



Statement by Ambassador Erling Rimestad
Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of Norway
to the 110th session of the Executive Council of the OPCW
Item 5 - General Debate

Chair,

Mr. Director-General,

Distinguished Colleagues,

Norway aligns itself with the statement made by Ambassador Melgaard on behalf of the European Union. I would like to add the following in my national capacity.

As members to the Convention, we have voluntarily signed on to a commitment that carries a legal and moral obligation to uphold the principles of the Convention. It demands we act decisively to prevent the recurrence of past atrocities. Yet, despite our collective pledge, chemical weapons are still being used. Ongoing violations underscore the urgent need for all Member States to fully embrace their responsibilities – not just in words, but through concrete action, accountability and unwavering support for the Convention's enforcement.

Norway has consistently condemned the use of chemical weapons, be it in Syria, Iraq, Malaysia, Russia, Ukraine or the United Kingdom. We note with great concern the reports of chemical weapons use in Sudan, and we welcome the OPCW's monitoring of all relevant situations, including in Gaza.

Chair,

Norway welcomes the Syrian transitional authorities' continued cooperation with the Technical Secretariat. The Syria Mission is a shared responsibility of all States Parties. It should not be dependent on the voluntary contributions of individual Member States. Nor should the demands of one Mission be at the detriment of other priority tasks. As members we must ensure the OPCW is properly equipped to adapt to changing circumstances.

[Norway is currently formalizing a voluntary contribution of 1 million Norwegian Kroner to support the OPCW mission in Syria in 2025.]

We welcome the establishment of the Office for Special Missions. Article VIII clearly outlines mechanisms for addressing non-compliance, including further measures when necessary. Identifying those responsible is a necessary next step.

We are therefore deeply concerned when some Member States question the OPCW's mandate to attribute violations threatens its purpose. Accountability is essential to uphold the Convention.

Chair,

Norway has repeatedly – and in the strongest possible terms – condemned Russia's illegal and brutal war of aggression against Ukraine. *Three* TAV reports confirm the presence of the RCA CS on the battlefield in Ukraine. We are appalled by reports that Russia's chemical attacks against Ukrainian forces are increasing. The use of chloropicrin as a Chemical Weapon and the use of RCAs as a method of warfare is a blatant violation of the Convention.

Russia's refusal to fully disclose its Novichok programme to the OPCW and to credibly account for its use of Chemical Weapons in and against Ukraine, underscores Russia's blatant disregard for international law. Instead of constructive engagement, Russia continues to spread unsubstantiated allegations and engage in extensive disinformation campaigns to discredit the OPCW.

Russia's conduct exemplifies why the OPCW must be able to publicly attribute any violation of the Convention. Neglecting this task only invites further proliferation.

Chair,

[It is our shared responsibility that the OPCW is fit for purpose, both for present and future challenges.] We must jointly ensure that women are fully, equally and meaningfully participating in decision-making bodies at all levels, and that the rights and needs of women are recognized in the work of the OPCW, in line with Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security and all subsequent resolutions.

It is crucial the next Director-General builds on Director-General Arias' exemplary leadership. Safeguarding the OPCW's credibility demands unwavering professionalism and impartiality in confronting all violations—especially under pressure from those who seek to undermine it.

[I would kindly ask you to consider this statement as an official document of this session and post it on the OPCW external server and public website.]

Thank you.