

**STATEMENT BY MR. EUGEN MIHUT, REPRESENTATIVE OF ROMANIA TO THE
OPCW, AT THE 107TH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

Agenda item 5 – General debate

Mr. Chairperson,

Romania fully aligns with the statement delivered on behalf of the European Union. In my intervention, I would like to emphasize a few aspects of particular interest from a national perspective.

My country attaches particular importance to the implementation of the CWC, a pillar of viable multilateralism, international law and a rules-based international order, and the first universal international legal instrument which aims to eliminate an entire category of weapons of mass destruction within a fixed time frame. In this context, Romania shares the conviction that all 193 States Parties must act to protect and promote the integrity of the CWC, an instrument underpinning the international non-proliferation and disarmament architecture.

Mr. Chairperson,

I must state once again that it is our view that the use of chemical weapons, anywhere, at any time, by anyone, under any circumstances, is totally unacceptable. This is a violation of international law and may constitute the gravest of international crimes - war crimes and crimes against humanity.

The most flagrant and substantial violation of the CWC occurred with the use of chemical weapons on the territory of the Syrian Arab Republic. Under these circumstances, paragraph 18 of the Director-General's report EC/107/DG 8 – *Progress in the Elimination of Syrian Chemical Weapons Programme*¹ raises deep concerns again. Even if it sounds like a broken record, in order to reverse the decision, Syria must resolve outstanding issues, declare the full extent of its chemical weapons program and return to full compliance with the Convention.

¹ paragraph 18 of EC/107/DG 8: *Considering the identified gaps, inconsistencies, and discrepancies that remain unresolved, the Secretariat assesses that the declaration submitted by the Syrian Arab Republic still cannot be considered accurate and complete in accordance with the Convention, Council decisions EC-M-33/DEC.1, EC-81/DEC.4, EC-83/DEC.5, and EC-94/DEC.2, as well as Conference decisions C-SS-4/DEC.3 (dated 27 June 2018) and C-25/DEC.9, and United Nations Security Council resolution 2118 (2013).*

Mr. Chairperson,

Let me now turn to another subject that is equally important for my country. From the very beginning of the invasion of Ukraine, Romania has condemned the premeditated, unjustified and unprovoked war of aggression by the Russian Federation, which constitutes a clear violation of the international law, including the UN Charter. We will continue to call on Russia to stop the aggression, as well as for the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of all aggressor forces from the entire territory of Ukraine, within internationally recognized borders.

Romania continues to be very concerned by the increasing number of well-documented reports of the use by the Russian Federation of riot control agents in Ukraine as a tactic of war. We must remind the authors that such use is prohibited by Article I of the Convention. Romania joins those calling on Russia to strictly comply with its obligations under the Convention.

We must not lose sight of the fact that the assassination attempt with a nerve agent of the late Russian opposition politician, Mr. Alexei Navalny, is still an open topic on the OPCW agenda. It is regrettable that we have to talk about him in the past tense, after his death in detention in a penal colony in Siberia. However, this does not end the case of the use of the nerve agent and, therefore, Romania once again joins the States Parties urging the Russian Federation to reveal without delay the circumstances of the assassination attempt.

Mr. Chairperson,

We must strengthen our efforts to prevent the use of chemical weapons, or the threat of their use. It is imperative that those who use, or have used, chemical weapons are identified and held accountable.

Before concluding I take this opportunity to reiterate my country's unconditional support for the professionalism, impartiality, objectivity and independence of the OPCW's work and to express to the Director-General, Ambassador Fernando Arias, and the Technical Secretariat the gratitude for the efforts made to fulfill the mandates given by the States Parties. My delegation was truly impressed by the many accomplished activities mentioned in the report EC - 107/DG.7 on the progress in the implementation of Article XI of the CWC during the period August 26, 2023 - August 25, 2024. We truly feel that we must congratulate the Technical Secretariat for all its efforts and support it to continue to do a good job.

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

I thank you Mr. Chairperson.