

**ROMANIA: NATIONAL STATEMENT BY H.E. NICOLAE COMĂNESCU,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE TO THE OPCW,
AT THE 110TH SESSION
OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

under Agenda item 5 – General debate

Distinguished Chairperson,

Mr. Director General,

Dear Colleagues,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

While Romania endorses the statement delivered by Denmark on behalf of the European Union, I want to stress in my intervention a few aspects of particular interest from the national perspective.

1. In recent years we have witnessed the erosion of international norms, flagrant violations of treaty obligations, and the use of toxic chemicals and weapons against combatants and civilians. These developments strike at the very heart of what the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) is deemed to prevent: the use of chemical weapons anywhere, anytime, by anyone, under any circumstances.

2. The most recent, blatant, and ongoing violation of the Convention is taking place on the territory of Ukraine where the number of uses of ammunitions with toxic chemicals by the Russian army is rapidly increasing. Since the begging of the invasion, Ukraine has recorded and documented nearly 11.000 cases of use of ammunition with toxic chemicals, such as riot control agents (RCA), chloropicrin, etc. The large number of cases, their spread along the frontlines, and the findings of the Technical Assistance Visits to Ukraine indicate a pattern of systematic use of riot control agents as a method of warfare by the Russian Federation.

3. As reported to the States Parties during the previous EC session, the intelligence services of Germany and The Netherlands have concluded that Russia has used not only RCA but also chloropicrin, a potent choking agent, against Ukraine. We express our deepest concerns regarding the widespread use of RCA and possible other chemicals such as chloropicrin on the battlefield in Ukraine by Russian armed forces. We underscore that Article I of the CWC explicitly prohibits the use of RCA as a method of warfare.

4. Equally worrying are the unresolved issues surrounding the use of the Novichok nerve agent in Salisbury, and the attempted assassination of the Russian opposition politician, Alexei Navalny. These cases are not only about one, two or three individuals. These are test for the entire system. If these situations remain unclear, there is a risk that entire CWC will lose its credibility. Therefore, this Council must insist on Russia's full cooperation, on the use of OPCW mechanisms to clarify all circumstances, and on accountability. At the same time we condemn in the strongest possible terms the use of chemical weapons in Syria, Iraq, and Malaysia. Any such use is a clear violation of the CWC and a breach of international law.

5. Syria's declared chemical weapons stockpiles have been largely destroyed, and many of the declared production facilities have been verified. However, unresolved issues remain. The Declaration Assessment Team continues to identify discrepancies in Syria's initial declaration,

gaps in reporting, and potential undeclared activities. The Fact-Finding Mission and the Investigation and Identification Team have investigated numerous allegations of chemical weapons use in Syria, many of which have been attributed to the Syrian regime of Al-Assad.

The transfer of power to the interim authorities represents an opportunity for the OPCW to obtain full clarification on the extent and scope of Syria's chemical weapons program, and to ensure the Syrian Arab Republic's long-term compliance with the Convention.

Romania shares the opinion expressed in paragraph 9 of the Director General's report EC-110/DG.15 that "all legal obligations binding upon the Syrian Arab Republic as a State Party to the Convention remain valid, regardless of any change in government". In this regard, Syria must declare fully, cooperate fully, and submit to verification. Anything less erodes the authority of the Convention.

Romania welcomes the cooperation of the Syrian transitional authorities with the OPCW with the view to definitively eliminating the threat posed by chemical weapons. To achieve this goal, it is extremely important that the Technical Secretariat has the necessary resources. For its part, my country can help in the field of unexploded ordnance, representing all categories of ordnance used for military purposes, fired, launched or detonated but unexploded, or those that have not been used and have not been destroyed.

6. Before concluding I would like to emphasize that the revised draft bi-annual program 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. None of the objectives arising from the CWC can be achieved if the Organization does not have a solid and predictable financial basis that is managed efficiently. At the same time, just as important as the level of funding is that contributions are paid in time and in full. Romania fully supports the work of the OPCW in addressing threats related to this category of WMD and condemns the seek to impede its work. We commend the professionalism and integrity of the OPCW Technical Secretariat.

7. In conclusion, allow me to summarize the following remarks:

In recent years, we have witnessed an unprecedented challenge to the norm against chemical weapons tested as never before. Russia's aggression against Ukraine has brought toxic chemicals back to the battlefield. The Navalny case remains unresolved. Syria's declarations are incomplete and an enormous amount of work to be done on the ground. The OPCW itself faces political and financial pressures.

To respond to these challenges: the aggression and violations must be condemned and perpetrators held accountable, investigations must be allowed and supported, Syria must comply and be fully supported in its efforts, and the OPCW must be funded and defended.

I thank you Mr. Chairperson.

I would like to ask to circulate this statement as an official document of the 110th Session of the Executive Council and publish it both on the Catalyst platform and the OPCW's official website.