



OPCW

Executive Council

111th Session
10 – 13 March 2026

EC-111/NAT.9
5 March 2026
ENGLISH and FRENCH only

FRANCE

**REQUEST FOR CIRCULATION OF A DOCUMENT
AT THE 111TH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

The Permanent Representation of France to the OPCW has requested that Note Verbale No. 2026-0082979, addressed to the Chairperson of the Executive Council, H.E. Ambassador Thomas Schieb, Permanent Representative of Germany to the OPCW, dated 5 March 2026, be circulated as an official document of the 111th Session of the Executive Council.

Annex: Note Verbale No. 2026-0082979 from the Permanent Representation of France to the OPCW Dated 5 March 2026



Annex

**NOTE VERBALE NO. 2026-0082979 FROM THE PERMANENT
REPRESENTATION OF FRANCE TO THE OPCW
DATED 5 MARCH 2026**

**Permanent Representation of
France to the Organisation for the
Prohibition of Chemical Weapons**

*Liberty
Equality
Fraternity*

No. 2026-0082979

The Permanent Representation of France to the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) presents its compliments to the Chairperson of the Executive Council, His Excellency Thomas Schieb, Permanent Representative of Germany to the OPCW, and asks him to kindly transfer the attached documents to the Permanent Representation of the Russian Federation, on behalf of the Permanent Representations of France, Germany, the Netherlands, Sweden, and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

The Permanent Representation of France to the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, on behalf of the five abovementioned countries, also thanks the Chairperson of the Executive Council for requesting the Technical Secretariat to kindly circulate this Note Verbale and its annex to all States Parties and to publish it on the internal server as an official document of the 111th Session of the Executive Council, and on the OPCW website.

[Embassy seal] *L.B.*

The Permanent Representation of France takes this opportunity to renew to the Chairperson of the Council as well as the Technical Secretariat of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons the assurance of its highest consideration.

The Hague, 05/03/2026

Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons
Technical Secretariat
Declarations Branch
Johan de Wittlaan 32
2517JR The Hague

--- Traduction de courtoisie ---

On behalf of the Governments of France, Germany, the Netherlands, Sweden, and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, we refer to the report of the Technical Secretariat, S/1906/2020 dated 6 October 2020. This report concluded that Alexei Navalny had been exposed to a toxic chemical in August 2020 similar to those added to Schedule 1 of the Convention at the Twenty-Fourth Session of the Conference of the States Parties in November 2019.

Mr. Navalny's death while held in a Russian prison was announced on 16 February 2024. Our Governments have made clear that we consider Russia to be responsible for his death.

We have established from evidence provided to us that prior to his death Mr. Navalny was exposed to a toxin, specifically epibatidine.

Epibatidine is found in nature, in some species of frogs native to South America. It is not found in Russia. It can be synthesized in a laboratory using a range of non-Scheduled chemicals.

We are aware of research by Russian institutions into the synthesis and use of epibatidine as a toxin.

We judge that only the Russian authorities had the means and opportunity to administer epibatidine to Mr Navalny while he was held in prison.

Under Art IX(4), a State Party has the "right to request the Executive Council to obtain clarification from another State Party on any situation which may be considered ambiguous, or which gives rise to a concern about its possible non-compliance with the Convention". Accordingly, we ask that the Chairperson of the Executive Council, H.E Ambassador Thomas Schieb, forward to the Russian Federation the request that it clarify the following questions:

- I. Please provide information sufficient to clarify how the neurotoxin epibatidine was administered to Mr. Navalny, as confirmed in biological samples of Mr. Navalny's tissue, while he was detained in a Russian state penal colony.
- II. What measures have been taken by the Russian Federation to identify the individuals, authorities, or entities responsible for the acquisition, handling, and delivery of epibatidine to Mr Navalny?

- III. Please clarify how long Russia has pursued a chemical weapons programme based on epibatidine.
- IV. Please clarify why Russia has not declared this chemical weapons programme as per its obligations under the Chemical Weapons Convention.