

Statement by H.E. Mrs. Solvita Āboltiņa
Permanent Representative of the Republic of Latvia to the Organisation for the
Prohibition of Chemical Weapons at the 30th Session of
the Conference of the States Parties
24-28 November 2025

Mr. Chairperson,
Director General,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and gentlemen,

Latvia aligns itself with the statement of the European Union and would like to make the following remarks in our national capacity.

First, allow me to express Latvia's appreciation to the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) Director-General, Ambassador Fernando Arias for his dedicated leadership of the Organisation and ensuring the implementation of the Convention. Latvia reiterates its full confidence in the Technical Secretariat's professionalism and impartiality.

Mr. Chairperson,

The Chemical Weapons Convention (the Convention) sets legally binding obligations that should not be a subject of neither re-interpretation nor selective application. In light of repeated violations, it is crucial to maintain an unwavering commitment to strengthen the norm of prohibition of chemical weapons and to ensure accountability for its violations.

Latvia condemns in the strongest terms Russia's ongoing war of aggression against Ukraine which remains a grave violation of international law and a serious threat to the global norm against chemical weapons.

Latvia remains deeply concerned by the growing number of credible reports of Russia using riot control agents and the choking agent chloropicrin as a method of warfare against Ukraine. The findings of the OPCW's Technical Assistance Visits to Ukraine, including independent analysis by OPCW-designated laboratories, confirm the presence of such agents in samples collected from the frontlines. These substances are explicitly prohibited under the Convention when used in conflict.

Rather than addressing these facts, Russia continues to deny, deflect, and spread disinformation. Russia ignores its obligations under Article IX and offers no credible explanations. This pattern is consistent with Russia's previous record — from the use

of Novichok nerve agents in Salisbury and against Mr. Navalny to its continued attempts to undermine the OPCW's work.

A country that continuously challenges the integrity and credibility of the OPCW while intentionally violating the Convention, cannot serve as a member of the Executive Council (EC). Latvia, along with overwhelming majority of the EEG countries strongly supports candidatures of Slovakia, Slovenia and Ukraine for the membership in the EC for upcoming term 2026-2028. They are longstanding strong supporters of the CWC, and responsible members of the Organization.

Mr. Chairperson,

Latvia attaches great importance to the full and verified elimination of chemical weapons in Syria. After years of denial by the Assad regime, we welcome the commitment of the Syrian authorities to cooperate fully with the Organisation. The task ahead — identifying, securing, and destroying the remaining chemical weapons remnants — is complex but crucial for finally closing this dossier.

As long as any remnants of chemical weapons remain unsecured, the risk of their proliferation persists. This year Latvia has supported financially efforts to ensure that the OPCW has the necessary resources to complete this task and we encourage others to do the same.

Mr. Chairperson,

Latvia supports building of the OPCW's resilience, innovation, adaption of its tools for analysis and verification. We commend the successful work of the *ChemTech* Centre, which strengthens the Organisation's analytical, training, and research capabilities. Latvia supports further exploration of how emerging technologies — including artificial intelligence— can reinforce the verification regime while preventing misuse of technology.

Latvia commends the efforts of the OPCW Director-General and Technical Secretariat to promote gender equality and geographic balance. Equal participation strengthens decision-making and ensures the Organisation reflects the diversity of its Member States. We encourage continued integration of inclusive practices across all areas of OPCW activity.

Thank you.