

NGO Joint Statement
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NGO Statement on the Intersection of Artificial Intelligence and the Chemical Weapons Convention

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Mr. Chairman, Director-General, Distinguished Delegates, Civil Society Colleagues:

As advancements in artificial intelligence (AI) continue to transform the global technological landscape, civil society calls for proactive measures under the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) to address emerging AI-driven threats. AI can improve verification, monitoring, and preventive actions within CWC mandates. However, it also poses unique risks in both civilian and military applications.

We, as civil society, have noted the rapid evolution of international efforts to understand and govern AI in the chemical domain. Since CSP-29, several significant initiatives have deepened global attention and institutional engagement on this issue, including:

- **The October 2024 Global Conference on Artificial Intelligence and the CWC in Rabat, Morocco**, which examined both opportunities and risks of AI's integration into chemical security and disarmament.
- **The June 2024 Berlin Conference on AI and Weapons of Mass Destruction**, hosted by the German Federal Foreign Office, which expanded global dialogue across scientific, policy, and diplomatic communities.
- **The April 2024 OPCW expert meeting** with IBM, Google DeepMind, Accenture, and academic institutions, exploring how AI impacts verification, analysis, and assistance.
- **The Temporary Working Group on AI (established January 2025)**, consisting of 15 experts tasked with assessing AI's relevance to the Convention.
- **The OPCW AI Research Challenge**, funding four teams to explore practical AI applications for strengthening verification and detection.
- **The June 2025 Shanghai Workshop on Artificial Intelligence and Chemical Safety and Security Management**, the OPCW's first AI-focused capacity-building programme.

Together, these initiatives establish a strong foundation for the OPCW's future work on AI—but they also highlight the need for sustained engagement, broader participation, and long-term resourcing. They show that AI-related risks are advancing faster than existing oversight mechanisms can adapt. They demonstrate the importance of structured, inclusive processes that draw on technical, scientific, and civil society expertise. And they underscore that without dedicated resources and capacity-building—especially for CSOs—the global community will be unable to fully anticipate or mitigate emerging AI-driven chemical threats.

Mr. Chairman,

AI's impact on chemical weapons regulation presents specific challenges and opportunities for the OPCW. Key developments include drones for chemical dispersal, automated and miniaturized laboratories for covert operations, 3D-printed equipment components, and nanotechnology that enables discrete laboratory functions. Enhanced detection systems for metals and chemicals, along with algorithms and computational models capable of generating novel chemicals, further complicate the regulatory landscape. Advances in

medical countermeasures and new materials for protective equipment reinforce the need to anticipate how AI might transform the chemical threat environment.

AI's dual-use nature underscores the urgency of establishing robust regulatory frameworks that prevent AI from being harnessed for chemical warfare or terrorism purposes.

CWC Coalition advocates for the following key principles and actions within the OPCW framework:

1. Integrate AI to strengthen CWC verification and implementation.

AI-driven technologies must be incorporated into OPCW strategies to enhance detection, anomaly identification, and real-time monitoring, ensuring early identification of potential misuse of dual-use chemicals.

2. Accelerate normative development on AI in the chemical domain.

States Parties should prioritize the development of international norms governing permissible uses of AI in chemical-related industries—drawing from the Rabat and Berlin conferences, the Temporary Working Group on AI, the AI Research Challenge, and the Shanghai capacity-building programme.

3. Ensure sustained and structured civil society participation in all AI–CWC processes.

Civil society contributes essential technical expertise, early-warning capacity, and accountability. CSOs must be included in follow-up processes to these conferences, TWG deliberations, future rounds of the AI Research Challenge, and upcoming AI-focused workshops and training sessions.

4. Provide resources and capacity-building support for civil society.

To contribute meaningfully to AI–CW risk assessment, research, training, and public awareness, CSOs require dedicated funding, access to tools, and inclusion in OPCW-led capacity-building programmes. Empowering civil society strengthens the global chemical safety and security system.

5. Promote responsible research and transparent sharing of AI tools and findings.

The OPCW should encourage open research collaboration on AI applications relevant to CWC compliance, ensuring that ethical safeguards and non-proliferation principles guide the development and deployment of these technologies.

6. Increase transparency and accountability for AI systems with autonomous or military applications.

AI-enabled autonomous systems raise serious governance challenges. States Parties should support transparency measures to ensure these technologies remain strictly within peaceful and protective uses.

Mr. Chairman,

CWC Coalition remains committed to supporting the OPCW's mission of a world free of chemical weapons. We look forward to ongoing dialogue and collaborative action, believing that collective vigilance, inclusive participation, adequate resources, and ethical AI governance will be vital to achieving lasting peace and security.