

**Statement of Dr. Nikolaus J. Korczynski, Deputy Permanent Representative of Germany to
the OPCW
at EC-111 on 10th March 2026
under agenda item 5**

Mr. Chairperson, Director-General,

Excellencies and distinguished Delegates,

Germany aligns itself with the statement issued by Cyprus on behalf of the European Union.

One of the most urgent issues that the OPCW has to focus - and act - on is the persistent use of Riot Control Agents and Chloropicrin by Russia against Ukrainian armed forces, a practice flying in the face of Article 1 of our Convention. Ukraine has informed us about more than 12.500 cases registered by its forces. We also refer State Parties to three official reports from Technical Assistance Visits which clearly confirmed RCA use on Ukrainian positions. There is no reasonable doubt that Russia is the perpetrator.

It remains of critical importance that it is the OPCW that officially identifies the perpetrators. We continue to believe that in order to uphold and defend the norm against Chemical Weapons use, the TS should identify those responsible of violating the Convention.

On 14 February, the Foreign Ministries of Germany, Great Britain, France, the Netherlands and Sweden have jointly declared that Russian opposition leader Alexey Navalny, who was poisoned in Russia with a chemical nerve agent from the Novichok group in 2020, was poisoned once again in a Russian prison in 2024 – this time with the neurotoxin epibatidine.

Given the toxicity of epibatidine and reported symptoms, poisoning was highly likely the cause of Mr. Navalny's death. He died while held in prison, meaning Russia had the means, motive and opportunity to administer this poison to him.

This constitutes another severe violation of the CWC and, in this instance, also the BTWC. Furthermore, this raises serious questions as to whether the Russian Federation may have developed a second, undeclared chemical weapons programme, in breach of the Convention.

Mister Chairperson,

We welcome the continued deployments of TS missions to Syria and the constructive approach displayed by the new Syrian authorities. We take note of the recent TS note about an incident where potential Category 3 Chemical Weapons were apparently destroyed without proper TS verification in Syria, and of a note by the Syrian Permanent Representation containing additional information on the incident. We call on the Syrian authorities to continue their fruitful cooperation with the TS while ensuring that this kind of incident will not happen again. We are confident that the Council, on the basis of progress made and in accordance with the decision of CSP-30, will be able to restore the rights and privileges of the Syrian Arab Republic in the foreseeable future.

The OPCW's work to verifiably destroy the remnants of Assad's Chemical Weapons programme in Syria is crucial. We call on all State Parties capable of contributions to consider payments into the Trust Fund, or donations in kind according to Syria's needs. Germany contributed 2 Mio. EUR to the Syria Trust Fund in December 2025.

Mister Chairperson,

Germany remains concerned about reports of chemical weapons use in the conflict in Sudan. We reiterate our call on the Government of Sudan to fully investigate and clarify this issue without delay.

Mister Chairperson,

Germany remains a staunch supporter of the OPCW and its work, dedicated to this Organisation's sound, effective governance, financial viability, and professional and pragmatic approach to Chemical Weapons related concerns, including Industry Verification. These factors remain crucial to the OPCW's ability to respond to threats and to adjust to new circumstances.