



REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA

STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR JOŽEF DROFENIK, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF SLOVENIA TO THE OPCW AT THE 108TH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

General Debate

Mr. Chairperson, Director-General, distinguished colleagues,

Slovenia's main views are aptly captured in the statement made on behalf of the European Union, to which we fully subscribe. I would like to make the following additional remarks.

Firstly, few days ago we marked a three years since the beginning of Russian full-scale invasion of Ukraine. Russian's federation continues its unprovoked and unjust aggression, which grossly violates international law and the UN Charter, undermines European and international peace and security

My country is deeply concerned in regards to the findings of the second OPCW Technical Assistance Visit (TAV) report, issued on February 14, 2025. The confirmation of a chemical agent classified as a riot control agent in the Ukrainian battlefield, raises serious questions about its use in the ongoing aggression. We would like to commend the Ukrainian authorities for their professional and meticulous approach in collecting samples and documentation that adhere to OPCW standards. The professionalism demonstrated in this process ensures that the findings are credible and rooted in scientific integrity.

Mr. Chairperson, one thing is for sure, we would not be discussing and calling for timely attribution of the proven cases of use of riot control agent in Ukraine, if Russian aggression wouldn't started.

Secondly, the fallen Syrian regime has long misled the OPCW, obstructing investigations and delaying progress toward the full and final elimination of Syria's chemical weapons stockpile.

We call upon the new leadership in Syria to take a different path and seize this moment to demonstrate a true commitment to the global effort to eliminate chemical weapons. This is an opportunity to fully cooperate with the OPCW, resolve outstanding issues, and finally close the Syrian file on chemical weapons. We believe it is critical for Syria to adopt this constructive approach, to show the world that it is ready to meet its obligations under the Chemical Weapons Convention and restore trust in the international disarmament framework.

In conclusion, I would like to emphasise that we must remain resolute in our commitment to the universal goals of the OPCW. This includes ensuring accountability for all chemical weapons violations, and working to prevent the further use of such weapons in future conflicts. The Artificial Intelligence can present a valuable tool to strengthen the OPCW's mission in this regard.

Thank you.