



Permanent Mission of Ukraine
to the International
Organizations in Vienna

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Statement on Russia's claims about chemical weapons

As delivered by Ambassador Ihor Prokopchuk,
Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the International Organizations in Vienna,
to the 1205th meeting of the Permanent Council,
29 November 2018

Mr. Chairperson,

The Russian Federation makes all accustomed to the regular absurd allegations and fake stories delivered by the Russian delegations in multilateral fora, including in this hall of the OSCE Permanent Council. They constitute an integral part of Russia's campaign to divert attention of the international community from Kremlin's gross violations of international law, the core OSCE principles and Russia's own political commitments. Special attention is paid by Moscow to disinformation about the Russian-Ukrainian conflict, where the Russian side for over four years continues its futile attempts of denying Russia's responsibility as a party to the conflict and of avoiding implementation of the commitments undertaken by Russia.

We do not respond to many of Russia's fakes and deceits because it would make the Permanent Council last hours longer. But we believe appropriate to specifically expose one Russia's fake pronounced by the Russian Permanent Representative in the last Permanent Council.

On Monday, in the special PC meeting, the Russian Permanent Representative was so desperate to divert attention from the unprovoked act of Russia's armed aggression against Ukraine near the Kerch Strait, that he included in his statement a claim: "Information has emerged about preparation of a provocation by the Ukrainian Armed Forces with the use of chemical weapons and the involvement of foreign special services". We are deeply concerned by the fact that the Russian Federation trivializes the issue of chemical weapons, a weapon of mass destruction, and the use of these banned military substances. Only few months after claiming to have completed destruction of its chemical weapons stockpile, in March 2018 Russia used an unscheduled, military-grade nerve agent in an assassination attempt of the Skripals in Salisbury, the United Kingdom. The UK's investigation into the assassination concluded that two Russian nationals were responsible for the attack and they are officers of the Russian military intelligence service. As for Ukraine, it has never produced, stockpiled or used chemical weapons. The absence of such weapons in Ukraine has been repeatedly confirmed by regular OPCW inspections. Moreover, as a responsible State Party to the Chemical Weapons Convention Ukraine considers

fulfillment of its provisions as one of the main priorities in the area of non-proliferation and arms control.

Considering Russia's record, the deceitful claim by the Russian Ambassador makes us urge the Russian authorities and its proxies to stop contemplating any provocation with the use of chemical weapons in the occupied territories of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions of Ukraine or elsewhere. There is no other way for chemical weapons to get into the territory of Ukraine than be supplied by the Russian side from the territory of the Russian Federation through the segment of the border, which the government of Ukraine is currently not controlling. This is how the Russians brought, in particular, the banned anti-personnel mines into the territory of Ukraine. If the Russian delegation is aware of any specific information, concerning the above, we call upon the Russian side to convey it to the OPCW through proper channels. I use this opportunity to again urge the Russian Ambassador to refrain from exploiting the Permanent Council meetings for disinformation and spreading outright fakes.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.