

NGO Joint Statement

Countering WMD Disinformation

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29th Conference of States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention, The Hague, The Netherlands, 25 November – 29 November 2024

Dear Chairperson, Director-General, Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

This year, we have seen an increase in malicious disinformation campaigns and information manipulation tactics that negatively impact cooperative threat reduction efforts and may erode trust in our international disarmament treaties and their safeguarding institutions, including the OPCW.

Disinformation campaigns across the spectrum of Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) domains pose a critical threat to international security. Nonproliferation and disarmament activities are particularly vulnerable to these hostile tactics due to their technical complexity and dual-use nature. These disinformation campaigns can undermine trust in the rules-based international system and the multilateral disarmament for a that help to support it, they can jeopardize the hard work of the OPCW in upholding the Chemical Weapons Convention and can provide opportunities to amplify fear and confusion among the general public. Failing to take decision action could allow disinformation to weaken critical disarmament agreements, to destabilize multilateral institutions, heighten tensions within the global community, and severely impede peaceful international cooperation and support.

We are pleased to note the priority and commitments that multilateral institutions including the OPCW, as well as many Member States and delegates here today, have placed upon combatting and countering disinformation. The international community has a responsibility to continue to identify and address disinformation campaigns as they are developed and to proactively combat these false narratives.

As an exemplar of this effort, the 31 members of the G7-led Global Partnership Against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction launched the Countering WMD Disinformation initiative. Further endorsed by the G7 Rapid Response Mechanism, the initiative is a coordinated, multi-institutional and multi-disciplinary effort to understand and counter state-sponsored or state-adjacent disinformation across the CBRN spectrum.

We encourage all delegations to engage with this initiative, to help prevent and counter harmful disinformation related to all forms of WMD, to support the work of the OPCW, and to work towards a safer and more secure world.

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