHEMICAL WEAPONS (OPCW)

Distinguished Chair, Director-General, Deputy Director-General, Excellencies, Colleagues,

Canada welcomes the election of His Excellency Agustín Vásquez Gómez of El Salvador, as Chair of the 30th Conference of the States Parties to the CWC. The Chair can be assured of Canada's full support and cooperation. We also thank outgoing Chair, His Excellency Mr Almir Šahović, Ambassador of Bosnia and Herzegovina, for managing the Conference this past year.

Chair,

This is the fourth time the Conference of States Parties has met since Russia launched its illegal and unjustifiable war of aggression against Ukraine.

The Technical Secretariat has concluded that CS was used as a weapon in no fewer than three attacks against positions held by Ukraine. Other reporting points to Russian responsibility for thousands of attacks with riot control agents and chloropicrin. We urge the Technical Secretariat to launch an investigation to identify the perpetrators of any and all attacks identified in Technical Assistance Visit reports.

The response of the Russian Federation to legitimate questions about their conduct has been that of deflection and disinformation. Their lack of engagement with the Technical Secretariat is part of this. Russia writes a lot about alleged Ukrainian use of chemical weapons or preparations, but these allegations are never supported by credible evidence, with an authenticated chain of custody. These distractions will not work.

Disinformation in all its forms poses a threat to the objectives and purpose of the CWC. Canada remains a proud champion of the Global Partnership's Countering WMD Disinformation initiative. Yesterday's side event helped showcase the analysis the initiative has done and tools it has created.

Chair, at the last two Conferences, a majority of States Parties have chosen to keep Russia off Executive Council. This year, Canada will vote for Slovakia, Slovenia, and Ukraine, in accordance with the majority of that group members' wishes.

Thankfully there is promising news coming out of Syria.

Until eleven months ago, the Assad Regime was hostile to the OPCW and to its own citizens. Questions about the Syrian Arab Armed Forces use of sarin and chlorine were never properly answered. The Assad regime spent over a decade leading the OPCW Technical Secretariat in a game of hide and seek for the full story of its chemical weapons programme, lying at nearly every opportunity.



Today, we see positive steps toward Syria's complete chemical disarmament. The Executive Council has taken a key decision for this work. The Syrian transitional authorities let the OPCW access chemical weapons sites in a way the Assad regime never did.

We support the inclusion of funding for the Special Fund for Syria Missions in the 2026-2027 biennial programme and budget. We welcome the spirit of cooperation and compromise which motivated many States Parties and note that the budget has zero nominal growth in assessed contributions for 2026.

The Syria mission will need more than what is in the budget. We must ensure that the Technical Secretariat has the funding it needs to work in Syria. In past chemical weapons destruction campaigns, the bills were mainly paid by a small number of States Parties through extra-budgetary contributions. We cannot use that model again. If the destruction of Syrian CW is a priority for this Convention and us all, the funding model must reflect that, along with realistic parameters that meet funders' regulatory constraints.

Finally, Chair, we are pleased to support the appointment of Ambassador Sabrina Dallafior Matter of Switzerland to the position of Director General of the OPCW. We believe the chosen candidate is the right person for the job and we commit to supporting her as she prepares for and takes on this important responsibility.

Ambassador Sabrina Dallafior Matter will be the first woman to take the position of Director General.

The United Nations is 80 years old and has never had a woman Secretary General.

The International Atomic Energy Agency is 68 years old and has never had a woman Director General.

The OPCW has always been an organisation where issues of gender equality have been taken seriously. So the OPCW achieves this milestone with only its fifth Director General.

Chair,

At this Conference of States Parties, all OPCW member states can be assured that Canada will engage constructively and in good faith to ensure that the important work of this Organisation continues. We look forward to working together toward our ultimate goal: a world permanently free of chemical weapons.

Thank you.