



# UK Delegation to the OPCW

***Statement to the 106<sup>th</sup> Session of the Executive Council  
of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical  
Weapons***

***by Her Excellency Joanna Roper, Permanent  
Representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain  
and Northern Ireland***

Mr Chair, Director General, Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates,

Let me begin by welcoming Ambassador Terán Parral as the new Executive Council Chair. We are firmly committed to supporting you throughout the year ahead. We also welcome and look forward to working with all incoming members of the Executive Council.

I would like to thank Director General Arias for outlining the Technical Secretariat's comprehensive programme of work. We recognise significant international cooperation and assistance activity and important achievements, including the recent designation of a laboratory in Algeria. We also note important DG led efforts to consider the implications of emerging technology for the OPCW. We look forward to further discussion of both the threats and opportunities presented by these new technologies. The UK is firmly committed to supporting other aspects of the programme of work in the coming months, including enhancing geographical and gender representation.

Mr Chair,

Chemical weapons continue to be a threat to international security. We have seen further evidence of widespread use of Riot Control Agents by Russia across the front line in Ukraine. Most recently, in May this year we saw Russia Today reporter Andrey Filatov presenting video footage that showed Russian forces dropping a 'gas grenade' on Ukrainian forces. The use of Riot Control Agents as a method of warfare is a clear breach of Article 1 of the Convention. We are confident in the US determination that Russia has used chloropicrin, a scheduled chemical, against Ukraine.

We cannot stand by while Russia seeks to undermine the CWC. That is why we, alongside 12 other States Parties, reiterated our request to the Executive Council under Article IX to assist in clarifying reports that Russian armed forces have repeatedly breached the Chemical Weapon Convention in Ukraine. We encourage all Executive Council members to respond to

this request. We are also seeking to reduce the threat posed by Russian chemical weapons to the Ukrainian people. We therefore welcome last week's OPCW technical assistance visit which delivered crucial detection and protective equipment to Kyiv, funded in part by the UK's contribution of £350,000 to the OPCW Assistance to Ukraine project. The UK will continue to stand with Ukraine and its people.

Mr Chair,

The OPCW Declarations Assessment Team has concluded that there are further, serious, issues with the Assad regime's chemical weapons declaration. It has been over ten years since Syria acceded to the CWC, and an accurate declaration is a distant prospect. We must continue to provide the Technical Secretariat and its Syria missions with our complete support. Their work is central to our efforts to mitigate the significant risks posed to international security presented by both the Assad Regime and regionally based non-state actors. We must also work together to implement November's CSP 28 Decision in full, applying more scrutiny to toxic chemical transfers and working towards full accountability for chemical weapon use - giving victims the justice they deserve.

Mr Chair,

The challenges to the CWC and the principles that underpin it are growing. Now more than ever, all States Parties must come together and fully commit to supporting the OPCW's work, to ensure it can meet current threats as well as those of the future.

Thank you.