



State of Palestine

Permanent Mission of the State of Palestine

**to the International Organizations based in The
Hague**

**STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR AMMAR HIJAZI, PERMANENT
REPRESENTATIVE OF THE STATE OF PALESTINE TO THE OPCW, AT THE 108th
SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL UNDER AGENDA ITEM 5 – GENERAL DEBATE**

(The Hague, 4-7 March 2025)

**Chairperson, Your Excellency Ambassador and the Permanent Representative of
Ecuador Mr. Andrés Terán Parral,**

Director-General, Your Excellency Ambassador Fernando Arias,

Excellences and Distinguished delegates

At the outset, we would like to express our appreciation to the leadership of His Excellency Ambassador Andrés Terán Parral, the chairperson of the Executive Council. We also express our appreciation to the Director-General Fernando Arias for his efforts along with the Technical Secretariat, including in assisting States Parties implement the provisions of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC).

The State of Palestine aligns itself with the statement delivered by Her Excellency Ambassador Miriam Blaak Sow, of the Republic of Uganda, in her capacity as Chair of the Non-Aligned Movement and China, States Parties to the CWC.

Chairperson,

The State of Palestine reiterate its principled position toward the achievement of general and complete disarmament of all chemical weapons and weapons of mass destruction as well as the full, effective and non-discriminatory implementation of the Convention. The State of Palestine is committed to engaging constructively in the election process for the new Director-General of the (OPCW) and supports the initiative of the African Group to review the voting process of electing the members of the Executive Council. In this regard, my delegation supports the decision of the General Committee to form an Open-Ended Working Group (OEWG) to review the current application of these election rules and will actively participate in its work.

Chairperson,

The strength of international law, including treaties such as the (CWC), is contingent upon the commitment of the international community to uphold and enforce its provisions in full and without selectivity. This obligation extends to preventing the exploitation of ambiguities and loopholes and excusing or legitimizing actions that are expressly forbidden under international law, including the CWC.

One such clear prohibition is the use of crowd control agent measures as a method of warfare. In this regard, I draw your attention to Israel's prolific unlawful use of teargas against Palestinian civilians during military assaults, which has escalated in scope and severity in recent months. Israeli occupation forces have been waging a relentless and destructive military assault on Jenin for over 40 days in which tanks and armored personnel carriers are deployed. Just this week, Palestinian medical authorities in Jenin treated a 3-month-old infant from teargas inhalation. Palestine will pursue these unlawful deployments of crowd control to the fullest extent of the Charter. We have started cooperation with the Secretariat in this regard and as described by the Secretary General in his report to the Council.

Chairperson,

Another unlawful exploitation of a chemical that is not classified as unlawful per se pertains to white phosphorus. When deployed against civilian populations, such use constitutes a serious violation of legal obligations under international humanitarian law and the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC).

Palestine recalls the documented and severe consequences of white phosphorus, including its devastating impact on agricultural land, public health, and soil quality in Palestine. Such unlawful deployment of white phosphorus constitutes a direct breach of the fundamental provisions of the CWC, including but not limited to Article II of the Convention, which defines the scope of prohibited chemical agents. This cannot be tolerated under international law and must be unequivocally condemned by the international community. As States Parties, we have a duty to prevent and address such abuse.

Chairperson,

The absence of accountability and the persistence of impunity serve to normalize even the most egregious violations of international law, including genocide. Such tragic patterns continue to manifest in Palestine today. The international community cannot afford to allow impunity to prevail; it must not permit dangerous precedents to be set without challenge. Ensuring compliance with international legal frameworks is not a luxury – it is not optional. Universal compliance is imperative to protecting humanity. The stakes are simply too high.

- We request that this statement be adopted as an official document of this conference and published on the Organization's public website and Catalyst platform.

Thank you, Chairperson