

NGO Joint Statement

“Completion of Chemical Weapons Destruction in the United States”

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Mr. Chairman, Mr. Director General, Distinguished Delegates and Guests,

The destruction of the two chemical weapons stockpiles at Pueblo Chemical Depot and the Blue Grass Army Depot are complete. Destruction at these last two sites in the United States has been accomplished without injury to the workers, the community or the environment. It is the many innovations used at Pueblo and Blue Grass that has ensured that the current treaty deadline of September 30, 2023 was met.

Under the auspices of the Assembled Chemical Weapons Alternatives Program and the United States Department of Defense, the PCAPP complex and BGCAPP carried out the OPCW principles of citizen and community involvement, including a Citizens Advisory Commission, and worker, stakeholder and environmental safety and transparency. These principles are often difficult to maintain over a long period of time, so constant vigilance was necessary. These principles, emphasizing public involvement and dialogue, were initiated early in the planning process and will be continued throughout the closure process.

The PCAPP and BGCAPP facilities are planning for closure and the future of these sites. Extensive cleanup, decontamination, equipment removal and demolition has begun. This process will take a minimum of 2-4 years. The workforce at each site is also preparing for their future by re-training and up-grading their professional skills.

The accomplishments at Blue Grass and Pueblo could not have happened without integration and cooperation between the military, regulators, elected officials, the communities, and the OPCW Technical Secretariat. This model of transparency and dialogue between all interested parties establishes a unique and successful model for addressing complex issues through cooperation rather than confrontation.

Thank you, for the opportunity to provide you with a glimpse into the US chemical weapons destruction program in Pueblo and Blue Grass. We request that this statement be a part of the record of the CSP-28.

Statement Endorsements (Affiliations are listed for identification purposes only):

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