Mr. Chairman,

Lithuania aligns with the statement made on behalf of the European Union and the joint statement of participating States of the International Partnership against Impunity for the Use of Chemical Weapons.

Mr. Chairman,

It is truly appalling that 90 years after the entry into force of the Geneva Protocol and 25 years after the signature of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) we witness numerous instances of confirmed use of chemical weapons. Furthermore, in recent years we observe an increase of these heinous crimes. While most of these cases took place in a war-torn Syria and Iraq, targeted attacks with the use of nerve agents were also committed during peaceful time in the United Kingdom and Malaysia.

Lithuania **condemns in the strongest possible terms** any use of chemical weapons by state or non-state actors anywhere in the World. International community must take responsibility and consolidate all the efforts to strengthen institutional capabilities to ensure full implementation of the CWC. All alleged attacks must be thoroughly investigated, and **perpetrators must be held accountable**.

We fully share the assessment of the authorities of the United Kingdom that highly likely Russia is responsible for nerve agent use in Salisbury attack and that there is no other plausible explanation.

Mr. Chairman,

It is deeply regrettable that during last year, the mandate of the OPCW-UN Joint Investigative Mechanism established to examine and attribute all cases of use of chemical weapons in Syria was blocked by several Russia's vetoes at the UN Security Council. Prior to its closure, JIM experts have concluded that both Syrian Government forces and ISIL were responsible for the use of chemical weapons.
OPCW experts, implementing the investigations over alleged chemical weapons attacks and verifying other aspects of the implementation of the CWC must have an unhindered access to the sites of attacks and other objects related to their work. All countries must fully and in good faith cooperate with OPCW experts to successfully conclude the investigations. Any attempts to discredit or undermine the work and authority of the OPCW or its experts, including by a cyber-attack are unacceptable.

In this regard we welcome the Decision of the Special Session of the Conference of the States Parties to the CWC, taken on 27th of June 2018, to enhance the capacity of the OPCW experts to identify the perpetrators of the use of chemical weapons. We are also looking forward to further steps in this regard during the upcoming Conference of States Parties of CWC and the Fourth Review Conference later this year.

EU Foreign Ministers on 15th of October have adopted a new regime of restrictive measures to address the use and proliferation of chemical weapons. We look forward to its practical implementation.

We are also grateful to the Polish delegation for putting forward a resolution on the implementation of the CWC on the Session of this Committee and their tireless efforts in order to achieve a well-balanced outcome.

Mr. Chairman,

Lithuania is an active member of the International Partnership Against Impunity for the Use of Chemical Weapons. All countries must stand united against any attempts to use chemical weapons or assistance to those accused responsible for their use. Our common efforts must be taken to hold accountable anyone responsible for these heinous acts.

Thank You,