



Embassy of Finland
The Hague

Check against Delivery

**Finland Statement by H.E. Ambassador Ilkka-Pekka Similä
Permanent Representative of Finland to the OPCW
at 29th of the Conference of the States Parties to the OPCW
under agenda item 8**

Mr. Chair, Mr. Director-General, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Finland aligns itself with the statement made by the European Union. In addition, we wish to highlight some key issues from a national perspective.

We congratulate H.E. Ambassador Almir Šahović of Bosnia and Herzegovina for his appointment as the Chairperson of the 29th Conference of States Parties and assure him of our full support in steering the work of the Conference towards a successful outcome. We thank H.E. Ambassador Suljuk Mustansar Tarar of Pakistan, Chairperson of the 28th Conference of States Parties, and H.E. Ambassador Andrés Terán Parral of Ecuador, Chairperson of the Executive Council, for their commitment and outstanding work.

Mr Chair,

We regret that almost thirty years after the Chemical Weapons Convention entered into force chemical weapons continue to pose a serious threat to international peace and security. The current global security situation, re-emergence of chemical weapons use, new and emerging technologies as well as abandoned chemical weapons present major challenges for the implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention. Today, the full and effective implementation of the Convention and its universalization is more important than ever.

We underline the work of the Director-General Fernando Arias and the Technical Secretariat in advancing the implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention. The current security landscape only reinforces the relevance of the work of the OPCW. We reiterate Finland's

unwavering support to and confidence in the Technical Secretariat's expertise, professionalism and impartiality.

Finland has an excellent, longstanding relationship and cooperation with the OPCW. Finland's support for the Convention and the OPCW is illustrated by our voluntary contributions to the Trust Fund for Article X implementation and the Trust Fund for Syria Missions. We are determined to continue our political and financial support.

We commend efforts and emphasize the need to continue promoting gender equality and mainstream gender throughout the organization and in all aspects of its work. We are encouraged by the broad support for the Secretariat's efforts towards an increasingly equal, diverse and inclusive OPCW. We underline the importance of strengthening meaningful interaction and participation with various and diverse stakeholders such as academia, the chemical industry, non-governmental organizations and youth.

Mr. Chair,

The Convention is and will remain a fundamental component of the international disarmament and non-proliferation regime. We as the States Parties have a duty to uphold it.

Regrettably, the use of chemical weapons remains high on our agenda. The repeated violations of the Convention are deeply concerning. The use of chemical weapons—by anyone and under any circumstances—is a threat to international peace and security, and in clear violation of international law. All those responsible for the use of chemical weapons must be held accountable and brought to justice.

Finland condemns in the strongest terms the repeated use of chemical weapons by the Syrian regime. Over ten years after its accession to the Convention, Syria's lack of compliance, progress and cooperation continue. Chemical weapons use has been independently attributed to the Syrian regime on nine occasions by the thorough and comprehensive investigations carried out by the UN and the OPCW. Recent Declaration Assessment Team findings on unreported chemicals suggest a potentially even more extensive Syrian chemical weapons programme than known so far. Syria must fully cooperate with the OPCW and all its established mechanisms, including the Investigation and Identification Team. We commend the work of the Technical Secretariat on all aspects of the Syrian dossier.

Finland condemns the unjustified war of aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine. The Russian invasion of a sovereign country is a violation of international law, including the UN Charter.

As Russia's war of aggression continues, Finland reiterates its unwavering support to Ukraine's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity as well as its right to self-defence. Russia must immediately cease its military actions, withdraw its troops from the entire territory of Ukraine

and respect Ukraine's territorial integrity and sovereignty within its internationally recognised borders.

Russia's repeated use of riot control agents as a method of warfare, as well as its use of other chemical munitions against the Armed Forces of Ukraine, is in blatant violation of the Chemical Weapons Convention. We are deeply concerned by reports that the frequency of Russia's chemical attacks against Ukrainian forces is increasing, as is the variety of chemical munitions that Russian forces are using on the battlefield. Finland condemns in the strongest possible terms Russia's use of chemical agents in Ukraine. Russia has not provided any credible answer on the RCA incidents pursuant to Article IX. In this context, we are deeply concerned regarding the findings of the OPCW Technical Assistance Visit report issued on 18 November 2024 which confirms the presence of riot control agenda "CS" in samples collected in in the Dnipropetrovsk region of Ukraine. We hope for a timely attribution of the RCA munition collected.

The international community also still awaits a credible response from Russia on the poisoning of Mr. Alexei Navalny in August 2020.

Mr. Chair,

To conclude we take this opportunity to support the candidacies Czechia and North Macedonia for the Executive Council. Russia's invasion of Ukraine is undoubtedly the important regional factor that the Convention foresees for consideration in designations for Executive Council Membership, alongside with security interests and the size of chemical industry.

I kindly request that this statement be circulated as an official document of this session and posted on the external server and public website.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.