

Statement of Mr. Neilas Tankevičius, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Lithuania to the
OPCW, EC-110, Agenda item 6(f):
Addressing the threat from chemical weapons use

Mr. Chairperson,

The Lithuanian delegation wishes to draw attention to the alarming pattern of Russia's systematic use of toxic chemicals and related compounds in its war of aggression against Ukraine. Since the beginning of the invasion, the Ukrainian authorities have documented more than 11,000 cases of the use of ammunition containing toxic chemicals. More than 2,800 Ukrainian servicemen have suffered symptoms of chemical injuries.

We commend Ukraine for its willingness and ability, under extremely challenging conditions, to collect, preserve, and transfer samples in full compliance with international standards. OPCW-designated laboratories, working independently from one another, confirmed that these samples contained the riot control agent CS, its precursor, and degradation products. These findings, transparently reported through OPCW Technical Assistance Visits, are deeply troubling.

Taken together — the number of documented incidents, the OPCW TAV findings, and the reported use of the choking agent chloropicrin — all point to a systematic and deliberate pattern of using riot control agents as a method of warfare by Russia on the frontlines in Ukraine. Such use is clearly prohibited under Article I of the Convention.

The body of evidence is growing every day. So is the need for the international community to react and hold the perpetrator to account. Therefore, Lithuania stresses the urgent need for timely attribution of responsibility for these serious breaches of the Convention.

In this context, we wish to recall the Note Verbale by the Permanent Delegation of Ukraine to the OPCW of July 7, 2025 requesting assistance, as well as the decision of the Conference of State Parties of June 27, 2018, empowering the Technical Secretariat to employ a broad set of measures to ensure compliance with the provisions of the Convention. Using this opportunity, Lithuania wants to thank the Technical Secretariat for all the support it has provided to Ukraine until now, and encourages it to continue to do so in the future.

Mr. Chairperson,

The Lithuanian delegation also recalls that the international community still awaits a credible explanation from Russia concerning the poisoning of Mr. Alexei Navalny in August 2020. Despite repeated international calls, Russia has failed to conduct a transparent and thorough investigation into this assassination attempt with a “Novichok” group nerve agent. There is no plausible explanation other than Russian state involvement and responsibility. Those responsible must be held to account.

Mr. Chairperson,

The Lithuanian delegation reiterates our unwavering commitment to the Chemical Weapons Convention and to accountability for all violations. The use of chemical weapons must never be tolerated, excused, or left unpunished.

Thank you.