

# Joint statement of the Nordic States Parties Denmark, Finland Iceland, Norway and Sweden to the 107<sup>th</sup> Session of the Executive Council

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## Agenda Item 13 – Follow-up to the Review Conferences – Engagement with Civil Society

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Mr. Chair,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Nordic States Parties Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Sweden, and my own country, Norway.

The Nordic States Parties would like to thank the Ambassadors of Costa Rica and Germany for their leadership in the ongoing informal discussions on engagement with civil society. The discussions are both fruitful and important.

Regular interaction with external stakeholders, such as chemical industry associations, NGOs, think tanks, academia and others, is of invaluable importance to the advancement of the Chemical Weapons Convention.

Chair,

It's our firm conviction that we, as States Parties to the Convention, and the OPCW as an organization, benefit from dialogue with civil society, not only during the Conferences of States Parties, but also between them.

We are concerned by the current regional imbalance of Civil Society organizations accredited to the CSPs. GRULAC and Eastern Europe are currently underrepresented with accredited organisations.

It's our conviction that the OPCW would benefit from a more streamlined, transparent and efficient accreditation process for NGOs wishing to observe the Conferences of States Parties. A State Party opposing accreditation of an NGO should be requested to share the reasons for its opposition. This would enhance the integrity of the decision-making process and the predictability for relevant NGOs - in all regions.

The Nordic States Parties will continue to follow this process carefully.

Thank you.