

Joint Statement in the UNGA First Committee

Other Weapons of Mass Destruction

Delivered by H.E. Ambassador Rytis Paulauskas, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Lithuania

Chair,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of Albania, Andorra, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Malta, Republic of Moldova, Monaco, Montenegro, the Netherlands, New Zealand, North Macedonia, Norway, Paraguay, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Romania, San Marino, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Türkiye, Ukraine, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United States of America, and my own country Lithuania.

Our delegations reaffirm their unwavering commitment to the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and the absolute prohibition of the use of chemical weapons under any circumstances.

The reappearance of toxic chemical agents in conflict zones poses a grave threat to international peace and security and undermines the credibility of the global disarmament and non-proliferation architecture.

In this regard, we note with utmost concern the growing body of reports on the Russian Federation use of riot control agents and other toxic chemicals on the frontlines in Ukraine. Ukraine has documented almost 11,000 cases of the use of munitions containing hazardous chemicals, including chloropicrin, by Russian forces since February 2023, which would be a clear violation of the CWC. In addition, Ukraine has reported that 2,862 of its service personnel required medical care for symptoms of chemical exposure, including acute poisoning by unidentified toxic substance.

Our concern is further reinforced by the findings of three consecutive OPCW Technical Assistance Visit (TAV) reports – dated 18 November 2024¹, 14 February 2025², and 20 June 2025³ – conducted at the request of Ukraine. These reports confirm that environmental and munition samples collected from locations along the confrontation lines in the Dnipropetrovsk region contained 2-Chlorobenzylidenemalononitrile (CS), a riot control agent. OPCW-designated laboratories independently verified the presence of CS or its degradation products in grenade fragments, soil, vegetation, and even components of first-person-view drone frames.

¹ [S/2338/2024](#)

² [S/2370/2025](#)

³ [S/2415/2025](#)

These reports raise further concerns about a clear and systematic pattern of use, going well beyond isolated incidents. They provide further evidence that CS gas has been used in combat, which would be in direct violation of Article I of the CWC, which explicitly prohibits the use of riot control agents as a method of warfare.

We commend the impartial and rigorous work of the OPCW Technical Secretariat, under the leadership of its Director-General, Ambassador Fernando Arias, for their professionalism in conducting these analyses and safeguarding the integrity of the Convention. We express our full support for the Director General and the Technical Secretariat of the OPCW, in fulfilling the mandate set by the Convention and policy-making bodies of the Organisation.

In this regard, we urge the Russian Federation to fully comply with its obligations under the CWC. We stand ready to support Ukraine and the OPCW Technical Secretariat, as we seek to implement our collective efforts in pursuit of effective attribution and full accountability.

Chair,

We wish to underscore our common belief that the development, production, acquisition, possession, stockpiling, retention, transfer, and use or threat of use of chemical weapons by any actor poses a threat to the object and purpose of the CWC and to the achievement of a world free of chemical weapons.

There is and there can be no justification for anyone to develop, produce, otherwise acquire, stockpile or retain chemical weapons.

Any use of chemical weapons – by State or non-State actors – is unacceptable. Such acts must be met with a unified, firm, and principled response. Upholding the CWC is not only vital for the credibility of the chemical weapons regime but also for the integrity of the broader disarmament and non-proliferation architecture.

Thank you.