



*The Permanent Representation of Italy to the
Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons*

ITALY

STATEMENT BY THE ITALIAN AMBASSADOR HE GIORGIO NOVELLO
AT THE 29th CONFERENCE OF THE STATE PARTIES

*Mr. Chairperson,
Director-General Arias,
Excellencies and Distinguished Delegates,*

Italy fully aligns itself with the statement delivered by the Hungarian Ambassador and I would like to add some remarks on my national capacity.

At the outset I would like to thank Ambassador Suljuk Mustansar Tarar of Pakistan for his work as the Chair of the 28th Conference of the State Parties.

To the new Chair, Ambassador Almir Sahovic of Bosnia Herzegovina, I extend my personal warm congratulations on his election as Chair of the CSP29 and would like to assure him of the Italian delegation full support.

Mr Chair,

Italy remains steadfast in its commitment to the principles and goals of the Chemical Weapons Convention. The past years have posed significant challenges to the Convention, highlighting once again the need for a full and resolute support by all States Parties.

Mr Chair,

Italy firmly condemns the ongoing unprovoked Russian aggression against Ukraine. The recent report of the “Technical and Assistance Visit” by the Technical Secretariat in Ukraine certifies what we all feared. Riot Control Agents (RCAs) have been used in

Ukraine and it makes the multiple indications of Russian use of RCAs even more worrying. We welcome the OPCW's technical and assistance visits to Ukraine and hope that they will be a prelude to ever more in-depth investigations. We cannot allow violations of the Conventions to encourage other States Parties to the illegitimate use of RCAs as a method of warfare.

The use of RCAs as a method of warfare is a blatant violation of the Convention and undermine the very foundations of this Organization. Italy calls on all States Parties to reaffirm their obligations under Article I of the CWC and urges the Russian Federation to provide transparent clarification on these allegations.

The Russian Federation has to withdrawal from its illegal and unprovoked war of aggression in Ukraine.

In line with the European Union and the very recent G7 statements, Italy stands next to Kiev in its fight for freedom and the enforcement of international law.

On a similar way, Italy expresses deep concern regarding the confirmed lack of cooperation by the Syrian Arab Republic with the Technical Secretariat. More than a decade has passed since the Syria's entry in the OPCW and, yet the discrepancies and unresolved issues in its "Initial Declaration" continue to undermine the credibility of the CWC. We urge Syria to cooperate with the Technical Secretariat, and fully comply with the obligations of the Convention.

In our commitment to support the OPCW, Italy has provided over the past years to consolidate the Technical Secretariat and the culture of chemical disarmament in Italy and worldwide. We have hosted a series of training and workshop aimed to improve the skills and knowledge of professionals engaged in chemical safety and security. Notably, the Master in CBRNe of the University of Rome "Tor Vergata" stands as a witness of our dedication to education and training in this critical area. This program, focusing on chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear and explosive threats, helps the next generation of experts to address actual challenges in disarmament and non-proliferation.

We welcome the efforts of the Technical Secretariat and the dedication of the States Parties who are actively working to the governance initiatives coming from the Fifth Review Conference, held in May 2023.

In closing, Italy wishes to thank the Director-General, Ambassador Fernando Arias, and the Kingdom of Morocco for hosting the recent forward looking Global Conference on “the Role of Artificial Intelligence in Advancing the Implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention”, held in Rabat in October. Italy attended the event, which underscored the opportunities of the emerging technology while addressing the risks they may pose to the global prohibition of chemical weapons.

Thank you.