



ORGANISATION FOR THE PROHIBITION  
OF CHEMICAL WEAPONS  
**AUGUST 11 - 15**

wfuna



World Federation of United Nations Associations

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# **SIMULATION**

# **HANDBOOK**

ORGANISATION FOR THE PROHIBITION OF CHEMICAL  
WEAPONS (OPCW)

# ORGANISATION FOR THE PROHIBITION AGAINST CHEMICAL WEAPONS SIMULATION HANDBOOK

## OVERVIEW OF THE ORGANISATION FOR THE PROHIBITION OF CHEMICAL WEAPONS (OPCW)

The Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) is the international body responsible for implementing the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), a multilateral disarmament treaty that bans the development, production, acquisition, stockpiling, transfer, and use of chemical weapons. The CWC was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1992 and entered into force on 29 April 1997. The OPCW, headquartered in The Hague, Netherlands, began operations the same year. With 193 States Parties, the CWC is one of the most widely adhered-to disarmament treaties in history, reflecting a near-universal rejection of chemical weapons.

The OPCW's mandate extends beyond disarmament. In addition to overseeing the verified destruction of declared chemical weapons stockpiles and production facilities, the organisation conducts inspections of chemical industry facilities, provides assistance and protection against chemical threats, supports international cooperation in the peaceful uses of chemistry, and investigates alleged uses of chemical weapons. In recognition of its work, the OPCW was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2013.

# Structure

The OPCW has three principal organs, established by the Chemical Weapons Convention:

## THE CONFERENCE OF THE STATES PARTIES (CSP)

The Conference of the States Parties is the principal and plenary organ of the OPCW. It is composed of all States Parties to the Convention and normally meets annually. The CSP oversees the implementation of the CWC, considers compliance issues, adopts the OPCW's budget and programme of work, elects members of the Executive Council, and takes decisions on major policy and institutional matters. Decisions are generally taken by consensus, reflecting the Convention's emphasis on cooperative disarmament, though voting procedures exist when consensus cannot be reached.

## THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL (EC)

The Executive Council is the executive decision-making body of the OPCW and is composed of 41 States Parties, elected on a rotational basis according to equitable geographical distribution. The Council meets several times per year and is responsible for supervising the activities of the Technical Secretariat, promoting the effective implementation of the Convention, addressing cases of non-compliance, and making recommendations to the Conference. Many sensitive compliance and verification issues are first addressed within the Executive Council.

## THE TECHNICAL SECRETARIAT (TS)

The Technical Secretariat is the professional and administrative arm of the OPCW. Headed by the Director-General, it carries out inspections, monitors destruction activities, provides technical assistance, supports capacity-building and training, and prepares reports for the policy-making organs. Inspectors and technical experts of the Secretariat play a central role in ensuring the credibility and effectiveness of the OPCW's verification regime.

## WORKING GROUP

Working Groups (WGs) are often established to handle specific, focused tasks for addressing technical challenges. While often "open-ended" (meaning any States Party can join), they are primarily attended by technical experts, specialized advisers, or mid-level diplomats

# Structure (cont.)

## Key Types of Working Groups

- Open-Ended Working Groups (OEWGs): These are established for broad preparatory tasks, such as the Open-Ended Working Group for the Preparation of Review Conferences. While they are open to all States Parties, they primarily serve as a venue for intensive, line-by-line negotiation of documents before they reach the Plenary.
- Temporary Working Groups (TWGs): Often established by the Scientific Advisory Board (SAB), these are strictly technical. They consist of independent experts who provide specialized advice on emerging technologies, forensics, or biotoxins.
- Administrative/Technical Working Groups: These focus on niche areas like budgetary planning or legal interpretations of the Chemical Weapons Convention.

## SUBSIDIARY BODIES

These subsidiary bodies include:

- Scientific Advisory Board (SAB): Composed of independent experts, this board assesses and reports on developments in science and technology relevant to the Convention, providing specialized advice to the Director-General. [1]
  - Advisory Body on Administrative and Financial Matters (ABAF): Advises the States Parties and the Technical Secretariat on financial policies, budget preparation, and the overall programme of the organisation. [1]
  - Confidentiality Commission: A dedicated 20-member body responsible for settling disputes between States Parties regarding the protection of sensitive and classified information. [1, 2]
  - Advisory Board on Education and Outreach (ABEO): Advises the Director-General, policy-making organs, and member states on strategies for educational programmes and public outreach regarding the peaceful uses of chemistry. [1]
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# The Stages of Working Group Sessions

The simulation of the OPCW will focus on negotiating a text in a Working Group. It will be divided into the following segments:

## A. FIRST FORMAL MEETING TO:

1. Review and adopt the Organization of Work which details how long delegates have to deliver their statements during the General Debate and how the time will be organized during the time delegates will be negotiating in informal consultations. The presentation of the Organization of Work is the first order of business which must be adopted by consensus before the Working Group can begin its General Debate.
2. Engage in an Interactive Session with a UN expert to give delegates an opportunity to deepen their knowledge on the topic they will be debating. The Interactive Session will begin with a statement delivered by an expert followed by Q&A from the delegates.
3. Convene the General Debate where individual delegates speaking in their national capacity and/or on behalf of a political group will have an opportunity to make an opening statement on the topic that will be discussed. Any delegation or political group wishing to make a statement during the General Debate must subscribe to the Speakers List before the debate begins.

## B. INFORMAL CONSULTATIONS (WHERE RULES OF PROCEDURE ARE SUSPENDED) TO:

1. **Allow each regional group to draft a Decision.** This replaces the use of working papers which is followed in some Model UN conferences. Before delegates will be split into different regional groups, the Working Group must agree by consensus on a common structure for the operative section of the Decision.
2. **Merge the different drafts.** The regional groups must each choose a head delegate to lead the discussions on how to merge their different drafts into one Decision that is later reviewed paragraph by paragraph by the entire Working Group. Each group can change the head delegate leading the negotiations on their behalf as often as they want.
3. **Review the draft Decision line by line** to create a compilation text that contains a complete list of amendments proposed by delegates participating in the simulation. These amendments are neither friendly or unfriendly and are never voted on during informal consultations. Delegates will temporarily suspend the line by line after reviewing the preambular section to debate the amendments that have been proposed so far.

# The Stages of Working Group Sessions (cont.)

4. **Debate the amendments** proposed by delegates during the line by line review. During this stage of the deliberations, delegates talk to each other with the goal of reaching consensus on the amendments that have been proposed. An amendment cannot be accepted if one or more delegates have an objection to including it in the text. When this happens, delegates can agree to an alternative version of the amendment if that will address the objection that has been raised or if there is strong objection to the amendment from other delegates, the delegate who proposed it can withdraw it, if they so choose. Every time the wording of an entire paragraph has been agreed to by the Working Group it should be marked "Agreed ad ref" to indicate that the Working Group has temporarily agreed to the text in that paragraph until the entire negotiation process has been completed.
5. During the debate, delegates can choose to have the Chair moderate the debate of amendments or to do it by themselves. It is up to the Working Group to decide.
6. If there is an amendment that the delegates cannot agree on during informal consultations, the amendment should be "bracketed" or set aside for further discussion later on so that the Working Group can first focus on those amendments that are easier to reach agreement on.
7. After going through all the amendments proposed during the review of the preambular paragraphs at least once, the Working Group will return to those amendments that have been "bracketed" after the entire Decision has been reviewed.
8. Facilitators can be appointed to help delegates reach agreement on these amendments.
9. Once all of the amendments in the preambular section have been debated, this process is repeated in the operative section. All delegates review each operative paragraph and propose amendments and then engage in a debate on each one until there are no amendments left to discuss.
10. After all the amendments have been debated and all paragraphs are marked 'agreed ad ref', the Chair should scroll through the entire resolution paragraph and paragraph and ask the delegates to carefully read the text to make sure there are no further objections.
11. If new objections are raised, they are immediately debated until agreement has been reached on all of the new amendments and every paragraph is marked "Agreed ad ref".
12. If consensus has been reached early and time still remains in the Working Group, delegates can go back and add more text or even another sub-topic. If new text is added, it must be reviewed and any amendments that proposed to the new text must be debated in the manner set forth in this handbook.

# The Stages of Working Group Sessions (cont.)

## C. FINAL FORMAL MEETING

1. After the negotiations have been completed in informal consultations, delegates return to the Plenary for a final formal meeting to take action on the draft Decision. The Plenary is presided over by the President.
2. The Chair of the Working Group formally Introduces the draft Decision to the Plenary.
3. The draft Decision is adopted either by consensus (i.e., without voting) or by voting (if consensus has not been reached).
4. If consensus has not been reached and action will be taken by voting, the non-sponsors can introduce new amendments during the final formal meeting and put each amendment to a vote and/or put forth a motion to divide the resolution into separate votes and have the Plenary vote separately on individual paragraphs. The final step is to vote on the entire draft Decision. After the vote, non-sponsors can make take the floor to make an Explanation of Vote.
5. Motion to Divide the Resolution into Separate Votes: If consensus is not reached, during the final formal meeting to take action, non-sponsors can put forth a motion to divide the resolution into separate votes. This motion is made if a delegate would like to remove one or more paragraphs from the Decision. If there are any objections to this motion, the chair will give two speakers for and two speakers against the motion an opportunity to speak. After all speakers have finished, the motion it voted on. If it passes, then the Decision is first divided into one or more separate votes and then the entire resolution is voted on. If the motion fails, then the resolution is not divided into separate votes and the Plenary proceeds to vote on the entire resolution.
6. Motion to Adjourn Debate (also known as the No-Action Motion): This motion is only used during the final formal meeting when consensus has not been reached and the sponsors of a Decision want to stop an amendment that has been proposed by a non-sponsor from being adopted. In order for this motion to be considered, it has to be raised immediately after an amendment is introduced. Once voting has started it cannot be interrupted and the Chair will rule that the Motion is out of order. If there is an objection to the No-Action Motion, the Chair must give two speakers for and two speakers against the motion an opportunity to speak. After all speakers have finished, the motion is voted on. If it passes, then consideration of the amendment is terminated and not voted on. If there are other amendments then the Chair will allow them to be introduced and voted on unless the sponsors raise a new No-Action Motion.
7. When consensus is not reached, delegates are expected to make these motions without being prompted.
8. If consensus is reached, non-sponsors can make a statement that that allows them to disassociate from from one or more paragraphs in the Decision, if they so choose.

# Things to Know about the Rules of Procedure

1. When delivering a speech during the Opening Plenary or the first formal meeting of the Working Group, speeches cannot be interrupted. The Speakers List is followed until all speakers have had an opportunity to speak.
2. Passing notes during Formal Meetings is not allowed.
3. The presiding officer during meetings will never ask, "Are any points or motions on the floor?"
4. Parliamentary points (e.g., Points of Personal Privilege, Points of Information, and Points of Inquiry) and motions (e.g., Motion for Moderated or Unmoderated Caucuses, Motion to Set Agenda, Motions to Set Speaking Time, Motion to Move to Voting Procedures, etc.) are **not allowed** during the conference. These are parliamentary rules of procedure and they are not used at the United Nations because it is not a Parliament.
5. Delegates will not be allowed to yield their time to the Chair or another delegation.
6. The only point that is allowed during a formal meeting is a Point of Order, which is only to be used if a delegate feels the rules of procedure are not being following properly.
7. Delegates must raise a Point of Order without being prompted.
8. The Right of Reply is allowed during the General Debate if a delegation wishes to respond to a comment made during a speech that they find offensive. Any delegation wishing to exercise their right of reply must notify the secretary of their Working Group of their request. If granted by the Chair they must wait until the end of the Speakers List to reply. Each delegation can exercise their Right of Reply of maximum of two times during the General Debate.
9. Signatories are not required in order for a Decision to be considered. When there are multiple version of a draft Decisions on an agenda item, the Working Group will merge the drafts so that no more than one resolution is submitted to the Bureau for consideration.
10. During informal consultations, there will be no rules of procedure. Delegates are encouraged to work together to achieve consensus on the wording of the draft Decision that is under consideration.
11. The line by line review offers an opportunity for delegates to propose changes to the draft Decision.
12. During the line by line review delegates can indicate if they agree or disagree with the amendments that are proposed. Delegates must wait until the line by line review has been suspended or completed before they can begin debating the amendments that have been proposed.
13. If delegates are not able to reach consensus in the time it has available to negotiate the text, a delegate can request that the draft resolution be put to a vote during the final formal meeting.
14. Regardless of whether a resolution is adopted by consensus or by a vote, non-sponsors are allowed to make a statement during the final formal meeting of their Working Group to voice their reservations on specific parts of the text or to disassociate their government from a particular paragraph.

# Double Delegations: Procedures

In the simulation of GA Committees, two students will be assigned to represent the same country forming what is called as a double delegation. While this arrangement allows for collaboration and shared responsibility, it also requires a high level of coordination and discipline.

## 1. **General Principle**

A double delegation must always speak and act as one voice. At the United Nations, a Member State is represented by a single official position, even when multiple diplomats are present. The same principle applies in the simulation. Internal discussion and disagreement may occur privately, but they must never be expressed publicly during formal proceedings.

## 2. **What This Means in Practice**

### 3. **Drafting and Merging Resolutions (Vienna Formula)**

During the drafting process double delegates can work together or work on separate paragraphs but must agree on what they propose putting into the text of their resolution.

During the merging process only one delegate per country may:

Serve as a regional group leader or be designated as the lead negotiator speaking on behalf of the region the assigned country belongs to.

Double delegations must decide internally which delegate will assume this role at any given stage.

Delegates may alternate roles during different phases of the conference, but not simultaneously.

### 4. **General Discussion**

Only one delegate from each double delegation may take the floor during the General Discussion.

The statement must reflect a single, unified national position agreed upon by both delegates.

Delegations may divide preparation responsibilities, but public representation must be singular.

### 5. **Communication with Chairs and Head Delegates**

All messages (written or electronic) sent to the Chair, Head Delegate, or Secretariat must reflect the joint position of both delegates. Double delegations must coordinate before submitting Amendments, Requests, or Objections.

Conflicting or uncoordinated messages from the same country may be treated as procedural errors and may be disregarded.

# Double Delegations: Procedures (cont.)

## 6. **Submission of Amendments**

Double delegations must jointly agree on which amendments are submitted on behalf of their country.

Delegates may take turns submitting amendments, but each submission must reflect the agreed position of both delegates.

Amendments submitted without internal agreement may be ruled out of order.

## 7. **Debate on Amendments**

During debate on a specific amendment, only one delegate may argue on behalf of the country.

Delegates may alternate speaking roles across different amendments, but both delegates may not speak on the same amendment at the same time.

In smaller-group negotiations where multiple amendments are being debated simultaneously, each delegate may participate in a different group.

In all cases, coordination of positions is essential, and both delegates remain responsible for ensuring consistency.

## 8. **Statements After Adoption**

If statements are permitted after the adoption of a resolution or outcome document (e.g., explanations of position), the same procedures apply:

Only one delegate may speak on behalf of the country.

The statement must reflect the jointly agreed position of both delegates.

## 9. **Internal Coordination**

Delegates in a double delegation are strongly encouraged to:

Divide research and drafting tasks strategically,

Consult frequently during negotiations,

Agree in advance on priorities, red lines, and acceptable compromises.

Internal disagreement is a normal part of diplomacy—but it must never appear in formal debate, written submissions, or procedural exchanges.

## 10. **Key Reminder**

Double delegations mirror real-world diplomatic practice, where multiple officials represent a single national position. Success depends not on speaking more often, but on effective

# Terms Used in Global Model UN

1. **Bureau:** refers to the Chair, Vice-Chair, and Rapporteur who are officials elected by the General Assembly to preside over Working Group meetings.
  2. **Tabling a draft Decision:** refers to the act of submitting a draft Decision to the Bureau for consideration. This action does not require signatories.
  3. **Paragraphs:** Model UN conferences around the world are used to referring to the clauses or sub-clauses of an outcome document. At the United Nations, these are referred to as paragraphs and sub-paragraphs.
  4. **Consensus:** Consensus occurs when all of the delegations in a Working Group reach agreement on the wording of every paragraph in a draft Decision and are ready to adopt it without voting on it. This is the goal of the negotiation process.
  5. **Explanation of Position:** When consensus has been reached and a resolution is adopted without a vote, a non-sponsor is given the opportunity to make a statement about any reservations they may have about the draft Decision. It is possible to agree to adopt a resolution without a vote and still have elements of a resolution that the non-sponsor is not entirely pleased with. Or it may be to express their disappointment that something important to the non-sponsor was left out of the resolution.
  6. **Explanation of Vote:** When a resolution is adopted by taking a vote, a non-sponsor is given the opportunity to make a statement about any reservations they may have about the draft Decision. Or it may be to express their disappointment that something important to the non-sponsor was left out of the resolution.
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# Terms Not Used in Global Model UN

1. **Dais:** This term is not used at the UN and is therefore not a part of the terminology of UN4MUN. The proper term to use when referring to the officials presiding over a meeting is the Bureau.
  2. **Honourable Delegates or Honourable Chair:** These terms are used in a Parliament and since the UN is not a Parliament it is not appropriate to use them during the simulation of UN meetings. When making a statement during the General Debate, delegates should address his/her comments to the person presiding over the meeting (e.g., Mr./Madame President during Plenary meetings) and not to the delegates.
  3. **House:** In some conferences, the person presiding over a meeting might say, "Will the House come to order" if the delegates are making too much noise. Again, since the UN is not a Parliament, it is inappropriate to refer to the Assembly or a Working Group as the "House" when addressing delegates.
  4. **Director:** Most MUN conferences have a Director that oversees working papers and draft resolutions and acts as an expert on topics. UN4MUN does not have Directors. There is the Chair who presides over meetings and Secretariat staff or real UN experts who advise on topics being discussed in each Working Group
  5. **Friendly and Unfriendly amendments:** These terms are not used at the UN and do not apply the negotiation process in UN4MUN which focuses on reaching consensus among all delegates.
  6. **Moderated and Unmoderated Caucuses:** These terms do not exist at the UN. what does exist are Formal Informals and Informal Informals which are similar in some respects but differ in other respects (see definition above).
  7. **Clauses:** Model UN conferences around the world refer to the clauses of a draft resolution. In contrast, the editorial guidelines at the UN refer to them as paragraphs and sub-paragraphs
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# Drafting a Decision (cont.)

Every draft Decision is divided into two sections that consist of preambular and the operative paragraphs.

Preambular paragraphs begin with a word or phrase in the present participle (e.g., **Recalling**) and always ends with a semi-colon (;). Preambular paragraphs are not numbered.

Operative paragraphs begin with a word or phrase in the present tense (e.g., **Recognises**) and always end with a semi-colon except for the last operative paragraph that ends with a period.

The words or phrases used to begin a paragraph are always **bolded**.

The preambular paragraphs set the stage and context for the operative section.

The best way to learn about how to write a good Decision is to study and compare them. Here are some tips about what goes into a good resolution.

## TYPE OF CONTENT TO INCLUDE IN THE PREAMBLE

A good way to begin a draft Decision on the topic that will be discussed is to reaffirm the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on their Destruction:

### **The Conference of the States Parties,**

**Reaffirming** the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction (the Convention);

If there are other Decisions that the CSP has taken that are important to recall they would also be included in the preamble:

**Recalling** the decision of the Conference of the States Parties (the Conference) entitled...;

If the same word is used twice in a row to begin a paragraph, the second time it is used, the word 'also' is added and bolded (e.g., **Recalling also**). And if it is used three times in a row the third the word 'further' is used (e.g., **Recalling further**).

It is important to keep in mind, because the OPCW is mandated to enforce the Convention on Chemical Weapons, delegates need to be aware of the different Articles in the Convention so that they can reference appropriate sections that are linked to the broad areas they wish to focus on in their Decision. For example:

**Recalling** that Parts VI, VII, and VIII of the Verification Annex impose specific restrictions and obligations on States Parties...;

# Drafting a Decision (cont.)

The preamble is also the place note any concerns that are driving the debate of the agenda item that is under consideration:

**Expressing grave concern** that the threat of chemical weapons...;

If there are any actions that have had a positive impact they would also be noted in the Preamble:

**Commending** the ongoing work of...;

## CONTENT TO BE INCLUDED IN OPERATIVE PARAGRAPHS

The operative section begins with the following chapeau in bold:

**Hereby:**

Operative paragraphs should consist of recommended actions that address the concerns outlined in the preamble. These actions are typically targeted to three different entities. Some are addressed to the States Parties:

1. **Encourages** all States Parties to strengthen cooperation

Other actions are address to the OPCW Technical Secretariat:

5. **Requests** the Secretariat to examine and report...;

And finally, some actions are addressed to the Director-General:

7. **Decides** that the Director-General shall report to the Council...;

## EDITORIAL GUIDELINES

1. All verb and verb phrases use to begin either preambular or operative paragraphs should be bolded. Check the list of terms used in OPCW Decisions posted on the simulation page for common verbs and verb phrases that are acceptable to use in Decisions.
2. All paragraphs should end in a semi-colon (;), except for the very last paragraph of the Decision which should end in a period.
3. Sometimes a verb that begins a paragraph can be repeated more than once in a paragraph. When that occurs, it should be bolded each time. The second time it is used within the same paragraph add the word 'also' and if it is used a third time, add the word 'further':

# Drafting a Decision (cont.)

**Decides** that the continued possession and use of chemical weapons by the Syrian Arab Republic in Syria, and its failures to submit an accurate and complete declaration and to destroy all of its undeclared chemical weapons and production facilities, have caused serious damage to the object and purpose of the Convention, and decides also, pursuant to subparagraph 21(k) of Article VIII and paragraph 3 of Article XII of the Convention...

## ADDITIONAL DRAFTING TIPS WHEN WRITING OPCW DECISIONS

1. The proper and full title of the Chemical Weapons Convention is: the Convention on the prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction. The first time it occurs in a preambular paragraph of the Decision, the text adds, “(the Convention)” immediately after it to indicate that future references will only include this phrase rather than the full name.
2. Similarly, the first time recalling a decision of the Conference of the States Parties, you should use the entire name followed by “(the Conference)” immediately afterward to indicate that future references will only include this phrase rather than the full name. Conversely, you would never see the acronym appear first with the full name spelled out in parentheses, for example, CSP (Conference of States Parties). That would never occur in the text of a Decision.
3. In both instances, when the name of something is referred to more than once, the first time it occurs, the name is spelled out fully, followed by one word in parentheses that will be used to refer to that thing everywhere else it occurs in the document. You shouldn’t use the full name more than once in the document.
4. When mentioning Subsidiary Bodies in a Decision, it is not appropriate to write that the Conference of States Parties works in cooperation with any of these bodies because they are already entities within the OPCW. When a Subsidiary Body like the Scientific Advisory Board (SAB) is mentioned in the text, it is usually done to acknowledge one of its reports on the subject-matter that is being discussed and/or to highlight the importance of its work as illustrated in this example:

**Recognising** the extensive work of the Scientific Advisory Board (SAB) to identify riot control agents (RCAs) (Annex 1 to RC-4/DG.1, dated 30 April 2018) (hereinafter “the SAB Report”), and underlining the SAB’s explanation in its Report that central nervous system-acting chemicals (hereinafter “CNS-acting chemicals”) differ from RCAs, as they act primarily on the central nervous system and their effects are not usually confined to sensory irritation of a temporary nature...

5. When referring to something in a paragraph that is linked to one of the Articles of the Convention, the paragraph should reference the Article that it is linked to. For example, if I write,

**Affirming** the implementation of legal reforms that establish a national framework for enforcing the prohibitions set out in the Convention...

it would be best to insert the specific Article in the Convention that deals with the Implementation of legal reforms as illustrated in the following text.

# Drafting a Decision (cont.)

**Affirming** Article VII of the Convention that outlines National Implementation Measures for enforcing the prohibitions set out in the Convention...

[Please note that the word “Article” always begins with a Capital letter.]

6. Make sure that the text is not too vague about what you are trying to say. For example, if the text were to state:

**Cognisant** that gaps in national implementation undermine the Convention...

the text should make it clear what is being undermined. A stronger paragraph would begin with:

**Cognisant** that gaps in national implementation undermine the object and purpose of the Convention...

7. In the operative section of a Decision, which is introduced with the chapeau, **Hereby**, if a recommended action deals with enforcing the Convention in some way, the paragraph should begin with “**Decides**”:

**Decides** that the continued possession and use of chemical weapons by the Syrian Arab Republic in Syria, and its failures to submit an accurate and complete declaration and to destroy all of its undeclared chemical weapons and production facilities, have caused serious damage to the object and purpose of the Convention, and decides also, pursuant to subparagraph 21(k) of Article VIII and paragraph 3 of Article XII of the Convention, to recommend that States Parties take the following collective measures, in accordance with national laws...

If, on the other hand, a recommended action remains the prerogative of States Parties within the context of their own obligations to implement the Convention, it is better to begin the paragraph with words like “**Urges**,” “**Encourages**,” or “**Requests**”:

**Requests** the Secretariat to examine and report to the Council regarding types of cooperation and assistance it could provide to assist States Parties in developing national measures to prevent the transfer of toxic chemicals...

OR

**Encourages** all States Parties to strengthen cooperation to prevent the production, acquisition, and use of chemical weapons by non-State actors, including terrorist groups...

Since the issue of non-State actors is not addressed in the Convention, it would not be correct to begin the paragraph above with **Decides**. It must begin a verb that is phrased as a recommendation that leaves it up to the States Parties to implement.

8. When recommending actions to be taken, those actions should reference the specific entities within the OPCW that would need to implement them rather than recommending that the OPCW implement those actions. For example, instead of writing:

# Drafting a Decision (cont.)

**Encourages** the OPCW to strengthen international and regional training...

the text should state:

**Encourages** the Technical Secretariat to strengthen international and regional training...

9. It is also important to check if an action that is being recommended has already been implemented. In another simulation of the OPCW, delegates recommended the following:

**Calls upon** the Technical Secretariat to develop ethical guidelines regarding the study of emerging technologies as well as chemical research...

In fact, The Hague Ethical Guidelines were developed collaboratively by a global group of chemistry professionals, chemical practitioners, and scientists from over 20 countries. This effort was a German initiative that was facilitated by the OPCW through two workshops in 2015. Therefore, it would have been better if the text had recalled this and focused on a specific aspect of the guidelines that was relevant to the Decision that was adopted. Be careful to check whether recommendations that you are considering to be introduced have already been implemented.

10. When recommending an action you think should be taken, don't forget to make it clear who you want to implement the recommended action. In the text, the authors forget to mention who they were encouraging:

**Encourages** positive uses of new technologies such as AI, to help with the detection and destruction of chemical weapons...

A better way to word this paragraph would have been to write:

**Encourages** States Parties to support positive uses of new technologies such as AI, to help with the detection and destruction of chemical weapons...

11. It is important to keep in mind that the prohibition against chemical weapons is absolute. Therefore, the following paragraph would not be found in an OPCW Decision:

**Stresses** the need to increase prevention against illicit manufacture and smuggling of chemical weapons...

That is because the Conference of States Parties does not generally recognize the possibility of smuggling chemical weapons but it might consider including language about preventing the smuggling of toxic chemicals that could be used to produce chemical weapons.

12. When referring to OPCW staff make sure you refer to inspectors rather than experts and facilities when referring to places that handle the most dangerous chemicals regulated by the Chemical Weapons Convention. For example:

# Drafting a Decision (cont.)

**Noting further** the expected phased return to the normal level of Article VI inspection activities, as well as the fact that the implementation of the OPCW's tenure policy has resulted in a significant turnover of inspectors in 2023 (35 inspectors, including 21 Inspection Team Leaders, who reached the end of their regular tenure);

and,

**Recalling further** that, since 2007, inspections at Schedule 1 facilities have been carried out at the rate of 11 per year;

13. Although the term Member States is sometimes used in OPCW Decisions, it is more common to refer members of OPCW as States Parties in the text.
14. Finally, there is a difference between when you use the word "**Decides**" to begin a paragraph or one of the verbs like "**Encourages**," "**Calls upon**," or "**Requests**" that has a softer tone. **Decides** is typically used when you want to recommend an action that enforces that terms of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction, For example:

**Decides** that the continued possession and use of chemical weapons by the Syrian Arab Republic in Syria, and its failures to submit an accurate and complete declaration and to destroy all of its undeclared chemical weapons and production facilities, have caused serious damage to the object and purpose of the Convention, and **decides also**, pursuant to subparagraph 21(k) of Article VIII and paragraph 3 of Article XII of the Convention, to recommend that States Parties take the following collective measures, in accordance with national laws...

When the text touches largely on national implementation and domestic action by States Parties,  
rather than an area directly governed by the Convention, it is more appropriate to use language \.  
such as "Encourages" and "Requests":

**Encourages** all States Parties to strengthen cooperation to prevent the production, acquisition, and use of chemical weapons by non-State actors

Since the Convention does not address the issue of non-States actors, "**Encourages**" is more  
appropriate than "**Decides**" because the recommended action does involve enforcing something  
in the Convention.