



OPCW

Conference of the States Parties

Twenty-Second Session
27 November – 1 December 2017

C-I/DEC.55/Rev.1
30 November 2017
Original: ENGLISH

DECISION¹

OPCW MEDIA AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS POLICY

The Conference

Recalling that the Commission, in PC-X/23, paragraph 6.11, provisionally approved the Draft OPCW Media and Public Affairs Policy, as attached to PC-X/A/WP.5 and amended by Working Group A in PC-X/A/3, paragraph 6.2, including the “Indicative List of Areas in which Information may be Routinely Provided by the OPCW to the News Media and the General Public”, annexed to the attachment to PC-X/A/WP.5, pending the adoption of other relevant documents including the Draft OPCW Policy on Confidentiality;

Recalling further that the Commission, in PC-XI/17, paragraph 7.7, adopted the Draft OPCW Policy on Confidentiality, as annexed to PC-XI/B/WP.8 and amended by Working Group B in PC-XI/B/12, paragraph 7.2;

Bearing in mind that the Commission recommended in paragraph 46.4 of its Final Report that the Conference adopt the above-mentioned Draft OPCW Media and Public Affairs Policy, including the “Indicative List of Areas in which Information may be Routinely Provided by the OPCW to the News Media and the General Public”;

Hereby:

Adopts the OPCW Media and Public Affairs Policy, including the “Indicative List of Areas in which Information may be Routinely Provided by the OPCW to the News Media and the General Public”, annexed hereto.

Annex: OPCW Media and Public Affairs Policy

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The revised version of the OPCW Media and Public Affairs Policy, including the “Indicative List of Areas in which Information may be Routinely Provided by the OPCW to the News Media and the General Public”, annexed hereto, contains amendments approved by the Conference of the States Parties at its Twenty-Second Session (C-22/DEC.16, dated 30 November 2017).



Annex

OPCW MEDIA AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS POLICY

1. Introduction

This document, which sets out the OPCW Media and Public Affairs Policy (hereinafter referred to as “the Media Policy”) for all OPCW organs, OPCW personnel and their activities, will apply to contacts with the news media or with any individual who is not employed or contracted by the Organisation nor authorised by a State Party in relation to implementation of the Convention. It will cover oral, written, electronic or any other communications.

The implementation of the Media Policy shall be consistent with the OPCW Policy on Confidentiality.

Any references to OPCW personnel or staff herein shall include any consultants and other contracted personnel.

2. Principles and objectives

To the extent needed to facilitate the achievement of the object and the purpose of the Convention, the implementation of the Media Policy shall assist the news media and the general public in understanding the tasks and the activities of the Organisation. It shall promote the image of the OPCW as an accessible international organisation which provides balanced, timely and objective information.

3. Responsibilities

The Director-General shall be responsible for ensuring that the Media Policy is implemented at all levels of the Organisation. The Director-General shall issue appropriate administrative directives and shall take other necessary measures for the proper implementation of that policy by the OPCW personnel.

4. OPCW contacts

4.1 Openness

The OPCW will endeavour to be as open and accessible as possible in providing factual information on its activities and shall conduct an effective Public Affairs Programme with respect to the news media and the general public. An indicative list of areas in which information may be routinely provided by the Organisation for these purposes, is set out in the Annex to this Media Policy. Such information shall not be related to a specific State Party or site.

4.2 Headquarters activities

- (a) The Director-General and, under his responsibility and acting in consultation with the relevant units of the OPCW Technical Secretariat, the Public Affairs Branch, shall have the authority to handle routinely all dealings of the OPCW Technical Secretariat with the news media and the general public.

- (b) The Director-General may release to the news media or the general public information specifically related to a State Party only at the request of or with the express consent of the State Party to which this information refers, unless otherwise authorised by the Executive Council.

4.3 Inspection activities

4.3.1 Inspection teams

- (a) The inspection team leader shall be responsible for ensuring strict adherence to the Media Policy by all members of the inspection team, including, when present, qualified experts designated by the Director-General under paragraph 7, Part XI of the Verification Annex. Members of the inspection team shall be fully conversant with the Media Policy and the relevant administrative directives of the Director-General.
- (b) Members of the inspection teams shall neither initiate contacts with, nor comment on, any aspect of a specific inspection activity in a State Party for the benefit of the news media or the general public. If required, without prejudice to the provision of subparagraph 2(c) (ii) of the Annex on Confidentiality and after prior authorisation by the Director-General, the inspection team leader may make statements to the news media or the general public. Any such statement should be in conformity with standard press guidelines on the general verification and inspection programme, which will be developed by the Organisation. The inspected State Party shall be consulted, prior to contact with the news media, on the advisability of establishing such contacts and of making such statements.
- (c) All references to inspections, inspection teams, inspectors, and inspected States Parties in this Policy shall be taken to mean, and shall therefore apply, *mutatis mutandis*, to any other operational deployments including, but not limited to, contingency operations, fact-finding missions and clarification activities.

4.3.2 Observer

The requesting State Party shall be fully responsible for and shall take all necessary measures to ensure that the Observer complies with all relevant provisions of the Media Policy. For his/her part, the Observer therefore is to adhere to and be bound by the same provisions of the Media Policy that apply to members of the inspection team and is not to take any independent action in this regard.

4.3.3 Inspected State Party

- (a) The inspected State Party shall ensure that the inspection team is not subjected to attention from the news media of a type which could impair the inspection team activities during the In-Country Period.
- (b) When the inspected State Party considers it desirable, for a better public understanding of the background to the verification activities, to arrange contacts with the news media with the participation of the inspection team

leader, the Representative of the inspected State Party and the inspection team leader will consult, prior to contact with the news media, in accordance with the provisions of subparagraph 4.3.1(b) above.

- (c) The rights and responsibilities of the inspected State Party referred to throughout this policy shall apply, *mutatis mutandis*, to any other State Party which is involved in any other operational deployments including, but not limited to, contingency operations, fact-finding missions and clarification activities.

Annex

Indicative List of Areas in which Information may be Routinely Provided by the OPCW to the News Media and the General Public

1. General information on:

- (a) OPCW structure, offices, budget, technical support and staffing policy and patterns;
- (b) activities of the OPCW, including its cooperation with States Parties;
- (c) OPCW cooperation with the United Nations and other intergovernmental organisations;
- (d) contacts with scientific and research institutions and support received from other institutions for the purpose of the Convention;
- (e) chemical industries, promotion of trade in chemicals and related equipment, and scientific and technological developments in the chemical field;
- (f) national bodies concerned with the implementation of the Convention, including National Authorities, chemical industry associations etc.;
- (g) progress towards the destruction of chemical weapons, old chemical weapons and abandoned chemical weapons; and
- (h) verification activities, including technology and methodology applied in on-site inspections.

2. Other materials based on:

- (a) the contents of the Convention and its implementation procedures, e.g. declaration forms, model agreements and inspection procedures;
- (b) non-confidential reports or parts of reports of the Organisation on the implementation of the Convention, as envisaged in Article VIII (subparagraph 38(b)), taking into account possible decisions of the Conference, the Executive Council or the Director-General not to make such reports or certain parts of them public;
- (c) official-series documents that are not subject to circulation restrictions. These include official statements by States Parties during sessions or meetings of the Conference of the States Parties or of the Executive Council unless decided otherwise by the State Party delivering the statement; and
- (d) publicly-available materials provided by States Parties concerning their respective policies having a bearing on the implementation of the Convention.