



DMUN Foundation

Office of the Observer of the DMUN Foundation to the International Criminal Court, Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, and Other Intergovernmental Organizations at The Hague

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Participation for All: Joint Written Statement of the DMUN Foundation, YouthCubed, and Other Youth Organizations

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The DMUN Foundation is the **world's largest international non-governmental organization** dedicated to **facilitating the participation of children and youth rightsholders in multilateral diplomacy** and supporting all aspects of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals.

The Foundation comprises more than **26,000 young individuals representing over 179 states**, territories, and other geographic designations.

The Foundation is pleased to deliver this written statement on behalf of its Members, YouthCubed, and 12 youth organizations not accredited to the CSP.

Just as with CSP-29, **we express our concern in the strongest terms** that the Technical Secretariat of the OPCW has **prohibited children under the age of 18** from participating in the sessions of the CSP, regardless of support from an accredited entity.

We emphasize that **participation is one of the four core principles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)**. Consistent with the CRC, **children's rights to be heard**, their views considered, and given due weight must be a basic tenet of all civil society engagement mechanisms in the UN system, **not willfully excluded**.



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In recent years, the UN has markedly raised its commitment to strengthening engagement of and partnership with children and youth, respecting their agency and the value they add to multilateral decision-making (e.g., Youth2030, UN Youth Office, and the Our Common Agenda Policy Brief on Meaningful Youth Engagement in Policymaking and Decision-making Processes).

Looking beyond children merely as a vulnerable population group, **children's views and voices are ambition-raisers in negotiation processes**, bringing new perspectives, knowledge, and innovative solutions to the work of the CSP.

In addition, **children are disproportionately vulnerable to chemical exposure**, whether from legacy arms dumps, industrial accidents, or chemical warfare agents. Their developing bodies absorb and retain toxic substances differently from adults, resulting in heightened and often irreversible health impacts. Ensuring their voices are represented at CSP-30 will advance more **effective, child-sensitive policy outcomes**.

The OPCW's mission to eliminate chemical weapons and prevent their re-emergence must integrate insights from "experts of lived experience"—including child survivors of chemical attacks, children living near contaminated sites, and youth advocates who have led community-based monitoring and education projects. **Their firsthand knowledge can enrich technical deliberations and strengthen implementation strategies.**

Therefore, **we object, in the strongest terms**, to the decision implemented during CSP30 to prohibit the participation of children and believe it to be rooted in an **ageist, discriminatory, and misinformed stance on the importance of meaningful inclusion of children and youth**.

We call on States Parties to urge the Technical Secretariat of the CSP to **eliminate the minimum age requirement for participation** in future sessions of the CSP, and to **mandate the inclusion of an agenda item** every session during the CSP that would address matters of **children and youth participation** in the implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention and the OPCW.