

**RUSSIAN FEDERATION****STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION
AT THE EIGHTY-SEVENTH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL
(RESPONSE TO THE STATEMENT BY THE EUROPEAN UNION)**

The Russian Federation expresses deep regret with regard to the statement by the countries of the European Union represented at the Executive Council of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons on 15 March this year, in which the European Union takes very seriously the unsubstantiated accusations by Great Britain against Russia regarding its alleged involvement in an incident with Mr Skripal and his daughter in the city of Salisbury on 4 March this year. Furthermore, we also reaffirm the categorical rejection of dialogue with Russia based on a language of ultimatums within the context of the calls made in said statement to submit to the OPCW full and extensive information on a programme that London has obstinately assigned the name “Novichok”. We emphasise that this type of ultimatum-based demands and calls are diametrically opposed to the provisions of the Chemical Weapons Convention and other generally recognised standards of international law.

We are forced to once again state the information that was already voiced at the United Nations Security Council on 14 March this year. No research and development or experiments were conducted under the “Novichok” code name within the Russian Federation. Starting from the early 1970s, a full range of countries were carrying out programmes to create new types of toxic Vx nerve agents—in particular the United States and the Soviet Union.

In line with a Decree of the President of the Russian Federation in 1992, Soviet developments in the field of chemical weapons were shut down by Russia. In 2017, the Russian Federation fully completed the destruction of its stockpiles of chemical weapons before its deadline, which was confirmed by the relevant international body, namely the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons.

In the mid-1990s, Western special services removed a number of experts from Russia, including a number of former employees from the Russian State Scientific Research Institute for Organic Chemistry and Technology (GosNIIOKhT): V.S. Mirzoyanov, S.S. Dubov, G.I. Kazhdan, and others, as well as certain documentation on the aforementioned topic; the research in this area was continued in Great Britain and the United States, the Czech Republic, and Sweden. The positive results that these countries achieved in creating new toxic agents, which the West has classified for some reason under the general name of “Novichok”, have been confirmed and reflected in over 200 open sources in NATO and European Union countries.



We would draw the attention of the States of the European Union to the fact that the identification of the toxic agent that was allegedly used in the city of Salisbury was conducted at the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory in Porton Down, where the development and production of chemical weapons components were developed—including of this type.

We once again call on Great Britain to, in line with Article IX of the Chemical Weapons Convention, urgently initiate consultations with the possible assistance of the Executive Council of the OPCW and the Organisation's Technical Secretariat in order to clarify the situation surrounding said incident on the basis of all materials related to it in possession of the British side, including samples of the chemical agent collected at the site of its presumed use. We welcome the Secretariat's readiness to provide assistance as appropriate.

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