

STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR JORGE CARVAJAL
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF CHILE TO THE OPCW
111TH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

Dear Chairman, Dear Director-General,

Mr. Chairman.

As this is my first statement in my national capacity, I would like to wish you every success in this session and assure you that you can continue to count on our constructive and, at the same time, frank opinion, as we have done until now.

We would also like to express our appreciation to the Technical Secretariat, led by its Director General, which has continued to carry out its mandate in a professional manner despite the current geopolitical tensions and challenges to the global architecture of disarmament and non-proliferation. In the face of this complex scenario, we must preserve the impartiality and integrity of this organization.

Chile has condemned the current escalation of violence in the Middle East, while reaffirming the importance of maintaining an international order based on rules, including the respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States, the prohibition of the use of force by any actor, and the respect for international humanitarian law.

Mr Chairman

In recent months, we have witnessed the efforts of the current Syrian authorities to make progress in fulfilling their obligations under the Convention, despite operating in difficult and exceptional circumstances, exacerbated by the intervention of third parties in their territory. We hope that, with the support and verification of the Technical Secretariat, the Syrian transitional government will continue to make progress in closing the gaps in its country's initial declaration and in preparing for the destruction of the remaining chemical stockpiles. In light of this progress, we cannot but express our concern over the destruction of 75 undeclared cylinders that may have been part of the chemical weapons programme developed by the previous regime. We trust that the investigation initiated by the current authorities on this sensitive issue will yield convincing results and dispel any doubts about their commitment to the Convention and to the requirements of the Technical Secretariat. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Permanent Representative of Syria for his willingness to openly discuss these issues at a bilateral meeting we had last week.

In this same dossier, the findings of the investigation conducted by the Investigation and Identification Team into the incident that occurred in Kafr Zeita in October 2016 reconfirm

that the Assad regime continued to use chemical weapons even after acceding to the Convention.

In another area, we reiterate our condemnation of Russia's invasion of Ukraine and the persistent use of riot control agents as a method of warfare, while reiterating our concern over reports of the use of chloropicrin against Ukrainian military personnel. These developments are indicative of the systematic use of chemical substances as a method of warfare and the re-emergence of chemical weapons as a method of warfare, which should be given special attention by this Organization.

We are awaiting further details of the investigative process that led five Member States to report the presence of apibaditine in biomedical samples allegedly obtained from the body of Mr. Alexei Navalny, and we await Russia's response to the requests for information made to it under Article IX, paragraph 4, of the Convention. It would be desirable for this case to be the subject of an impartial investigation by the Technical Secretariat.

Any use or suspected use of chemical weapons is a cause for concern. We therefore hope to learn as soon as possible the results of the investigations that the Sudanese authorities have said they have launched in response to allegations of the use of chemical weapons on their territory. From the outset, those authorities have been offered assistance by the Technical Secretariat, and we encourage them to accept that assistance.

Mr. Chairman,

Artificial intelligence presents opportunities to strengthen the work of the Organisation, particularly in data analysis, the optimisation of verification systems, and support for the early detection of possible violations of the Convention. These same technologies can be used to facilitate the synthesis of prohibited substances or to circumvent control mechanisms. We therefore welcome the initiatives of the Technical Secretariat and this year's work plan aimed at monitoring emerging technologies, promoting their responsible use, accompanied by measures to maximise their benefits and mitigate the adverse effects of AI.

Mr Chairman

We greatly welcome the fact that the first CHEMEX GRULAC will become a reality this year. We thank the Dominican Republic for hosting this event and for the involvement of the country's highest authorities, encouraged by our dear colleague Carlos de la Motta, to ensure its success. This will undoubtedly be an opportunity for collective learning and interaction that will benefit our region.

Finally, we are pleased that the last Conference of States Parties ratified Ms Sabirna Dallafuio as the next Director-General of the Organisation. Given the professionalism, leadership and seriousness with which Director-General Fernando Aria has led this organisation over the last eight years, we are confident that the transition from one to the other will be smooth and in a spirit of great cooperation.

Thank you.