



OPCW

Conference of the States Parties

Sixteenth Session
28 November – 2 December 2011

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DECISION

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT NETWORK FOR VICTIMS OF CHEMICAL WEAPONS AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A VOLUNTARY TRUST FUND FOR THIS PURPOSE

The Conference of the States Parties,

Mindful that the States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention (hereinafter “the Convention”) are determined for the sake of mankind, to exclude completely the possibility of the use of chemical weapons;

Mindful also that the States Parties to the Convention undertake never under any circumstances to use chemical weapons and to engage in any military preparations to use these weapons;

Recognising that chemical weapons have been used in the past, resulting in deaths and casualties, and that those injured in chemical warfare suffered from the effects the rest of their lives, and **bearing in mind** the commitment of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) to eliminate the threat of chemical weapons completely;

Recalling that the Conference of the States Parties (hereinafter “the Conference”) at its Tenth Session endorsed a proposal for the establishment of a Day of Remembrance for all victims of chemical warfare, and for the dedication in The Hague of a permanent memorial to them, and that it decided that the Day of Remembrance would be observed on 29 April each year—the date in 1997 on which the Convention entered into force;

Recalling further that the Executive Council (hereinafter “the Council”) invited the Director-General, on behalf of the OPCW, to convey annually on 16 March to the authorities and inhabitants of the city of Halabja, Iraq, and on 28 June to the authorities and inhabitants of the city of Sardasht, the Islamic Republic of Iran, statements in memory of the chemical weapons attacks thereon, and to express sympathy for the victims;

Recalling that, at its Fifteenth Session, the Conference requested the Council to continue its deliberations, with a view to developing further measures for emergency assistance to Member States, including with regard to the victims of chemical weapons, taking into account all proposals from the States Parties relevant to this issue that were being brought



forward to the Conference at its Fifteenth Session and/or the Council (paragraph 9.17 of C-15/5, dated 3 December 2010); and

Noting that, pursuant to Article VIII of the Convention, the Conference may make recommendations and take decisions on any questions, matters, or issues related to the Convention, raised by a State Party or brought to its attention by the Council, and that it shall act in order to promote the object and purpose of the Convention;

Hereby:

1. **Decides**, after a trust fund has been set up in accordance with paragraph 2 below, to establish the International Support Network for Victims of Chemical Weapons (hereinafter “the Network”);
2. **Decides** that all activities undertaken in the context of the Network are to be financed solely from voluntary contributions, without any financial implications for the regular budget through the Trust Fund for the International Support Network for Victims of Chemical Weapons, to be established by the Director-General;
3. **Requests** the Technical Secretariat to:
 - (a) **administer** a trust fund, without any financial implications for the regular budget, to fund the activities identified in this paragraph in accordance with the applicable Financial Regulations;
 - (b) **establish** contacts, as appropriate, with international, regional, and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) relevant for the Network;
 - (c) **establish** links to appropriate sources of information relevant to the victims of chemical weapons, and establish and administer a subpage on the OPCW official website to contain information on the history of use of chemical weapons, details of relevant international and regional organisations, and of NGOs mandated to provide assistance to victims of chemical weapons, and information on international events to promote the Convention, at which victims of chemical weapons and representatives from relevant NGOs could participate; and
 - (d) **establish** a databank (on the website referred to in subparagraph (c) above) to include information on offers by Member States relevant to the victims of chemical weapons and information on needs of the victims of chemical weapons, as submitted by the Member States; and
4. **Encourages** the States Parties in a position to do so to actively support the Network, inter alia, by:
 - (a) providing financial contributions to the trust fund;
 - (b) providing medical treatment to victims of chemical weapons in their countries;

- (c) organising events to raise awareness at the national level on victims of chemical weapons;
 - (d) exchanging information on experiences related to treatment of victims of chemical weapons, through e.g. providing research scholarships to the developing States Parties in the field of the treatment of victims of chemical weapons; and
 - (e) facilitating materials- and equipment-related assistance to States Parties to assist and support the victims of chemical weapons; and
5. **Requests** the Director-General to report every two years, through the Council, to the Conference at its regular sessions on the status of implementation of this decision.

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