



## **Statement by North Macedonia**

**H.E. Ambassador Beti JACHEVA, Permanent Representative**

107<sup>th</sup> Executive Council of the OPCW - The Hague, 8-11 October 2024

### Agenda item 5 - General debate

*Mr. Chairperson, Mr. Director-General, Distinguished delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,*

North Macedonia aligns itself with the statement delivered by the European Union. On this occasion, I would like to highlight the following points in my national capacity.

I would like to start by reiterating my delegations' full support to H.E. Andrés Teran Parral, Chair to the Executive Council in steering the work of the 107<sup>th</sup> Executive Council of the OPCW. We also extend the appreciation and reiterate our full support to the Director General, Ambassador Fernando Arias and to the Technical Secretariat for their professionalism, impartiality and expertise in implementing the Chemical Weapons Convention.

Mr. Chair,

We continue to condemn in strongest terms the unprovoked and unjustified, and still continuing, Russian aggression over Ukraine, which constitutes a flagrant violation of the UN Charter obligations and international law. We reiterate our unwavering support for Ukraine's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognised borders and its inherent right of self-defence against the Russian aggression. Russia will be held accountable for its war of aggression and all the destruction it causes.

Furthermore, the growing number of reported use of riot control agents by Russian Federation as a method of warfare, as well as alleged use of choking agent chloropicrin against Ukrainian soldiers constitutes direct violation of the Chemical Weapons Convention. That is why, together with 12 states parties we requested clarification of this situation and we urge the Russian Federation to provide answers. In addition, we appreciate the Secretariat's work in providing equipment and training to Ukraine including the TAVs to

Ukraine and the delivery of training and non-military equipment to first responders, medics and firefighters.

Numerous questions remain unanswered ten years after Syria's initial declaration. The continued non-compliance seriously damages the Convention. We once again recall that 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. We call on Syrian authorities to fully and effectively cooperate with the OPCW and all its established mechanisms, including the Investigation and Identification Team.

Mr. Chair,

We also welcome and fully support the ongoing work steered by Germany and Costa Rica on enhanced interaction with Civil Society and its meaningful and broadest possible participation in the Conference of States Parties.

We are already aware that emerging technologies, including Artificial Intelligence, could potentially pose a major challenge to the implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention. Therefore, we welcome the efforts towards deepening the understanding of these technologies and impact they might have on the work of the OPCW and the Convention.

Mr. Chair,

Over the years, North Macedonia has proven to be a reliable and responsible member of the OPCW which fulfils its obligations from the Convention and has engaged very actively in the work of the Organization, including serving as Vice president of Review Conference and Vice chair of the EC. In this regard, and with a view to continuing its active contribution to the work of this important organization, we have submitted our candidacy for the membership of the Executive Council for the period 2025-2027 and would like to ask for support from States parties.

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I would kindly ask you to consider this statement as an official document of the 107<sup>th</sup> Executive Council and post it on the OPCW external server and public website.

I thank you.