



STATEMENT OF CANADA TO THE 110th SESSION OF THE OPCW EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

AGENDA ITEM 5: GENERAL DEBATE

DELIVERED BY H.E. MR. HUGH ADSETT, AMBASSADOR OF CANADA TO THE NETHERLANDS AND PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF CANADA TO THE ORGANISATION FOR THE PROHIBITION OF CHEMICAL WEAPONS (OPCW)

Excellencies and distinguished colleagues,

As conflicts continue around the world, we cannot lose sight of the OPCW and the valuable work that it does in maintaining and overseeing the global ban on chemical weapons.

Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine is illegal and unjustifiable. We have said that before; we will continue to repeat it here and elsewhere. The subject for this Council's consideration, this week, is the Russian Federation's flagrant violations of the Chemical Weapons Convention. The Technical Secretariat has concluded that CS was used as a weapon in at least three attacks against positions held by Ukraine. Germany and the Netherlands used this information and other data to conclude that Russian forces are responsible for many attacks with riot control agents and the Schedule 3 toxic chemical chloropicrin.

We urge the Technical Secretariat to launch an investigation so that it can identify the perpetrator of the CS attacks identified in the Technical Assistance Visit reports, as requested by Ukraine and as explicitly authorized under paragraph 20 of decision C-SS-4/DEC.3: Addressing the Threat from Chemical Weapons Use.

Russia continues to refuse to answer questions put to it regarding the reports of its many CWC violations, tactically employing disinformation here and elsewhere in the international security framework instead of meaningfully engaging on the issues at hand.

Thankfully there is better news coming out of the Syrian Arab Republic. After more than a decade of hostility by the Assad regime, we are pleased to see the positive engagement of the Syrian transitional authorities, including allowing the OPCW to access chemical weapons sites, and the diplomatic support they are being given by the government of Qatar.

This session of the Executive Council is set to take a decision on measures to completely and verifiably eliminate the Assad regime's undeclared chemical weapons. We welcome the draft text, which takes into account both our treaty obligations and the security environment around the locations of possible chemical weapons sites.

For our part, we would like to thank the Technical Secretariat for providing Canada a detailed and fully costed project proposal for our funding consideration. In this time of fiscal restraint, such a breakdown of expenditures can be much more easily justified to our domestic authorities.

Canada continues to follow with concern the allegations that chemical weapons were used by the Sudanese Armed Forces against the Rapid Support Forces. It is regrettable that the Republic of the Sudan has not provided satisfactory answers to the four States which raised questions under Article IX. We request that the Technical Secretariat continue to monitor the situation in Sudan and take whatever action is necessary to ensure that all parties remain in compliance with the Convention.



This session of the Executive Council will need to take a decision on the OPCW program and budget for 2026 and 2027. We were pleased that the Technical Secretariat was able to produce a zero nominal growth draft budget. Though it means the Special Fund for Syria Missions cannot be fully funded out of assessed contributions by all States Parties, it permits us to continue funding the vital work of the Organisation. We look forward to seeing the program and budget decision adopted.

Finally, Chair, we understand that the Council continues to work at selecting the new OPCW Director General. We look forward to the conclusion of this lengthy process, which we are confident will result in the best candidate identified.

Chair, there is much to do this week. In the past months you have shown patience and good judgement as you guide this Council through difficult moments and lengthy processes. You can continue to count on Canada's support as we work together to strengthen the OPCW.

Thank you.