



Joint Statement Regarding CSP Rejections by the General Committee

Statement Organized by the CWC Coalition¹

Chairperson, Distinguished Delegates of the General Committee,

It is generally recognized that important multilateral treaties and organizations require global recognition and active involvement by civil society to reach universality, improve national implementation, and promote capacity-building and public awareness at the national and regional levels.

As stated by Director-General H.E. Fernando Arias, “The civil society community of non-governmental organizations, researchers, scientists, and other relevant stakeholders are essential partners in achieving the OPCW’s mission and raising awareness about the risks posed by certain chemicals.”

According to [RC-3/DEC. 2](#), Amendment of Rule 33 of the Rules of Procedure of the Conference of the States Parties with Respect to Attendance of Non-Governmental Organizations at Meetings of Special Sessions of the Conference of the States Parties to Review the Operation of the Chemical Weapons Convention, it is agreed that:

“Representatives of non-governmental organisations may attend the plenary sessions of the Conference, and participate in the activities of review conferences, in accordance with such rules or guidelines as the Conference has approved.”

The amended rules/guidelines provide exactly two eligibility criteria for attendance of non-governmental organizations:

1. the NGO has been previously approved, or has been recommended for approval by the General Committee, for attendance of a session of the Conference; and
2. the activities/interests of the NGO [are] demonstrably relevant to the object and purpose of the Convention.

¹ The following statement reflects 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.

A small number of NGOs with activities/interests that are demonstrably relevant to the object and purpose of the Convention have been rejected this year. Several of these organizations have been routinely rejected for years.

There is no transparency from the General Committee about why these organizations were rejected. The rejected organizations cover sensitive topics in their work. Nonetheless, their work is relevant to the object and purpose of the CWC, thus satisfying the eligibility criteria. Members of the General Committee cannot reject an NGO that meets the eligibility criteria on the grounds that they disagree with the opinion of the NGO.

We request that the General Committee must provide, in writing, an explanation of each decision to reject an NGO. It is important to know on what basis these organizations are being rejected, since they seemingly meet the one criteria that can be controlled by the applicant NGO. We will not be able to remedy this issue if we do not know why these organizations are being rejected.

Furthermore, the NGO application process for CSP is out of step with the general practices of other international WMD treaty conferences. We look forward to working with you to remedy this issue so that NGOs can continue to play an important role in achieving a world free of chemical weapons.

List of Endorsers*

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Fadel Abdulghany, Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR)

Charles Aboagye, Margliz Foundation

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Douglas Boateng, Linx Foundation

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Sharon Dolev, Middle East Treaty Organization

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