



### GERMANY

**JOINT STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE DELEGATIONS OF ALBANIA, ANDORRA, AUSTRALIA, AUSTRIA, BELGIUM, BRAZIL, BULGARIA, CANADA, CHILE, COLOMBIA, COSTA RICA, CROATIA, CYPRUS, THE CZECH REPUBLIC, DENMARK, ECUADOR, ESTONIA, FINLAND, FRANCE, GEORGIA, GERMANY, GREECE, HUNGARY, ICELAND, IRELAND, ITALY, LATVIA, LIECHTENSTEIN, LITHUANIA, LUXEMBOURG, MALTA, MEXICO, MONACO, MONTENEGRO, THE NETHERLANDS, NEW ZEALAND, NORTH MACEDONIA, NORWAY, 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 TO THE OPCW AT THE FIFTH SPECIAL SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE STATES PARTIES TO REVIEW THE OPERATION OF THE CHEMICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION REGARDING COOPERATION WITH NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS AND THEIR INCLUSION IN THE WORK OF THE OPCW, INCLUDING THEIR ATTENDANCE AT SESSIONS OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE STATES PARTIES**

Participation of civil society in the shaping of international relations is today a regular and welcome feature. Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) contribute critical expertise and increase inclusivity and transparency of international decision-making processes. Regarding the Chemical Weapons Convention and the 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 of 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 Fifth 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 Operation of the Chemical Weapons Convention, and for it to be published on the OPCW external server and public website.

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