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ENGLISH only

NOTE BY THE TECHNICAL SECRETARIAT

INVITATION TO APPLY TO THE ASSOCIATE PROGRAMME 2023

1. The Technical Secretariat (hereinafter “the Secretariat”) wishes to inform Member States of its intention to hold the OPCW Associate Programme 2023 in The Hague, the Netherlands, and elsewhere from 21 July to 22 September 2023. The Programme aims to foster a better understanding of the objectives of the Chemical Weapons Convention (hereinafter “the Convention”) and to promote the peaceful uses of chemistry, with an emphasis on chemical safety.
2. The objectives of the Programme are to:
 - (a) facilitate national implementation of the Convention with a focus on the chemical industry;
 - (b) promote the peaceful use of chemistry;
 - (c) improve the skills of specialists from industry, academia, and the governments of the Member States in the fields of chemical engineering, integrated chemical management, chemical safety and security, and related areas; and
 - (d) broaden the talent pool for positions related to the chemical industry in National Authorities and specialised institutions in the Member States, as well as in the Secretariat.
3. The Programme is designed for chemists and chemical engineers, especially from Member States with economies that are either developing or in transition. It has been designed to enhance knowledge of the Convention and develop skills in the fields of chemical engineering, integrated chemical management, and chemical safety and security within the context of the chemical industry. The Programme for 2023 will accommodate 32 participants.
4. In order to attract highly qualified applicants, the Secretariat requests the assistance of National Authorities in disseminating this invitation to relevant organisations.
5. The provisional programme includes the following components:
 - (a) an induction segment at OPCW facilities in The Hague (approximately one week), aimed at offering an overview of the Convention and the various aspects of the work of the OPCW. This segment also includes lectures on the activities of National Authorities and other relevant Convention stakeholders (such as the European Chemical Industry Council, the European Association of



Chemical Distributors, the European Chemicals Agency, and the World Customs Organization), as well as study visits to the head office of the Dutch Customs Administration in Rotterdam, and the Port of Rotterdam. During the induction segment, participants will choose research projects and start working on them in pairs under the supervision of OPCW staff. Participants will also be trained in various safety and security aspects of operational environment in chemical plants;

- (b) a university segment (three weeks) consisting of chemical engineering training at an internationally recognised university comprising the following: a series of courses in chemical engineering (relevant areas include process operations, mass balancing, risk assessment, safety management, etc.), practical exercises at a pilot plant, training in specific skills needed in the field of industrial management (communication, teamwork, leadership, and problem solving), and the application of the acquired skills and knowledge in a simulated company environment;
 - (c) an intermediate segment (one week) at OPCW Headquarters, including a two-day inspection table-top exercise and study visits to the OPCW Laboratory and Equipment Store at the Centre for Chemistry and Technology. Time will also be allotted for working on the research projects selected during the induction segment;
 - (d) an industrial segment (three weeks) during which participants will be placed at chemical plants in Member States to gain exposure to modern practices in chemical industries, with a focus on chemical safety; and
 - (e) a final segment (one week) at OPCW Headquarters, which will include presentations on the industrial assignments, research projects, and a final review period.
6. Since English will be the language of instruction, it is essential that all participants be able to understand, read, and communicate proficiently in this language, both orally and in writing. Any candidate who is found, upon arrival in The Hague, not to meet this requirement may not be allowed to participate in the Programme.
 7. The Secretariat invites applications from candidates who have a first degree (BSc or equivalent) in chemistry or in chemical or process engineering from a university or another recognised institution of higher learning, **and a minimum of five years' relevant work** experience (e.g., in the chemical industry or process engineering, governmental institutions, research laboratories, or academia). In addition, a working background with a National Authority or other government agency involved in the implementation of either the Convention or a comparable international regulatory instrument would be an advantage.
 8. The Secretariat can accept applications only from nationals of OPCW Member States. Applicants will be carefully screened, and only those considered to be the most suitable will be interviewed. Selections are normally made several weeks after the application deadline.

9. Once candidates have been selected, they may be required to undergo a medical fitness test, which is designed to assess their ability to use chemical protection equipment and to work with hazardous materials. Any health condition that might affect the fitness of a prospective candidate should be declared in the medical history form that successful applicants will be required to fill out. These candidates will also be required to sign a confidentiality agreement with the OPCW. A copy of this document, along with an information note containing details of the arrangements regarding the Programme, will be made available only to those candidates who have been accepted for participation.
10. The OPCW will cover the costs of Programme-related travel, accommodation, meals, course fees, and medical and travel insurance for all participants while the Programme is being conducted.
11. It is mandatory for participants to attend all the activities scheduled under the Programme. Participants are expected to undergo the training at any location as determined and allocated by the OPCW.
12. Withdrawal from the Programme: In the event of withdrawal at any stage, the Secretariat will notify the relevant Permanent Representations and National Authorities of the withdrawal of the candidate concerned. The candidate may, at the discretion of the OPCW, be liable for a partial or full refund of any associated financial loss incurred as a result of the withdrawal.
13. Break in the training: Breaks in the Programme are not allowed, except in the case of force majeure.
14. When making travel arrangements, the Secretariat will seek the most economical options, and will purchase tickets and send them to participants. Participants will be allowed to purchase tickets locally only if this leads to further savings for the Secretariat, and if the Secretariat authorises it. In order for the Secretariat to keep costs to a minimum, participants are expected **to arrive no earlier than 20 July 2023 and to depart no later than 23 September 2023.**
15. The agreement of the Secretariat is required for any changes to the arrival and departure dates of the participants. The Secretariat will not cover expenses unrelated to the Programme or that result from changes in travel arrangements it has not authorised. Participants must bear all costs resulting from changes that they make, including cancellations, once the Secretariat has purchased the tickets.
16. Candidates that have been accepted for participation are requested to obtain any necessary visas (including transit visas) before travelling to the Netherlands. Those requiring an entry visa for the Netherlands are advised to contact the nearest diplomatic/consular mission of the Netherlands as soon as they receive the invitation letter from OPCW. Participants who need further assistance may contact the Protocol and Visa Branch of the Secretariat by telephone (+31 (0)70 416 3777) or by email (visa@opcw.org).
17. Candidates are responsible for obtaining the required visas for the full period of their stays in Europe and other training locations.

How to apply for a place in the Programme

18. Candidates for the Programme must apply online through Eventus—the OPCW event management system (<https://apps.opcw.org/eventus>)—no later than **10 February 2023**. Applicants should create an account in Eventus and then register for the training course. Please note that all questions marked with an asterisk (*) in the online form must be answered and the applicant should attach the following documents in the system:
 - (a) a current curriculum vitae (maximum three pages including the information on education, professional experiences, language skills, training, emergency contact details of family members or next of kin, and personal information);
 - (b) a cover letter (one page, highlighting the following:
 - (i) why the applicant would like to participate in the Programme;
 - (ii) how the applicant would benefit from the course; and
 - (iii) how the applicant would disseminate the knowledge and experience they would gain in their country);
 - (c) a letter from the candidate’s employer, authenticating the applicant’s employment and permitting the candidate to participate in the Programme in its entirety; and
 - (d) a photocopy of the applicant’s valid passport.
19. The information provided under each item on the form and the attachments must be complete and accurate. Incomplete or insufficiently detailed applications will not be considered.
20. Applications must be endorsed by their respective National Authority electronically before they will be considered for review by the Secretariat. The Secretariat will only review endorsed applications and may conduct phone or online interviews as part of the final selection process.
21. In the event that an applicant has difficulties in submitting the application online or obtaining the endorsement of their National Authority via Eventus, please contact the Secretariat by email at icb.events@opcw.org **no later than 30 January 2023**.
22. Any queries regarding the Programme can be addressed to Mr Taeon Kim, Programme Officer, or Ms Julia González, Senior Project Assistant, via email at icb.events@opcw.org.