



**STATEMENT OF THE EUROPEAN UNION
BY H.E. AMBASSADOR STEPHAN KLEMENT
SPECIAL ENVOY FOR DISARMAMENT AND NON-PROLIFERATION
EUROPEAN EXTERNAL ACTION SERVICE
AT THE 30th SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE OF STATES PARTIES TO THE
CHEMICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION
(The Hague, 24 - 28 November 2025)**

Agenda item 8 – General debate

I have the honour of speaking on behalf of the European Union (EU).

Andorra, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Monaco, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Norway, Republic of Moldova, San Marino and Ukraine align themselves with this statement.

The European Union pays tribute to H.E. Ambassador Almir Šahović of Bosnia and Herzegovina for his steering of the 29th Conference of States Parties. We welcome H.E. Ambassador Agustín Vásquez Gómez of El Salvador as the Chairperson of the 30th Conference of States Parties and assure him of our full support. The EU also expresses its appreciation to H.E. Ambassador Thomas Schieb of Germany for the effective and constructive conduct of the 110th Executive Council at which important decisions and recommendations were taken on Syria, the biannual Budget and Programme as well the new OPCW Director-General. The EU warmly congratulates H.E. Ambassador Sabrina Dallafior Matter for her appointment as the next Director-General.

Mr. Chairperson,

This year marks the 100th anniversary of the Geneva Protocol prohibiting the use in war of asphyxiating, poisonous or other gases, as well as 28 years since the entry into force of the

Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC). However, chemical weapons continue to pose a grave threat to international peace and security. The current global security landscape, re-emergence of chemical weapons use, emerging technologies and abandoned chemical weapons present major challenges for the implementation of the Convention.

The EU will continue to actively support and promote the full and effective implementation of the Convention, as well as its universalisation. The EU is consistently a top voluntary financial contributor to the OPCW's key activities. Today, I am pleased to inform of a new voluntary financial contribution approved by the EU Council of Ministers on 20 November 2025. The grant consists of EUR 4,450,000 million in support the OPCW activities in Syria and Ukraine including the provision of satellite imagery for 2026-27.

Mr. Chairperson,

On 3 November 2025, the United Nations General Assembly First Committee overwhelmingly reaffirmed its strong support for the Convention and for upholding of the norm against the use of chemical weapons. The annual resolution tabled by Poland is an unequivocal expression of support for the OPCW and its activities from all regions.

The EU expresses its full confidence in the Secretariat and commends the effective leadership of OPCW Director-General, Ambassador Fernando Arias. We welcome the confirmations that the Secretariat is monitoring all relevant situations and any allegations of use of chemical weapons, and stands ready to assist if requested. The EU supports the revised draft Biennium Programme and Budget for 2026-27. We also continue to encourage OPCW's efforts to promote gender equality, geographic representation, tenure flexibility and civil society engagement. Embracing opportunities from emerging technologies is essential to keep the Organisation fit for purpose.

Mr. Chairperson,

The EU welcomes the Syrian transitional authorities's determination to cooperate with OPCW. We consider this commitment an essential and positive step toward rebuilding trust, transparency and accountability in a dossier that remains crucial for international peace and security. We would like to commend Qatar's efforts in facilitating this reset in an efficient and timely manner.

We welcome progress towards achieving the verified and irreversible elimination of any remnants of the Assad-era chemical weapons programme. This is a complex undertaking and

as long as it is not finished, the risk of proliferation remains significant. It is crucial that this work begins without delay. In this context, we take note with satisfaction of the eight in-country deployments carried out by the Secretariat and the work to establish a permanent presence in Damascus. These missions are a clear demonstration of the Secretariat's engagement, even under difficult and complex circumstances. The EU will continue to support the OPCW's Syria-related activities financially, and encourages others to pledge in-kind and financial resources to enable future operations, as called for by the Secretariat.

Mr. Chairperson,

Since more than three years now, Russia's unjustified and illegal full-scale war of aggression against Ukraine continues to inflict a devastating toll on the country and its people. We reaffirm our unwavering commitment and support - with all available means at our disposal - for Ukraine's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognised borders and its inherent right of self-defence.

The spillover effects of Russian aggression are felt in the wider region and across the globe, resulting in the deterioration of the global security environment, as well as the re-emergence of use of chemical weapons. The EU is seriously concerned by the ever-growing number of registered cases of use of Riot Control Agents (RCA) by Russia as a method of warfare, which is explicitly prohibited by the Convention, as well as by credible reports of the use of choking agent chloropicrin against Ukrainian soldiers.

Three OPCW Technical Assistance Visit (TAV) reports confirm the presence of riot control agents in samples collected from the frontlines in Ukraine. These reports were prepared following strict international protocols for investigation, sample analysis and chain of custody. The TAV reports, together with the cases registered by the Ukrainian authorities, point to a pattern of systematic riot control agent use by Russia as a method of warfare. Russia still has not provided a credible explanation pursuant to Article IX of the Convention. Instead, it continues to deflect its responsibilities and distort facts with disinformation campaigns.

In light of the seriousness of the situation, the EU continues to call for a timely attribution of responsibility for this proven breach of the Convention. It is our common responsibility to take action against violations of the Convention, and hold perpetrators of all and any confirmed chemical attacks to account.

Mr. Chairperson,

Russia has a long track record of violating international law, including the UN Charter. Its blatant disregard for multilateral agreements, as well as disarmament and non-proliferation architecture have led to its exclusion from various executive bodies of these conventions and organisations. Russia's breaches of the Chemical Weapons Convention, as well as its war against another member of the Eastern European Group, make it unfit for a leadership position also in our Organisation. An overwhelming majority of the EEG is not comfortable with the idea that Russia, an aggressor against another State Party of the same region, would represent them in the Executive Council. This is a question that is of concern to all States Parties alike. The EU encourages States Parties to respect the will of the EEG majority and support the candidacies of Slovakia, Slovenia and Ukraine.

Thank you.

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