

Statement

The OPCW's CSP's General Committee Rejects SNHR's Application

**Syrian Organizations With Experience in Documenting
Chemical Attacks Should Attend the Conference,
Rather Than Leaving This Vitally Important Space
Open for Russia and the Syrian Regime**



The OPCW's CSP-23 at the OPCW Headquarters in The Hague, The Netherlands
| Photo by: OPCW

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The Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR), founded in June 2011, is a non-governmental, independent group that is considered a primary source for the OHCHR on all death toll-related analyses in Syria.

Every year, the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) holds its Conference of the State Parties (CSP) in the Hague. Human rights groups usually hold side-events on the sidelines of the main conference to which state parties are invited as part of the efforts to combat chemical weapons. These events feature groups from all around the world, except for Syria, which is patently absurd, given that Syria, in particular, is the country worst affected by chemical weapons in light of the Syrian regime's repeated use of these weapons. This year, as in previous years, the Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR), as a human rights group working on documenting the use of chemical weapons in Syria, applied for accreditation for the Fifth Review Conference (RC-5), which is set to be held in The Hague on May 15-19, 2023. On this occasion, however, our application was rejected by the RC-5's General Committee.

SNHR has worked extensively on the issue of documenting chemical weapons usage for over 10 years, releasing dozens of reports and statements, throughout that period, on the use of chemical weapons in Syria. We possess a large database on incidents involving the use of chemical weapons, including details of the deaths and injuries resulting from these attacks, as well as data on hundreds of individuals involved in the use of chemical weapons in Syria.

In January 2020, SNHR signed a [Principles of Cooperation Agreement with the OPCW's Investigation and Identification Team \(IIT\)](#) and has been a reference source in all the reports released by the IIT.

Furthermore, in November 2022, SNHR joined the [Chemical Weapons Convention Coalition](#) - an independent civil society group that works to support the aims of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and to supplement the work of the OPCW's member states. This is done through focused civil society action, with the aims of attaining full CWC membership, working for the timely and safe elimination of all chemical weapons, and preventing the misuse of chemicals for hostile purposes while promoting their peaceful use.

In attending the CSP, SNHR's goal is to hold an international event to outline the latest developments regarding the issue of chemical weapons in Syria and the most notable figures involved in the use of chemical weapons in Syria. To this day, the Syrian regime continues to obstruct the investigation, and is still producing and storing chemical weapons.

The General Committee of the Conference should accept SNHR's application to attend the Conference, rather than leaving the space open for the Syrian regime, Russia, China, and Iran, the states that voted in support of the Syrian regime's use of chemical weapons, while blocking its prosecution. These are also the same states that questioned the authenticity of the reports released by the OPCW. The General Committee's refusal of SNHR's applications directly assists these states in the promotion of their misinformation and in presenting their grotesquely distorted narrative misrepresenting the reality in Syria.



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