

**JOINT STATEMENT CONCERNING COOPERATION WITH NON-
GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS AND THEIR INCLUSION IN THE WORK
OF THE OPCW, INCLUDING THEIR ATTENDANCE OF SESSIONS OF THE
CONFERENCE OF THE STATES PARTIES**

**Albania, Andorra, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile,
Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Ecuador, Estonia,
Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia,
Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Mexico, Republic of Moldova, Monaco,
Montenegro, Netherlands, New Zealand, North Macedonia, Norway, Peru, Poland,
Portugal, Romania, San Marino, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland,
Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and United States of
America**

Participation of civil society in the shaping of international relations is today a regular and welcome feature. NGOs contribute critical expertise, increase inclusivity and transparency of international decision making processes. Regarding the CWC and OPCW, NGOs have made important contributions in support of the shared objective of a world free of chemical weapons.

Therefore, it is crucial that the Conference of the States Parties as the highest policy-making organ also engages with a wide range of civil society organisations. We as States Parties need to hear diverse voices, in order to strengthen the 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 from chemical weapons. Principles of inclusivity and transparency are at the core of the OPCW and its work.

We underscore that the guidelines adopted by the Conference of the States Parties at the Third Review Conference were put in place to promote transparency and dialogue in this 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 accreditation process for NGOs to attend the session of the 5th Review Conference has yet again shown that the process implemented under the current guidelines suffers from a lack of transparency, preventing such NGOs from participating in the work of the Conference only because very few States Parties disagree with aspects of their work.

We therefore propose that the guidelines are reviewed taking into consideration established international practices. A review of these guidelines should be requested by this Conference, in 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 Fifth Special Session of the Conference of the States Parties to review the CWC, and for it to be published on the OPCW external server and the public website.