

**Twenty-Sixth Session of the Conference of the  
States Parties (CSP-26) to the Chemical Weapons Convention  
The Hague, The Netherlands  
November 29 – December 3, 2021**

NGO Statement 3:

***Chemical Weapons Victims' Medical Needs***

Statement prepared by:<sup>1</sup>

Homeyra Karimivahed (The Organization for Defending Sardasht Victims of Chemical  
Weapons);

Kathryn Millett (Biosecure Ltd);

Elaheh Pooyandeh (Tehran Peace Museum)

***Chairperson, Director General, Distinguished Delegates, CWC Coalition Colleagues, Ladies and Gentlemen,***

We take this opportunity to express our appreciation for the international attention paid to the use of chemical weapons consequences. The consistent presence at annual OPCW meetings of chemical weapons victims' groups demonstrates the impact chemical weapons have wrought on humanity. Indeed, history and the awakened human conscience will not forget the catastrophes of the use of chemical weapons.

Our message is one of peace and reconciliation in the world. We strive to work with the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) to better and more effectively implement the Chemical Weapons Convention objectives.

The right to human health is enshrined in the Statute of the World Health Organization and Article 25 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. National medical communities consistently struggle to understand and provide adequate care for the unique needs of victims of chemical weapons. We therefore call upon the international community and international organizations, including the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), to ensure victims of chemical weapons are provided the necessary and appropriate care to allow them to spend the rest of their lives in peace and comfort. Chemical weapons victims must be provided easy access to the medicine and medical equipment they need. Despite the best efforts of the medical communities in affected countries, many victims of chemical weapons exposure continue to suffer severe long-term health effects which only increase and become more significant as affected populations age. For the victims in such conditions, availability of medical

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<sup>1</sup> Please note: the following statement is a reflection of the views and opinions of the authors and the co-signers, and does not necessarily reflect the views of all organizations and individuals within the CWC Coalition.

equipment is a critical issue, while support is also needed by the victims' families and communities.

We urge the OPCW and the international community to consider further education, professional training, and programs to assist victims of chemical weapons in various professions, including medical, psychology, law, chemistry, engineering, and other fields. Furthermore, countries and companies responsible for the use of chemical weapons should be held accountable and responsible for allocating the necessary resources and facilities to train specialized and efficient indigenous personnel to meet the medical needs of chemical victims.

We also recall the recommendation of the 2018 OPCW International Symposium on Medical Treatment of Chemical Warfare Victims for the establishment of an international network of clinicians, scientists, academia and civil society, and a Forum to exchange experiences and best practices in the treatment of and support for chemical weapons victims as well as to develop scientific collaboration and other activities.

Assisting the victims of chemical weapons use is not merely a humanitarian afterthought: it is a humanitarian imperative. More must be done by States, the OPCW, and the international community to better understand and respond appropriately to the complex needs of all chemical weapons victims. Civil society stands ready to work hand-in-hand with you to better the lives of those who have so egregiously suffered.

We thank you for your kind attention and request this statement be made part of the official published proceedings of this Conference.

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**Statement Co-Signers\*:**

Gen. (Ret.) Mansour Aburashid, *Chairman of Amman Center for Peace & Development*

Lucky Kingsley Amoh-Kodie, *Linx Foundation*

Samuel Asamoah Asare, *High Hope*

Kwame Baah, *Margliz Foundation*

Dr. Daniel Esteban, *Consejo Argentino de Relaciones Internacionales (CARI)*

Alexander Ghionis, *The Harvard Sussex Program*

Mohammad Reza Hajipour, *Society for Chemical Weapons Victims Support Fars (SCWVSF)*

Kheder Kareem, *International Peace Bureau (IPB)*

Mustafa Kibaroglu, *MEF University, Istanbul, Turkey*

Daryl G. Kimball, *Arms Control Association*

Irene Kornelly, *Chair of Colorado Citizens' Advisory Commission*

Gregory D. Koblenz, *Associate Professor, Schar School of Policy and Government, George Mason University; Scientists Working Group on Biological and Chemical Security, Center for Arms Control and Non-Proliferation*

Benjamín Ruiz Loyola, *Facultad de Química, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México*

Kathryn Millett, *Biosecure Ltd*

Thomas Kwame Osei, *Farmers Care Foundation*

Animesh Roul, *Society for the Study of Peace and Conflict, New Delhi (INDIA)*

Christopher Sykes, *CWC Coalition*

Ralf Trapp, *International Disarmament Consultant, France*

Deborah Klein Walker, *American Public Health Association*

Dr. Paul Walker, *Arms Control Association*

Dr. Jean Pascal Zanders, *The Trench*

**\*Note:** Endorsement by these individuals does not represent endorsement by the organization they are affiliated with.