

**ROMANIA: STATEMENT BY MR. IOAN TUDOR, DIRECTOR GENERAL,  
AT THE 29TH SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE OF STATES PARTIES  
TO THE CHEMICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION**

- agenda item 8 *General debate* -

Mr. Chairperson,

I would like to congratulate Your Excellency on your election as Chairperson of the 29th Conference of the States Parties and express Romania's full support to you during your term of office. At the same time, let me express Romania's appreciation to H.E. Ambassador Suljuk Mustansar Tarar of Pakistan for his work in leading the Conference at its 28th session, and to H.E. Andrés Terán Parral of Ecuador for his able leadership of the Executive Council in these troubled times.

Romania fully supports the declaration of the European Union. At the same time, I briefly address the Conference to highlight a few issues of particular national interest.

We need to keep our focus on topics which are of fundamental importance for maintaining global security, as well as for maintaining respect for international law and a rules-based international order. We will not hesitate to repeat that the use of chemical weapons, anywhere, at any time, by anyone, under any circumstances, is totally unacceptable. We welcomed that last year on July 7th the OPCW confirmed that the last chemical weapons in the stockpiles declared by all States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention had been verified as destroyed. At the same time, we cannot turn a blind eye to an event such as the poisoning of Mr. Alexey Navalny with a nerve agent, because this assassination attempt transcends the emblematic figure of a person who has meanwhile died defending his political views, and constitutes a clear violation of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC).

Mr. Chairperson,

We cannot ignore the fact that the Russian Federation's aggression against Ukraine is a violation of the values stemming from the international law and international commitments, including the CWC.

Since February 2022, Romania has strongly condemned the Russian Federation's premeditated, unjustified and unprovoked aggression against Ukraine, a violation of international law, including the UN Charter. We will continue to call for a complete cessation of the attacks and the immediate withdrawal of the aggressor forces from the territory of Ukraine, within internationally recognized borders.

Romania is very concerned of the growing number of reports of the use by Russian Federation troops of riot control agents in Ukraine as a method of warfare. We note in particular the issuance last week by the Technical Secretariat of the report on the Technical Assistance Visit (TAV) to Ukraine, which confirmed the presence of CS in the samples collected by the TAV team from the Ukrainian soil at the site of the alleged incident that took place along the

confrontation lines in Dnipropetrovsk region on 20 September 2024. Such use is prohibited by Article I of the Convention and we join all other delegations that called on Russia to strictly comply with its obligations under the Convention.

Mr. Chairperson,

The Chemical Weapons Convention, in Article VIII, clearly sets out the factors to be taken into account when deciding on the composition of the Executive Council. It specifically mentions that due regard be paid to political and security interests, and that regional group shall agree to take into account other regional factors when nominating a member.

Russia's blatant violation of international law by waging a war of aggression against Ukraine, a member of the Eastern European Group (EEG), is such a "regional factor" and the essential reason why Romania - like the vast majority of EEG members - encourages supporting the candidacies of the Czech Republic and the Republic of North Macedonia for the Executive Council at the elections to be held within this CSP.

Mr. Chairperson,

Since 2013 we keep on deploring the failure of the Syrian Arab Republic to comply with the provisions of the CWC. For this reason, we will continue to emphasize that the most flagrant violations of the norm have occurred through the use of chemical weapons in the Syrian Arab Republic and that all those responsible must bear the consequences.

We welcome the Director-General's reports on "*PROGRESS ON THE ELIMINATION OF THE SYRIAN CHEMICAL WEAPONS PROGRAMME*" EC 107/DG 8 and EC-108/DG.1. We remain concerned that the OPCW Technical Secretariat continues to be unable to confirm the completeness and accuracy of the Syrian Arab Republic's declaration. Resolving the remaining gaps, inconsistencies and discrepancies will permit shared confidence in Syria's declaration, within the international community.

In this context, allow me to congratulate the OPCW technical teams, which continue to carry out their work in an exemplary and professional manner, in accordance with the mandates given by States Parties.

Mr. Chairperson,

Allow me to touch briefly on the subject of emerging technologies, including artificial intelligence (AI).

Thanks to accelerating advances in research, technology and science, humanity is on the threshold of a revolutionary new leap in its history, with artificial intelligence as a springboard with a major impact on all facets of human activity. The implementation of the CWC is no exempt from this impact. As a common denominator of many of the statements that have been made in the Executive Council in recent sessions is the conclusion that artificial intelligence brings opportunities along with risks and challenges, and we, the States Parties, need the wisdom and courage to seize both the opportunities and the appropriate measures to mitigate the risks and challenges.

Romania welcomes the work carried out so far by the Director-General and the Secretariat to identify the implications of AI and its associated risks and opportunities on the object and

purpose of the Convention and shares the conclusions resulting from the note "*ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND THE OPCW: A MEETING WITH EXPERTS*" (DG S/2289/2024). At the same time, we consider the contribution of States Parties to the conference on artificial intelligence and weapons of mass destruction held in Berlin in June 2024 as highly relevant.

It is very important that the Secretariat monitor the developments of the AI and potential risks posed, while identifying the opportunities to apply the AI technologies to the work of our organization.

Mr. Chairperson,

In order for the performance of the OPCW to meet the expectations of the States Parties one needs a predictable and solid financial base for the organization. In our view, the draft revised program and budget of the OPCW for 2025 proposed by the Director-General is justified, and therefore my delegation fully supports the draft decision submitted with the unanimous recommendation of the Executive Council. The budget will enable the organization to continue its vital work, including cooperation and assistance projects.

Mr. Chairperson,

We need to increase our endeavors to prevent the use of chemical weapons, or the threat of their use. So long as the use of chemical weapons is ongoing, or the threat of their use lingers, we must retain our focus on this issue and not allow ourselves to become inured to it. The use of these weapons must always be seen as a violation of a deeply-held taboo. Accordingly, the identification and accountability of those responsible is imperative.

In concluding my remarks, I avail myself of the opportunity to reiterate Romania's unwavering support for the OPCW's work and to commend once more the professionalism, impartiality, objectivity and independence displayed by the Director-General, Ambassador Fernando Arias, and the Technical Secretariat in fulfilling the mandates bestowed by the States Parties.

I kindly request that this statement be considered as an official document of the CSP 29 and post the full version on the OPCW external server and public website.