

STATEMENT OF ROMANIA
TO THE ONE HUNDRED AND SIXTH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL OF
THE OPCW

Mr. Chairperson, Director-General, distinguished delegates,

Romania fully agrees and supports the statement of the European Union. We welcome the new Chairperson of the Executive Council, H.E. Ambassador Andrés Teran Parral of Ecuador, and we assure him of Romania's full support in his activity.

Allow me to highlight some elements from the national perspective.

Romania is determined to continue supporting the activities of the OPCW and Technical Secretariat. More than ever, it is imperative that the Secretariat remains alert and able to carry out its tasks in the post-destruction phase.

Romania joins those who welcome again the Secretariat's activity in monitoring all relevant situations and any allegations of use of chemical weapons and stands ready to assist if requested.

The Convention is a key instrument of the global non-proliferation architecture, and we must continue the work done so far and implement the decisions and resolutions adopted by States Parties in order to defend this entire structure.

We are determined to continue our actions in order to contribute to the consolidation of the OPCW, sustaining and building the capabilities of the Technical Secretariat.

The use of chemical weapons, anywhere, at any time, by anyone - a State or a Non-State actor -, under any circumstances, remains completely unacceptable. It is a violation of international law and can amount to the most serious of international crimes - war crimes and crimes against humanity.

Therefore, even if we repeat ourselves, we will continue to highlight the fact that the most blatant breaches of the norm have occurred with the use of chemical weapons on the territory of the Syrian Arab Republic. Those responsible for the repeated use of chemical weapons must be held accountable.

At the same time, the Syrian Arab Republic needs to resolve the pending issues. Return to full compliance with the Convention remains imperatively necessary. The continued non-compliance of the Syrian Arab Republic causes serious damage to the confidence in the structure on which the Convention is based.

Furthermore, Romania has since the very beginning condemned the war of aggression waged by the Russian Federation against Ukraine, in blatant breach of the UN Charter and the international law. And we will continue to do so, and to call for the full and immediate withdrawal of the

Russian Federation forces from the entire territory of Ukraine, within its internationally recognized borders. We have repeatedly denounced the use by Russia of prohibited methods of warfare in Ukraine and we will continue to do so as long as necessary. Once again, we take very seriously the growing number of reports on the use of Riot Control Agents by the Russian Federation in Ukraine as a method of warfare. Such use is prohibited under Article I of the Convention. Romania joins those who are calling on Russia to strictly comply with its obligations under the Convention.

Among the topics on the OPCW agenda that require further clarification is the assassination attempt on the Russian opposition politician, Alexei Navalny, in August 2020, with a nerve agent. His tragic death in a Russian prison does not exempt the Russian Federation from revealing without delay the circumstances of the prior assassination attempt against him with a nerve agent from the “Novichok” group. Romania once again joins the States Parties that urge the Russian Federation to provide clear explanations.

We take this opportunity to reiterate Romania’s strong support for the professionalism, impartiality, objectivity, and independence of the work of the OPCW and to express appreciation to the Director-General, Ambassador Fernando Arias, and the Technical Secretariat for their efforts to uphold the norm against the use of chemical weapons.

From the perspective of the post-destruction phase, it is of paramount importance that the Secretariat deepens its understanding of Artificial Intelligence technology and explores its capabilities and opportunities in greater depth, but also the associated risks.

To conclude, the development of technology must not make us forget the importance of engaging in the dialogue of the OPCW with all relevant stakeholders, ranging from the chemical industry or the scientific community to non-governmental organizations.

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

Thank you.