

**AUSTRALIA**  
**STATEMENT BY MILENA ARSIC**  
**DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF AUSTRALIA TO THE OPCW**  
**AT THE 103RD SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

**Agenda Subitem 12(e) – Follow-up to the Review Conferences**

***Civil society participation:***

Chair,

Australia supports robust engagement with civil society and is pleased to co-sponsor Germany's working paper on civil society participation and proposal to establish a facilitation.

We also support a review of the NGO accreditation guidelines.

We thank Germany for its initiative and the Technical Secretariat for its discussion paper.

Australia looks forward to working creatively and constructively with States Parties to strengthen civil society engagement in advancing our goal of a world free of chemical weapons.

Thank you, Chair.

***Decision on Geographical Representation:***

Australia reiterates its strong support for all forms of diversity, including gender and geographical diversity.

It will contribute to the successful operation of this organisation.

We support GRULAC's initiative in proposing a working group on geographical representation, and thank them for their leadership.

We commend the Technical Secretariat for taking practical steps to promote gender and geographical diversity within the organisation, and look forward to further fruitful discussions.

Thank you, Chair.