



## **STATEMENT AS PREPARED**

### **UNITED STATES OF AMERICA STATEMENT ON AGENDA ITEM 6 (f) ADDRESSING THE THREAT FROM CHEMICAL WEAPONS USE (NAVALNY) TO THE 111TH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

As Secretary Rubio said, this is a troubling report, and we don't have any reason to question it.

We know Russia already tried to poison Mr. Navalny once before using a Novichok nerve agent. In that case, the TS itself confirmed as part of a Technical Assistance Visit the analytical findings of OPCW Designated Laboratories that determined that Mr. Navalny had been exposed to such a nerve agent.

We continue to call on Russia to fully declare and eliminate its chemical weapons program and come into compliance with the Convention.

Epibatidine is a toxic chemical. Specifically, it is a small molecule biotoxin like saxitoxin, which is on the CWC Schedules.

Furthermore, it can be synthesized with commercially-available precursor chemicals.

Article II defines "Chemical Weapons" to include "[t]oxic chemicals and their precursors, except where intended for purposes not prohibited under this Convention."

It further provides that "'Toxic Chemical' means: Any chemical which through its chemical action on life processes can cause death, temporary incapacitation or

permanent harm to humans or animals. This includes all such chemicals, regardless of their origin or their method of production.”

From this, it is clear that toxic chemicals that are derived from natural sources are covered by the Convention if used in a manner inconsistent with the Convention.

This is confirmed by the fact that there are toxins on the CWC schedules; would Russia question the applicability of the Convention to those substances and the ability of the OPCW to discuss them?