



**STATEMENT OF THE EUROPEAN UNION
BY H.E. MARGARETA KASSANGANA
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF POLAND TO THE OPCW
AT THE 108th SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL
(The Hague, 4 - 7 March 2025)**

Agenda item 6(f): Addressing the threat from chemical weapons use

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

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

Mr. Chairperson,

The European Union is seriously concerned by the growing number of reported cases of uses of Riot Control Agents by Russia as a method of warfare, which is explicitly prohibited by the Convention, as well as by the alleged use of choking agent chloropicrin against Ukrainian soldiers. Russia also risks exposing the Ukrainian population to toxic chemicals through continuous deliberate attacks against civilian industrial facilities.

Ignoring legitimate international concerns, Russia still has not provided a credible explanation regarding its widely reported use of RCA, pursuant to Article IX, paragraph 2 of the Convention. Furthermore, twelve States Parties have requested the Executive Council to assist in clarifying the situation pursuant to paragraph 3 of the said Article. Instead, Russia attempts to deflect its responsibilities and shift the blame, continuing to engage in campaigns of state-controlled disinformation, including by implying that a Russian laboratory was acting in capacity of an OPCW designated laboratory.

Mr. Chairperson,

The European Union expresses deep concern regarding the findings of the second OPCW Technical Assistance Visit (TAV) report issued on 14 February 2025. The report confirms the presence of riot control agent "CS" in samples collected in the battlefield in Ukraine in three incidents in October 2024. Taken together with the first TAV report, the results point to a pattern of riot control use as a method of warfare in the frontlines in Ukraine. Such use is prohibited under Article 1 of the Convention. In light of the seriousness of the situation and to enhance the global norm against the use of chemical weapons, the European Union calls for a timely attribution of the proven use of riot control agents as a method of warfare.

We expect the Secretariat to continue monitoring the situation in Ukraine closely and to be fully prepared to take action should this be requested in line with the provisions of the Convention.

Mr. Chairperson,

The international community still awaits a credible response from Russia on the poisoning of Mr. Alexei Navalny in August 2020. Russia has not reacted to international calls for a thorough and transparent investigation into the assassination attempt with a nerve agent of the “Novichok” group, for which there can be no other plausible explanation than a Russian state involvement and responsibility. The death of Mr. Navalny does not relieve the Russian Federation of its obligation to provide answers. Impunity for the use of chemical weapons must not and will not be tolerated. Those responsible for the assassination attempt must be brought to justice.

Mr. Chairperson,

Since 15 October 2020, the European Union has imposed restrictive measures under its chemical weapons sanctions regime against fourteen Russian individuals, including agents, high-ranking officials of the Russian Federal Security Service (FSB) and Russian chemical weapons experts, as well as one entity responsible for inducing and providing support to the poisoning of Mr. Alexei Navalny. Previously, the EU has introduced sanctions on four senior officials from the Russian military intelligence service involved in the poisonings with a nerve agent from the “Novichok” group in Salisbury in 2018. We are ready to consider introducing further measures as appropriate. The EU has also introduced a ban on the export of chemicals to Russia that could be misused for manufacturing chemical weapons.

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