



**REPORT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR AGUSTÍN VÁSQUEZ GÓMEZ
AND H.E. AMBASSADOR I GUSTI AGUNG WESAKA PUJA
CO-FACILITATORS NOMINATED BY THE NINETIETH SESSION
OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

1. Mr Chairperson, Director-General, distinguished colleagues, it is an honour for us to report back to the Executive Council (“the Council”) on the way in which we tried to take forward issues delegated to us at the previous session. In order to fairly distribute the work, we have decided to split our report in two parts. The first part focuses on the approach of the co-facilitators to consultations; the second part reports on actions taken during the reporting period.

General approach

2. As you will recall, at the Ninetieth Session of the Council, States Parties discussed the non-paper submitted by the Council Chair entitled “Way Forward on OPCW Tenure Policy and Related Issues” (circulated by the Council Chair on 19 February) as well as the joint position paper circulated by the Non-Aligned Movement and China on the follow-up to the Fourth Review Conference¹ (EC-90/NAT.4*, dated 7 March 2019).
3. Although the Council was not in position to agree on the report of this session, the Council Chair requested us, with the consent of the Council, to conduct facilitations on tenure policy and also to prepare a proposal based on the joint position paper submitted by the NAM and China. From the very outset of the consultations, we decided to adopt a forward-looking approach and excluded the possibility of revisiting the Fourth Review Conference process.
4. Other commitments that co-facilitators made were related to conducting an inclusive and transparent process and to following the principle of consensus. In order to improve the flow of information between the co-facilitators and regional groups, each group was invited to nominate a “Sherpa”. The co-facilitators would like to thank the regional groups that did so.

Process

5. During the reporting period, the co-facilitators conducted six rounds of consultations.

¹ Fourth Special Session of the Conference of the States Parties to Review the Operation of the Chemical Weapons Convention.



6. In March, the co-facilitators met with all five regional groups as well as with the Non-Aligned Movement and China and the European Union (EU). The Co-facilitators used these meetings to present their general approach to consultations and to collect preliminary views of delegations on topics delegated by the Council.
7. The co-facilitators also consulted the Director-General to gain better understanding of the challenges faced by the Technical Secretariat (“the Secretariat”) in the area of workforce management.
8. The second round of consultations took place on 21 June. It was organised to give the opportunity to the Non-Aligned Movement and China to present their proposal on the establishment of an Open-Ended Working Group to identify and prioritise the implementation of items on which consensus is achievable among States Parties (EC-91/NAT.3, dated 7 June). The co-facilitators invited delegations to offer their views and opinions on this document.
9. Following the abovementioned consultations and in response to calls for using the time available until the Ninety-First Session of the Council, the co-facilitators held informal discussions on 28 June with a number of States Parties representing different perspectives on the process. These discussions provided a forum to exchange views on the possible way forward with regard to the document submitted by the Non-Aligned Movement and China and the non-paper by the Secretariat entitled “Ensuring Diverse and Qualified Workforce of the Technical Secretariat”. This last document was circulated to the States Parties on 26 June in follow-up to the meeting organised by the Director-General with the coordinators or sherpas from all regional groups, as well as the Non-Aligned Movement plus China and the EU. We thank the Director-General for having introduced the non-paper and explaining the rationale behind the proposals contained therein.
10. The fourth round of consultations was organised on 3 July to enable States Parties to further comment and ask questions to the Secretariat on the content of the Secretariat non-paper. During that meeting, the co-facilitators also presented a proposal on the establishment of an Open-Ended Working Group on diverse topics within the Organisation.
11. A revised version of the aforementioned proposal was discussed during the fifth round of consultations on 5 July, but it did not receive consensual support. The main source of disagreement was related to identifying the topics to be taken up by the OEWG. While some States Parties argued that the topics need to be agreed at the inception of the OEWG, others thought that the group should identify relevant topics only after it is established. Different views were also expressed in relation to the status of the possible future OEWG vis-à-vis the existing facilitation processes.
12. The last attempt by the co-facilitators to arrive at a compromise solution was made on 8 July with a limited number of States Parties, again representing different approaches to the proposal to establish the OEWG. This informal discussion confirmed the absence of viable common ground on the issue.

Concluding remarks

13. Based on the six rounds of consultations described above, the facilitators conclude that, at present, they see no room to agree on the establishment of an OEWG to discuss different topics relevant to the OPCW's agenda. While there is a strong sense that the current facilitations could benefit from a revitalising impulse and that there are important matters for which no facilitation exists, diverging views remain as to what would be the right framework to address this.
14. It appears that more time is necessary for delegations to think through and discuss informally amongst themselves the different alternatives and options. We hope that our consultations have brought more clarity about what those options could be and which limitations would need to be resolved in order to progress.
15. In closing, we would like to express our appreciation to the Director-General, to all the co-ordinators and sherpas of regional groups, to the Non-Aligned Movement and China, the EU, and delegations for profoundly engaging with us during the intersessional period and participating in consultations. Last not but least, let us thank the Secretariat staff for their support.

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