



OPCW

Conference of the States Parties

Twenty-Sixth Session
29 November – 3 December 2021

C-26/NAT.67
29 November 2021
ENGLISH only

UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND

**STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF THE UNITED KINGDOM
OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND TO THE OPCW
ON BEHALF OF THE GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP AGAINST THE SPREAD
OF WEAPONS AND MATERIALS OF MASS DESTRUCTION
AT THE TWENTY-SIXTH SESSION
OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE STATES PARTIES**

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland is very pleased to make this statement on behalf of the members of the Global Partnership Against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction (the Global Partnership). It highlights some of the important contributions made by the Global Partnership community to strengthen the Chemical Weapons Convention (“the Convention”), support the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, and enhance global chemical security.

The G7-led Global Partnership was set up in 2002, and has grown to include 31 members, who all are States Parties to the Convention or comprise States Parties¹. This year, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland has had the privilege of chairing the Global Partnership.

The Global Partnership is the principal voluntary international mechanism for coordinating and delivering tangible programmes, projects and activities to reduce chemical weapon threats as well as threats from other weapons of mass destruction. To date, the partners have collectively implemented programmes worth more than USD 25 billion to prevent, detect and respond to chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear terrorism, and proliferation threats. This has made a concrete difference to the security of all of us.

For over a decade Global Partnership members provided vital support worth well over EUR 1 billion for the destruction of declared chemical weapons stockpiles in the Russian Federation, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, and the Syrian Arab Republic. This support, together with the efforts of other relevant States Parties and the OPCW, played a major role in bringing us to the present situation, where we are almost on the brink of completing destruction of all declared weapon stockpiles.

¹ Australia, Belgium, Canada, Chile, Czech Republic, Denmark, the European Union, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Republic of Korea, Mexico, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, the Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Ukraine, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America.



But the destruction of declared stockpiles is not enough for us to achieve the core vision of the Convention: “to exclude completely the possibility of the use of chemical weapons”. Sadly, despite these efforts, the use of chemical weapons is still a real threat to international peace and security, as we have seen in recent years in the Syrian Arab Republic, Iraq, Malaysia, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and, most recently, in the Russian Federation. It is essential that all use of chemical weapons, whether by a State Party or non-State actors, is terminated; that all remaining chemical weapon stocks are declared and verifiably destroyed, in accordance with the Convention; and that those responsible for using chemical weapons are held to account.

The continuing use of chemical weapons, including the use of toxic industrial chemicals as weapons, is the greatest chemical security threat that we currently face. A primary focus for the Global Partnership is therefore to support the OPCW in addressing this threat. We have been doing so in a number of ways:

Ensuring that the use of chemical weapons in the Syrian Arab Republic—and elsewhere—is investigated and any remaining chemical weapon stocks are identified, declared and destroyed is a high priority. Nineteen Global Partnership members have provided funding support for the OPCW’s Syria Missions.

The new OPCW Centre for Chemistry and Technology will have a key role in ensuring that the Organisation has the highest standards of current scientific expertise available to support it in its key tasks under the Convention, including investigating allegations of use of chemical weapons. The centre will also support States Parties to fulfil their obligations. Twenty-seven Global Partnership members have provided funding support for the construction of the new centre.

It is essential to maintain the security of the OPCW against external threats, and to safeguard the confidential information that States Parties provide to the Technical Secretariat. Five Global Partnership members have provided funding to protect the Organisation against further cyberattacks.

The Global Partnership takes a holistic approach to supporting both the Convention and the OPCW. We recognise the need to build capacity globally against chemical weapon threats. Thirteen Global Partnership members have therefore contributed funding to support implementation of Article X, including in the East Africa Community, the Economic Community of West African States, and the Southern African Development Community, as well as providing support through the OPCW Africa Programme, so that States Parties can have greater confidence in their ability to respond to chemical weapon attacks, including by terrorists. Global Partnership members have also contributed funding to support laboratories in new regions to achieve OPCW designated laboratory status, so that they can both contribute to the OPCW’s network of designated laboratories, making it truly global, and also support the national and regional response to any event involving toxic chemicals. In this context, we are delighted that Brazil has become the first State Party in Latin America to host an OPCW designated laboratory. We look forward to more States Parties joining Brazil in hosting newly designated laboratories.

Global Partnership members have provided—and continue to provide—substantial and effective financial support to the Convention and the OPCW, as well as to other international organisations such as INTERPOL, which provide specialist support in their own areas of

expertise, but equally important is the non-financial support that Global Partnership members have provided, both to the Organisation and to States Parties, including training and provision of expertise, for example both through the OPCW National Authority mentoring scheme and through informal advice and cooperation.

Global Partnership members look forward to continuing their support for the Convention and the OPCW under the chair of Germany next year. We remain strongly committed to continuing our efforts to mitigate chemical weapon threats, enhance chemical security across the globe, and improve the coordination of chemical security threat reduction programmes and activities, in partnership with the Technical Secretariat and other States Parties.

--- 0 ---