OPCW Technical Secretariat

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ENGLISH only

NOTE BY THE TECHNICAL SECRETARIAT

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR A COURSE FOR ANALYTICAL CHEMISTS FROM LABORATORIES SUPPORTING CUSTOMS SERVICES OPCW CENTRE FOR CHEMISTRY AND TECHNOLOGY NOOTDORP, THE NETHERLANDS 14 – 17 NOVEMBER 2023

PURPOSE OF THE COURSE

1. The Technical Secretariat of the OPCW (hereinafter "the Secretariat") wishes to inform Member States that it will hold a course on the development of analytical skills for analytical chemists supporting customs services. The course is scheduled to be held at the OPCW Centre for Chemistry and Technology in Nootdorp, the Netherlands, from 14 to 17 November 2023. The aim of the course is to assist qualified analytical chemists from laboratories that support, or plan to support, customs services or offices in acquiring further experience and practical knowledge of the analysis of chemicals related to the Chemical Weapons Convention (hereinafter "the Convention"). In addition, the course will facilitate the adoption of good laboratory practices for the implementation of the Convention.

CONTENT

2. The training course will include a variety of lectures and laboratory work. The lectures will cover general aspects of the OPCW, the Convention, and the Verification Annex to the Convention. It will also cover the chemical structure and properties of scheduled chemicals, the methods of separation and structure elucidation, and the detection and analysis of scheduled chemicals at various concentration levels. The role of customs service laboratories in promoting chemical safety will also be discussed.

3. Practical laboratory work will include:

   (a) gas chromatography-mass spectrometry (GC-MS) and analyte identification using the Automated Mass Spectral Deconvolution and Identification System (AMDIS) and the OPCW Central Analytical Database (OCAD);

   (b) sampling and sample preparation methods for GC-MS analysis;

   (c) hand-held Fourier transform infrared (FTIR) and Raman spectroscopy for rapid identification; and

   (d) a visit to the Dutch customs laboratory.

SPONSORSHIP

4. The cost of the course and of accommodation for all participants will be covered by the Secretariat. In addition, the Secretariat will pay for international travel, lunch, coffee breaks, and medical and travel insurance for all participants while the course is being conducted, in accordance with OPCW rules. The Secretariat will select the participants based on their qualifications and experience.

5. Participants are requested to obtain any necessary visas, including Schengen Area travel visas, before travelling to the Netherlands. The Secretariat will cover the costs of these visas by reimbursing participants upon production of the original receipts to representatives of the Secretariat. The Secretariat will also send information to the selected participants on how to apply for Schengen Area visas.

6. The Secretariat will not pay for medical assistance. Therefore, participants should be fit to travel. All participants taking prescribed medication should arrive with supplies sufficient for the duration of the event.

7. When making travel arrangements for sponsored participants, the Secretariat will seek the most economical options. The Secretariat will purchase tickets and send them to the participants. The participants must keep the boarding passes and hand them to the Secretariat representatives.

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

8. The course is open to those who:

   (a) have a minimum of a first degree (BSc or equivalent) in chemistry or analytical chemistry from a recognised university or institution, with relevant practical and theoretical experience in analytical chemistry, including the use of GC and GC-MS;

   (b) are citizens of OPCW Member States; and

   (c) have at least three years of experience in an analytical laboratory, and currently work in a chemical laboratory providing support or planning to support customs services in their home country.

9. The course will be conducted in English. Candidates must therefore have a good command of both written and spoken English. Any candidate who, upon arrival, is found not to meet this requirement will not be allowed to continue with the course.

10. Participants will be required to sign a set of terms and conditions for participation in the course as well as a confidentiality agreement with the OPCW.

11. Members States and their National Authorities are strongly encouraged to support and endorse applications by suitable female candidates for the course.

APPLICATION PROCEDURE

12. Interested candidates are invited to submit their applications online through Eventus, the OPCW event management system (https://apps.opcw.org/eventus). Applicants must first create an account and then register for the event.

13. Each application must be endorsed digitally on the Eventus platform by the nominee's respective National Authority. Only nominations endorsed by the National Authority or Permanent Representation of the candidate's country to the OPCW will be considered. Nominees must attach their curriculum vitae with a detailed explanation of their work experience and the analytical techniques they are familiar with.

14. All applications must be received by the Secretariat **no later than 14 July 2023**. Additional information may be obtained from the International Cooperation Branch of the International Cooperation and Assistance Division. The contact persons are Mr Massimo de Rienzo, Senior Programme Officer (Tel: +31 (0) 70 416 3458) and Ms Julia Gonzalez, Senior Project Assistant (Tel: +31 (0) 70 416 3239). They can also be contacted by email (icb.events@opcw.org).

Annex: Provisional Programme

Annex

**COURSE FOR ANALYTICAL CHEMISTS
FROM LABORATORIES SUPPORTING CUSTOMS SERVICES
OPCW CENTRE FOR CHEMISTRY AND TECHNOLOGY
NOOTDORP, THE NETHERLANDS
14 – 17 NOVEMBER 2023**

PROVISIONAL PROGRAMME

Time	Agenda
Day 1: 14 November 2023	
09:30 – 13:00 (11:00 – 11:15 *coffee break*)	• Opening session: Welcome addresses and group photo • Introduction to the OPCW, the Chemical Weapons Convention, and its Verification Annex • Overview of International Cooperation Branch capacity-building programmes • Introduction to the OPCW Centre for Chemistry and Technology (ChemTech Centre) • Tour of the ChemTech Centre
13:00 – 13:45	*Lunch*
13:45 – 16:30 (15:00 – 15:15 *coffee break*)	• Designated laboratories and proficiency testing • Introduction to scheduled chemicals and their chemistry • Analysis strategy • Element-specific gas chromatography (GC) detectors • Use of gas chromatography-mass spectrometry (GC-MS), quality checks, and contamination control
Day 2: 15 November 2023	
09:30 – 13:00 (11:00 – 11: 15 *coffee break*)	• Sample collection • Handling of toxic samples, chain of custody, and security • Sample preparation: ✓ Solid phase extraction ✓ Hydrocarbon clean-up <u>Laboratory practical session</u>: sample clean-up and analysis by GC-MS before and after clean-up
13:00 – 13:45	*Lunch*
13:45 – 16:30 (15:00 – 15:15 *coffee break*)	• Derivatisation • <u>Laboratory practical session</u>: sample derivatisation and analysis by GC-MS
Day 3: 16 November 2023	
09:30 – 16:30	Visit to the Dutch customs laboratory in Amsterdam

Time	Agenda
Day 4: 17 November 2023	
09:30 – 13:00 (11:00 – 11: 15 *coffee break*)	• Retention indices • The Automated Mass Spectral Deconvolution and Identification System (AMDIS) and the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) • The OPCW Central Analytical Database (OCAD) • Practical exercise with AMDIS/OCAD
13:00 – 13:45	*Lunch*
13:45 – 16:30 (15:00 – 15:15 *coffee break*)	• Introduction to hand-held devices for chemical warfare agent detection • Discussion: Analysis strategies and unknowns • Evaluation session, collection of questionnaires, and discussion • Handing out of certificates

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