



OPCW

Conference of the States Parties

Twenty-Sixth Session
29 November – 3 December 2021

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ENGLISH and FRENCH only

**JOINT STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF FIFTY-FOUR MEMBER STATES
OF THE OPCW DELIVERED BY H.E. AMBASSADOR LISA HELFAND
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF CANADA TO THE OPCW AT THE
TWENTY-SIXTH SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE STATES PARTIES
CONCERNING ACCREDITATION OF NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS**

This joint statement concerns the importance of upholding the goal of cooperation and inclusion in the accreditation process for non-governmental organisations (NGOs) wishing to attend this Conference of the States Parties (“the Conference”), and is delivered on behalf of the following States Parties: Albania, Andorra, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Ecuador, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Marshall Islands, Monaco, Montenegro, the Netherlands, New Zealand, North Macedonia, Norway, Panama, Peru, Poland, Portugal, the Republic of Moldova, Romania, San Marino, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Ukraine, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and the United States of America.

NGOs play a key role in supporting the global fight against the use of chemical weapons. It is crucial that the Conference engage with a wide range of civil society organisations and that we hear from diverse voices, in order to strengthen the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), and to ensure that it is capable of addressing the current and future challenges we face in achieving our collective aim of a world free of chemical weapons. Principles of inclusion and transparency are at the core of the OPCW and its work. We need the expertise and voice of civil society in the room.

We underscore that the guidelines adopted by the Conference at the Third Review Conference were put in place to promote transparency and dialogue in the Organisation, including strengthening partnerships with organisations that share the concerns and aims of the States Parties.

However, we are concerned that the intent of these guidelines is being undermined by a very small minority of States Parties blocking the accreditation of NGOs that have a proven track record of working on issues demonstrably relevant to the object and purpose of the Chemical Weapons Convention (“the Convention”). This has become a worrying pattern that goes against the spirit of cooperation and genuine partnership required to fulfil the aims of the Convention.

We ask that this statement be made an official document of the Conference and published on Catalyst and the public website of the OPCW.

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