



Permanent Representation
of Ukraine to the OPCW

English only

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

**Statement by the Delegation of Ukraine
at the 111th session of the Executive Council**

Mr Chairperson,
Director-General,
Excellencies,

Ukraine fully associates itself with the statement delivered by the European Union. I would also like to deliver the following remarks in my national capacity.

Mr Chairperson,

The global norm prohibiting chemical weapons remains under serious pressure due to the actions of the Russian Federation. Since launching its full-scale invasion of Ukraine, Russia has increasingly used toxic chemicals and riot control agents as a method of warfare in violation of the Chemical Weapons Convention.

More than 12,500 documented incidents of Russian use of hazardous chemical munitions have been recorded on the battlefield.

It should be noted that at the initial stage of the full-scale invasion in 2022, such incidents did not reach a widespread scale. Due to the lack of rapid success, the Russian Federation gradually increased the number of chemical attacks, facilitated by the introduction at the end of 2023 of new chemical (aerosol) RG-Vo grenades into the arsenal of Russian forces.

As a result, Russian forces use riot control agents such as CS and CN, delivered by drones using K-51 and RG-Vo grenades, as well as improvised chemical devices.

Evidence also indicates that Russian forces deploy such munitions from drones to force Ukrainian soldiers out of shelters.

Mr Chairperson,

Ukraine continues to cooperate closely with the OPCW Technical Secretariat within the framework of relevant decisions of the Conference of the States Parties in support of Ukraine's ongoing national investigation.

We also recall that, based on evidence provided by Ukraine regarding the use of toxic chemicals by the Russian Federation against Ukrainian forces, the Technical Secretariat conducted three Technical Assistance Visits to Ukraine. Independent OPCW-designated laboratories subsequently confirmed the presence of riot control agents in samples collected during these visits.

Mr. Chairperson,

Ukraine also welcomes the fifth report of the OPCW Investigation and Identification Team concerning the chemical weapons incident in Kafr Zeita in the Syrian Arab Republic. The report concludes that a Syrian Arab Air Force helicopter dropped a chlorine cylinder on 1 October 2016, injuring dozens of civilians.

The report also documents that military operations in Kafr Zeita were conducted with significant support from the Russian Aerospace Defence Forces and that the airspace over Kafr Zeita was controlled exclusively by the Syrian Arab Air Force and the Russian Aerospace Defence Forces.

Ukraine therefore calls on the Technical Secretariat to continue its work in this and other cases so that all those responsible for chemical weapons use, including those who enabled or supported such attacks, are identified and held accountable.

Mr Chairperson,

Recent developments further highlight the importance of such mechanisms.

Ukraine takes note of the conclusions presented by France, Germany, the Netherlands, Sweden and the United Kingdom that Alexei Navalny was poisoned with the highly toxic substance epibatidine while in Russian custody and that the Russian Federation had the means and opportunity to administer this toxin to him. Ukraine supports the efforts of our partners to pursue clarification and accountability within the framework of the Convention.

Mr Chairperson,

Taken together, these cases – the use of toxic chemicals on the battlefield in Ukraine, the documented chlorine attack in Kafr Zeita conducted with the support of Russian forces, and the poisoning of Alexei Navalny in Russian custody – illustrate a deeply troubling pattern of violations of the Chemical Weapons Convention associated with the Russian Federation. The Russian Federation has repeatedly violated the Convention and continues to do so.

This pattern of behaviour makes attribution and accountability indispensable. Identifying the full chain of responsibility – including those who planned, authorised, organised, supported or otherwise enabled such acts – is essential for preserving the credibility of the Chemical Weapons Convention.

Mr Chairperson,

Ukraine remains fully committed to the Convention and will continue to cooperate closely with the OPCW and all States Parties to defend the integrity of the Convention and ensure that its violations do not go unanswered.

Thank you for your attention.