



111th SESSION OF THE OPCW EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

AGENDA ITEM 6(f): Addressing the threat from chemical weapons use

STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF CANADA IN EXERCISE OF THE RIGHT OF REPLY TO THE STATEMENT OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION

Thank you very much Mr Chair. I take the floor in right of reply to the remarks of the Russian Federation.

Russia has alleged that the “collective West” has exotic theories about poisonings and its violations of the Convention. This morning I’m going to suggest that we move away from the fog of disinformation that characterises interventions from the Russian Federation and ground our discussion and our thinking in a simple number, a quick count from impartial work of the Technical Secretariat in its Technical Assistance Visit reports from Ukraine.

That number is three.

It’s worth looking at what the Secretariat has said about their Technical Assistance Visits in Ukraine, and some elements recur.

Three times, the Secretariat has “assessed the methodologies and the practices applied by the Ukrainian experts against the international standards related to sample collection, evidence handling, and maintenance of the chain of custody, as followed by the OPCW Secretariat”.

Three times it has assessed that “overall, the procedures followed were in line with these standards”.

Three times, the Secretariat was able to “to corroborate that,[...], the chain of custody of the [...] samples, collected in Ukraine from locations [...] along the confrontation lines with the opposing troops, had been maintained.”

Three times, “analyses of the samples conducted by two OPCW designated laboratories selected by the Director-General, separately and independently from one another,” have confirmed the “presence of CS, sometimes with precursors and degradation products.”

These are not exotic theories. These are facts. These are documented cases where riot control agents have been used against Ukraine. They are extensively documented and investigated by the TS in the later pages of each TAV report.

That these few cases fit into a larger number of reported cases – a number more than four thousand times larger – indicates the scale and the scope of the challenge which all States Parties must face.

Thank you Chair.