



**Permanent Representation
of Ukraine to the OPCW**

English only

Agenda item 5: General debate

Statement by the delegation of Ukraine at the 111th session of the Executive Council

Mr Chairperson,
Director-General,
Deputy Director General,
Excellencies,
Distinguished colleagues,

I extend a warm welcome to the Chairperson Ambassador Thomas Schieb and assure him of our full support in guiding the work of the 111th session of the Executive Council.

I also express gratitude to the Director-General Ambassador Fernando Arias for his leadership and dedication.

Mr Chairperson,
Ukraine fully aligns itself with the statement of the European Union. I would also like to deliver the following remarks in my national capacity. This session of the Executive Council takes place shortly after Ukraine and the international community marked the fourth anniversary of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine. This invasion was not the beginning of the war, but a dramatic escalation of Russia's aggression against Ukraine, which has started twelve years ago. Russia's ongoing aggression continues to undermine international law and poses a threat to very existence of the international legal order. Against this backdrop, we are witnessing a deeply alarming development – the re-emergence of toxic chemicals as a method of warfare in Europe. According to Ukrainian authorities, more than 12,500 incidents involving the use of hazardous chemical munitions by Russian forces have been recorded and documented on the battlefield. These cases point to a pattern of systematic use of toxic chemicals and riot control agents as a method of warfare in violation of the Chemical Weapons Convention. Russia's systematic violations of the Convention have already had consequences for its standing within the OPCW. For three consecutive years, the Russian Federation has failed to secure election to the Executive Council. This clearly demonstrates that a State Party that persistently violates the Convention cannot expect to shape the work of this Organisation. As long as Russia continues its aggression against Ukraine and persists in violating the Convention, it remains essential that States Parties take appropriate steps to ensure that those responsible for such violations cannot influence the work of the OPCW's policy-making organs.

Mr Chairperson,
Russia's actions in Ukraine do not occur in isolation. They form part of a broader and deeply troubling pattern of hostile use of toxic chemicals.

Ukraine is deeply concerned by the recent findings presented by France, Germany, the Netherlands, Sweden and the United Kingdom, which conclude that Alexei Navalny was poisoned with the highly toxic substance epibatidine while in Russian custody. Alexei Navalny later died while held in prison, meaning that the Russian Federation had the means, motive and opportunity to administer this poison to him. These findings again raise extremely serious concerns regarding Russia's non-compliance with its obligations under the Chemical Weapons Convention.

We take note of the request submitted by these States Parties under Article IX of the Chemical Weapons Convention seeking clarification from the Russian Federation regarding these serious allegations. Ukraine supports the efforts of our partners to pursue transparency and accountability within the framework of the Convention.

Mr Chairperson,

The work of the OPCW Investigation and Identification Team in Syria demonstrates that the international community possesses the tools necessary to identify those responsible for chemical weapons use. We commend the dedication and professionalism of the experts and staff of the Technical Secretariat and the Investigation and Identification Team, as well as the cooperation of the Syrian authorities. We express our appreciation for the Fifth IIT report on the incident in Kafr Zeita. Identification of perpetrators and ensuring accountability for violations of the Chemical Weapons Convention remains essential for preserving the credibility of this Organisation and the global norm against chemical weapons.

Ukraine remains a committed and responsible State Party to the Convention and will continue to cooperate closely with the OPCW and States Parties to eliminate the threat posed by chemical weapons and the use of riot control agents as a method of warfare. In this regard, Ukraine reiterates the importance of strengthening international efforts aimed at identifying perpetrators, organisers and sponsors involved in the use of chemical weapons.

Mr Chairperson,

The Chemical Weapons Convention rests on two fundamental pillars: the complete elimination of chemical weapons and the prevention of their re-emergence.

Full attribution and accountability are therefore critical for safeguarding both objectives and for ensuring the OPCW to fully implement its mandate.

I would like to express our sincere appreciation to the Director-General and the Technical Secretariat for their continued assistance to Ukraine, including three assistance visits and the issuance of three Technical Assistance Visit (TAV) reports, the provision of technical support in Ukraine's national investigation and assistance aimed at strengthening national capacities under Article X of the Convention.

We are also deeply grateful to the States Parties whose voluntary contributions make such assistance possible.

Mr Chairperson,

Let us be clear: failure to act today risks normalising the use of toxic chemicals as weapons and undermining the global norm against chemical weapons. At this critical moment, unity of purpose and unity of action remain essential. We must defend the principles upon which the OPCW was founded and ensure that the prohibition of chemical weapons remains absolute.

Thank you for your attention.