



**NEW ZEALAND STATEMENT
BY H.E. AMBASSADOR SUSANNAH GORDON PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF
NEW ZEALAND TO THE OPCW AT THE TWENTY NINTH SESSION OF THE
CONFERENCE OF THE STATES PARTIES**

Thank you Chair.

New Zealand and Mexico circulated an information paper under this agenda item. It sets out a proposed new rehiring policy, and we have proposed it could be discussed next year at the March Executive Council.

We see this proposal as a helpful follow-up to the Review Conference – it's a chance to build on the momentum of 2023. This issue has been discussed for some years, including last year as part of the tenure facilitation. My sense is that there is good support for it, and that it is the last piece of the puzzle. Along with Mexico, we have discussed it with a number of delegations over the recent period. I heard positive comments in national statements from a number of member states from across the regional groups. Thank you all for the support and encouragement.

So, in shaping this proposal, there are things we all agree on. We agree that the non-career nature of the OPCW is important as this encourages renewal and exchange of skills and knowledge between the OPCW and other organisations and member states. But we also agree that limited flexibility is needed in a small number of cases. This is why we agreed on the tenure policy amendments last year.

There is a feeling amongst us that the Technical Secretariat needs a little bit more flexibility, for a small number of positions, to bring back former OPCW staff, to ensure the OPCW has the right people with the right skill sets in the right roles. These people are often quite specialised.

We all support the Director General's efforts to recruit on the widest geographic basis possible, and to work towards gender balance. We think this proposal will help in a small way on these issues. We also know that this change would bring the OPCW closer to with the limited flexibility to the tenure policies of similar organisations such as the IAEA and CTBTO.

Rehiring would be in exceptional circumstances – hence limit of 6 positions at any one time. This is less than 1% of the professional staff. There would be a three-year stand-down period between contracts- so it's not a "contract roll-over with a sabbatical" but a genuine re-hire.

Overall, we value the current HR model for the OPCW, but we think with a small amount of extra flexibility – such as in this very modest proposal - we can make sure our organisation is staffed with the highest calibre people.

Thanks again for all the support from around the membership.

Thank you Chair.