



United Kingdom  
Mission to the  
United Nations

**UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY, 80<sup>TH</sup> SESSION  
FIRST COMMITTEE**

**THEMATIC DEBATE ON OTHER WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION**

**STATEMENT BY THE UNITED KINGDOM  
Andrea Pareja, Disarmament Attache  
New York, 22 October 2025**

Mx Chair,

This year marks the 50th anniversary of the BTWC; and the centenary of the Geneva Protocol. It has now been twelve years since Syria acceded to the CWC, and we welcome Syria's recommitment to meet its obligations under the Convention. We also reaffirm our commitment to Article I of the BTWC: to ensure that biological agents and toxins are used solely for peaceful purposes - to protect health, advance science, and strengthen global security.

As the UN High Representative for Disarmament Affairs recently noted, "In a time of rapid scientific advancement, the peaceful application of biology must be safeguarded through cooperation, transparency, and trust."

The fall of the Assad regime in December 2024 opens the way for Syria to destroy its chemical weapons. We commend the Syrian Government's engagement with the OPCW to find, secure, and destroy Assad's chemical weapons and we will continue to support the OPCW's missions in Syria. We have committed £2.8m over the last year to support these efforts and as such, we encourage all CWC state parties to contribute funding, technical expertise and support to Syria and the OPCW.

Mx chair,

Russia continues to use chemical weapons on the battlefield in Ukraine. The OPCW has confirmed in three reports the presence of riot control agents in samples collected by Ukraine. In July, the UK sanctioned two individuals and a Russian entity under its chemical weapons sanctions' regime. Rest assured that we will support Ukraine's pursuit of the perpetrators.

The UK is also concerned by reports that the Sudanese Armed Forces have used chemical weapons. Let us be clear: any use of chemical weapons is unacceptable. As a CWC State Party, Sudan must abide by its obligations under the Convention.

Mx Chair,

On a positive note, we welcome the OPCW Executive Council's recommendation to appoint Ambassador Sabrina Dallafior Matter as Director General. A strong, confident and properly funded OPCW is critical to achieving the CWC's vision of a world free of chemical weapons.

The UK also welcomes President Trump's remarks to UNGA on the BTWC. The time is indeed ripe for "an international effort to enforce the BTWC". We support strengthening the Convention to ensure that all states parties use biological agents or toxins only for prophylactic, protective or other peaceful purposes.

To conclude, we remain alert to non-state actors' and terrorists' interest in acquiring WMDs. For that reason, we urge all states to implement in full the obligations of UNSCR 1540, and to support the 1540 Committee's efforts to provide advice and assistance to states to prevent the spread of WMD to non-state actors.

Thank you mx chair.