

STATEMENT OF THE EUROPEAN UNION
BY H.E. ULF MELGAARD
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF DENMARK TO THE OPCW
AT THE 110th SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL
(The Hague, 7-10 October 2025)

Agenda item 5: General debate

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

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

Mr. Chairperson,

The European Union commends H.E. Ambassador Thomas Schieb for his efficient steering of the Executive Council, and assures him of our full support. The EU also wishes to express its full confidence in OPCW Director-General, Ambassador Fernando Arias, and the Secretariat.

The EU will continue to actively promote the full and effective implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), as well as its universalisation. A concrete expression of our support are the four on-going EU voluntary financial contributions totalling EUR 8.7 million in support of the OPCW activities. Furthermore, we are preparing an additional EU voluntary contribution in support of OPCW missions.

Mr. Chairperson,

The EU reiterates its resolute condemnation of Russia's unjustified and illegal full-scale war of aggression against Ukraine, which constitutes a violation of international law including the UN Charter. We reaffirm our continued full respect for Ukraine's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognised borders. We reconfirm the EU's unwavering commitment to providing continued political, financial, economic, humanitarian, military and diplomatic support to Ukraine and its people for as long as it takes.

The EU is seriously concerned by the use 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. Ignoring legitimate international concerns, Russia still has not provided a credible explanation pursuant to Article IX, paragraph 2 and 3 of the Convention.

Instead, Russia continues to deflect its responsibilities and distort facts with disinformation, whereas the ever growing number of reported cases of use as well as the three TAV reports, point to a pattern of systematic riot control agent use by Russia as a method of warfare on the frontlines in Ukraine. In light of the seriousness of the situation and to enhance the global norm against the use of chemical weapons, the EU continues to call for a timely attribution of responsibility for this proven breach of the Convention.

Mr. Chairperson,

Following the fall of the Assad regime, the EU has consistently reiterated its support for a Syrian-led and Syrian-owned transition. In this context, the EU commends the Syrian transitional authorities' cooperation with the OPCW and encourages it to ensure Syria's return to full compliance with the Convention as soon as possible. We welcome the progress in planning, the Secretariat's helpful information notes, as well as the briefing on its in-country deployments. We encourage swift implementation of the next steps to eliminate Syria's chemical weapons programme for good, to counter proliferation risks and to hold the perpetrators to account. This requires a clear Council agreed framework setting out the key parameters for the activities by the Syrian authorities and Technical Secretariat.

Mr. Chairperson,

Allegations of use of chemical weapons should be addressed in an expeditious, objective and transparent manner. The EU welcomes the confirmation that the Secretariat is monitoring all relevant situations and any allegations of use of chemical weapons that could arise, and stands ready to assist, if requested, in accordance with the Convention. In this context, the EU notes with concern allegations of possible use of chemical weapons in Sudan. Pursuant to Article IX, paragraph 4 of the Convention, the Executive Council has been seized, and we look for a timely clarification of the situation.

Mr. Chairperson,

The OPCW needs a predictable and solid financial base to be able to meet States Parties' expectations regarding its programmatic work. Under the current challenging financial situation, the Secretariat is required to continue to practice strict budgetary discipline. The revised draft bi-annual programme and budget for 2026-27 must ensure the necessary funding

for the OPCW to continue its vital work including verification activities as well as international cooperation and assistance. This responsible approach should also be applied to the use of extra-budgetary funding. The EU calls on States Parties to meet their obligations and pay their assessed contributions in full and on time.

Thank you.

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