



STATEMENT AS PREPARED

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

Mr. Chair, Colleagues,

The Convention is clear: it absolutely prohibits the use of chemical weapons or of riot control agents as a method of warfare. Based on the facts, it is clear that Russia is in flagrant violation of the Convention.

Russia maintains a chemical weapons program. Russia used its chemical weapons program to produce the Novichok nerve agents with which it poisoned Mr. Navalny and the Skripals.

And Russia is using the chemical weapon chloropicrin as well as riot control agents across the frontlines of its war against Ukraine, at a scale unprecedented in decades.

Ukraine has reported more than 11,000 Russian chemical attacks, indicating that Russia has chosen to normalize the use of chemical weapons and riot control agents as a method of warfare in this conflict. Russia's choices endanger us all.

As we have heard many times, Russia would have us believe that accusations against its military are conspiracies spawned by Western governments acting in concert with Ukraine. These are lies.

Three Technical Assistance Visit (TAV) reports by the OPCW attest not only to the presence of riot control agents in samples from grenades collected by Ukrainian forces after attacks on their frontline positions, but also to Ukraine's exemplary collection and preservation of evidence.

We commend the OPCW and Ukraine for their efforts to bring this evidence before States Parties. We strongly support OPCW attribution of the incidents documented in the TAV reports.

We all benefit from an OPCW that is willing and able to identify the perpetrators of chemical attacks wherever States Parties call upon it to do so, in line with its mandates, and fully in line with the Convention.

The history of Russia's lies about chemical weapons is long and to recall it would exceed the time available to us.

We will simply recall that before Russia told us it was not conducting chemical weapons attacks against Ukraine, it told us that Assad had no chemical weapons program - until the day Assad declared one.

Then, it told us that the Assad regime had destroyed that chemical weapons program while the regime continued to use those weapons against its own people, and it sought to undermine the credibility of UN and OPCW investigative entities for documenting evidence of these attacks.

Russia now denies knowledge of the chemical grenades used against Ukrainian forces, pictured in the TAV reports, despite clearly visible designators linking them to Russian military factory production.

This pattern of widespread, systematic violations and lying demonstrates Russia's contempt for international security and the Convention.

Every State Party has a role to play in responding to Russia's campaign of chemical attacks and discouraging others from going down the same road.

Failure to act risks our collective security and the credibility of the Convention itself. We must be clear: we will oppose any use of chemical weapons by anyone, anywhere – including in Ukraine.