



**STATEMENT OF THE EUROPEAN UNION**  
**BY H.E. SPYROS ATTAS**  
**PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF CYPRUS TO THE OPCW**  
**AT THE 111th SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**  
**(The Hague, 10 - 13 March 2026)**

**Agenda item 6(f): Addressing the threat from chemical weapons use**

I have the honour of speaking on behalf of the European Union (EU).

Andorra, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Liechtenstein, Monaco, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Norway, Republic of Moldova, San Marino and Ukraine align themselves with this statement.

Mr. Chairperson,

The European Union has taken note with concern of the conclusion of the Governments of the United Kingdom, Sweden, France, Germany and the Netherlands that poisoning was highly likely the cause of death of the Russian opposition politician Alexei Navalny. The analyses of samples recovered from the remains of Mr. Navalny have conclusively confirmed the presence of a lethal toxin epibatidine. This toxin cannot be found in nature in Russia. Russia had the means, motive and the opportunity to administer this poison to him during his imprisonment.

Furthermore, the international community still awaits a credible response from Russia on the poisoning of Mr. Alexei Navalny in August 2020. Russia has not reacted to international calls for a thorough and transparent investigation into the assassination attempt with a nerve agent of the “Novichok” group, for which there can be no plausible explanation other than a Russian state involvement and responsibility.

The death of Mr. Navalny does not relieve the Russian Federation of its obligation to provide answers. We urge Russia to engage constructively and address the legitimate international concerns under the Convention. Impunity for the use of chemical weapons must not and will not be tolerated.

Mr. Chairperson,

The European Union remains deeply concerned about the ever-growing number of reported uses of Riot Control Agents (RCA) by the Russian Federation as a method of warfare against Ukrainian soldiers. The Ukrainian authorities have to date documented over 12,500 cases since the beginning of Russia's war of aggression. We commend Ukraine for having managed to provide samples of these cases under especially challenging conditions and in accordance with international standards.

The analyses conducted by OPCW designated laboratories have confirmed the presence of riot control agent CS, and/or its precursor and degradation products in the grenades and samples collected. These findings have been transparently shared with all States Parties in the OPCW Technical Assistance Visit (TAV) reports to Ukraine. Taken together, the number of registered cases of RCA use and the OPCW TAV findings point to a pattern of systematic riot control agent use as a method of warfare by Russia on the frontlines in Ukraine. Such use is prohibited under Article 1 of the Convention. Russia still has not provided a plausible explanation pursuant to Article IX, paragraphs 2 and 3 of the Convention. Instead, it attempts to deflect its responsibilities and shift the blame, continuing to spread disinformation against Ukraine.

This is a grave situation, and the EU reiterates its call for a timely attribution of responsibility for these proven breaches of the Convention and stresses the need to act without delay to address them. To that effect, we expect the Secretariat to take the necessary steps to assist Ukraine at their request and in line with the provisions of the Convention and decisions by the States Parties. Without meaningful accountability, the Convention and the global norm against the use of chemical weapons risk losing credibility.

Mr. Chairperson,

Since 15 October 2020, the European Union has imposed restrictive measures under its chemical weapons sanctions regime against fourteen Russian individuals, including high-ranking officials of the Russian Federal Security Service (FSB) and an entity responsible for inducing and providing support to the poisoning of Mr. Alexei Navalny. Previously, the EU has also introduced sanctions on four senior officials from the Russian military intelligence service involved in the poisonings with a nerve agent from the "Novichok" group in Salisbury in 2018.

On 20 May 2025, in light of the OPCW TAV findings, the EU introduced additional restrictive measures on three Russian entities involved in the development and use of chemical weapons. The entities sanctioned are the Radiological, Chemical and Biological Defence troops, the 27<sup>th</sup>

Scientific Centre and the 33<sup>rd</sup> Central Scientific Research and Testing Institute of the Ministry of the Russian Federation, all belonging to the Russian Armed Forces.

The EU has also introduced a ban on the export of chemicals to Russia that could be misused for manufacturing chemical weapons. We are ready to consider introducing further restrictive measures as appropriate.

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