

**Statement to the Conference of States Parties (CSP-27)
Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW)
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Mr./Madam Chairperson,
Director-General,
Distinguished ambassadors and delegates,

It is an honor to address the Twenty-Seventh Session of the Conference of States Parties of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC). For 25 years, the convention has stood as the cornerstone of the global regime prohibiting the production, stockpile, possession, and use of chemical weapons.

Unfortunately, the CWC is under threat today due to the Russian Federation's proven use of chemical agents in at least two assassination attempts against enemies of the state. Russia's invasion of Ukraine and deliberate threats to use chemical weapons have further undermined the CWC's vision of a "complete and effective prohibition of the development, production, acquisition, stockpiling, retention, transfer and use of chemical weapons, and their destruction." Moscow's actions constitute a brazen attempt to lay a pretext for a chemical weapons attack on Ukraine, or at the very least, sow fear and deter assistance to Kyiv. Such measures have no place among the peace-seeking community of nations.

The United States of America assesses that Moscow likely maintains a banned chemical weapons program in violation of its CWC obligations.² Russia's non-compliance with the CWC, preceded by Syria's, should be of utmost concern to all OPCW member states. In August 2020, the Russian government tried to silence one of its fiercest critics, Alexei Navalny, with a chemical attack. The council was unsuccessful in its October 2021 attempt to clarify the attack with Russia under CWC Article IX. This flagrant refusal to comply with the CWC has been met by strong words of condemnation but no consequences from this esteemed body.

Furthermore, Russia is working from within the OPCW as a member state in breach of its obligations to shield itself and its allies from investigation, delegitimize the work of the OPCW, and interfere with routine OPCW business. This conference must soundly reject Russia's determined efforts to weaken the CWC and OPCW. It must make clear that a member state that displays persistent contempt for the convention has no place in the OPCW.

¹ Note from the [CWC Coalition](#): This statement is not a document of the 27th Conference of the States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention, as the General Committee did not accredit the authoring organization. However, the CWC Coalition believes that civil society voices should not be muted through this practice and is hosting the statement on the CWC Coalition website.

² U.S. Department of State, "Compliance with the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on their Destruction," Condition (10) (c) Report, April 2022, p. 5. (<https://www.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/Condition-10-c-Report.pdf>)

We strongly urge member states of the Executive Council, at the council's next meeting, to pass a decision setting a 90-day deadline for Russia to demonstrate compliance with the CWC, just as the council did in July 2020 for Syria.

If Moscow fails to comply with the Executive Council's deadline, the subsequent council session should vote to recommend suspension of Russia's voting rights and privileges at the OPCW. The CSP should move to finalize the suspension absent Moscow's immediate compliance. Those states that routinely sit on the sidelines through abstentions or non-voting must take a stand. Russia has shown the world that it is not willing to act in good faith or fulfill its CWC commitments.

Allow us to commend the OPCW's and the conference's continued efforts to verifiably eliminate chemical weapons around the world. To ensure peace in the days ahead, there must be no impunity for Russia's violations and its most grave threats to security.

Thank you.