



OPCW

Executive Council

108th Session
4 – 7 March 2025

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DECISION

AMENDMENT OF THE OPCW TENURE POLICY TO ALLOW REHIRING ON AN EXCEPTIONAL BASIS

The Executive Council,

Mindful of the paramount importance of having within the Technical Secretariat of the OPCW (the Secretariat) experienced staff with the requisite skills and expertise to meet OPCW requirements related to the implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention (the Convention);

Reaffirming that the OPCW is a non-career organisation and **noting** that the maximum total length of service of Professional staff in the Secretariat is seven years, with only limited exceptions;

Recalling the productive discussions in the lead-up to and during the Fifth Special Session of the Conference of the States Parties to Review the Operation of the Chemical Weapons Convention, where States Parties attached great importance to progressing a number of organisational issues to ensure that the Secretariat and the OPCW as a whole remain effective and fit for purpose;

Recalling also that the Conference of the States Parties (the Conference) at its Twenty-Eighth Session adopted a decision (C-28/DEC.10, dated 30 November 2023) granting the Director-General the authority to extend by one year and for up to three consecutive years the tenure of up to 10 staff members;

Recalling further the provisions contained in paragraph 44 of Article VIII of the Convention, including, inter alia, that “the paramount consideration in the employment of the staff and in the determination of the conditions of service shall be the necessity of securing the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity,” and that “[d]ue regard shall be paid to the importance of recruiting the staff on as wide a geographical basis as possible,” and **recalling further** the decision of the Conference its Twenty-Third Session (C-23/DEC.9, dated 19 November 2018) to adopt an amendment to OPCW Staff Regulation 4.2 “recognising also the need to take into account considerations of gender balance” in Secretariat recruitment processes, and **underlining** the importance of the decision taken by the Conference at its Twenty-Eighth Session (C-28/DEC.11, dated 30 November 2023) to establish an “Action Plan on Geographical Representation”;



Noting that targeted allowances for the rehiring of former staff may provide opportunities to ensure that the OPCW has staff with the highest standards of efficiency, competence, and integrity, through enlarging the pool of suitably qualified and experienced potential candidates eligible to apply for posts, within the context of a recruitment regime that actively promotes, at all applicable steps of the recruitment process, both the recruitment of staff on as wide a geographical basis as possible and gender balance within the Secretariat;

Reiterating the importance for the Organisation to continue strengthening its knowledge management policies and practices, and **calling on** the Secretariat to continue its efforts in this regard;

Recalling that upon request of the delegations of New Zealand and Mexico, a paper entitled “Amendment of the OPCW Tenure Policy to Allow Rehiring on an Exceptional Basis” was circulated to the Conference at its Twenty-Ninth Session (C-29/WP.2, dated 25 November 2024); and

Recalling also that the Conference at its Twenty-Ninth Session agreed with its Chairperson that the matter of the proposed amendments to the OPCW tenure policy would be for the Council to decide at its 108th Session (paragraph 22.13 of C-29/5, dated 29 November 2024);

Hereby:

1. **Decides** that the Director-General may use discretion to designate a limited number of positions for which former staff members subject to tenure may be eligible to apply and be considered alongside other candidates. Candidates eligible for rehiring should normally have had a break in service from the OPCW of three years or more, unless this requirement is waived by the Director-General in order to solicit a larger field of potentially qualified candidates when required by operational exigencies of the Secretariat. In these cases, the Director-General should consider the need to secure the highest standards of efficiency, competence, and integrity as well as the importance of recruiting the staff on as wide a geographical basis as possible, while promoting gender balance. Any staff member rehired under this policy for another seven-year tenure would not be eligible for further contract extensions, and any staff member may be rehired under this policy only once, to ensure that the OPCW remains a non-career organisation;
2. **Considers** that the total number of staff rehired under this modality should not exceed 20 fixed-term positions subject to tenure at any given time;
3. **Requests** that the Director-General inform the Executive Council (the Council) about the implementation of this decision through the Director-General’s annual reports to the Council on the “Implementation of the Tenure Policy”;
4. **Requests also** that the Director-General inform both the Council and the Conference annually about the impact of the increased flexibility on the overall performance of the Secretariat. The updates should include the exceptional circumstances for which rehiring was deemed necessary; continued improvements of knowledge management processes; and the impact of the measures taken with regard to tenure on progress to continue to recruit staff on as wide a geographical basis as possible and to promote gender balance; and

5. **Decides** that this decision shall be subject to an implementation review period. The Council shall evaluate the functioning of the policy as amended at its 116th Session in 2027 and make appropriate recommendations to the Conference on the extension, modification, or non-renewal of this decision.

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