OPCW Technical Secretariat

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NOTE BY THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL

EVALUATION OF THE RESULTS OF THE FIFTY-THIRD OFFICIAL OPCW PROFICIENCY TEST

1. The Director-General wishes to inform the States Parties of the results of the Fifty-Third Official OPCW Proficiency Test, which was conducted by the Technical Secretariat (hereinafter "the Secretariat") from April to August 2023. The OPCW Laboratory is accredited by the Raad voor Accreditatie (RvA), the Netherlands, to conduct proficiency testing in compliance with the criteria laid down in ISO/IEC 17043.[1] The test was conducted according to the following quality management system documents:

   (a) "Standard Operating Procedure for the Organisation of OPCW Proficiency Tests" (QDOC/LAB/SOP/PT01 (Issue 4, Revision 0, dated 18 April 2023));

   (b) "Work Instruction for the Preparation of Samples for OPCW Proficiency Tests" (QDOC/LAB/WI/PT02 (Issue 3, Revision 4, dated 18 April 2023));

   (c) "Work Instruction for the Evaluation of the Results of OPCW Proficiency Tests" (QDOC/LAB/WI/PT03 (Issue 4, Revision 2, dated 18 April 2023)); and

   (d) "Work Instruction for the Reporting of the Results of the OPCW Proficiency Tests" (QDOC/LAB/WI/PT04 (Issue 3, Revision 3, dated 18 April 2023)).

2. In order to retain their designation, designated laboratories must demonstrate once per calendar year that they have maintained their capabilities in a proficiency test organised by the Secretariat, unless the additional guidelines in decision C-20/DEC.4 (dated 2 December 2015) are applicable.

3. The sample preparation laboratory was the Bundeswehr Research Institute for Protective Technologies and NBC Protection, Germany, while the evaluating laboratory was the Swedish Defence Research Agency (FOI), Sweden.

4. Before the closing date, 17 Member States nominated 19 laboratories, including the two assisting laboratories, for participation in the Fifty-Third Proficiency Test. Two of these nominated laboratories opted to participate in the test on a trial basis. One of the laboratories nominated for the proficiency test had its participation cancelled because

[1] Standard ISO/IEC 17043 of the International Organization for Standardization/International Electrotechnical Commission.

of technical communication-related difficulties. Accordingly, in the test there were 14 regular participants, two trial participants, and two assisting laboratories.

5. It should be noted that because of the relocation of the OPCW Laboratory to the Centre for Chemistry and Technology, a regular Chemical Weapons Convention Chemical Analysis Competency Test could not be organised in parallel with the Fifty-Third Proficiency Test, resulting in several new and non-regular laboratories participating in this test.

6. The preliminary evaluation report was discussed on 18 July 2023 at a hybrid meeting (held online and at the OPCW Centre for Chemistry and Technology) between Secretariat staff and the test participants. The participants were given two weeks to comment on the results and to inform the Secretariat whether they accepted their performance evaluation.

7. The evaluating laboratory submitted its final evaluation report to the Secretariat on 15 August 2023.

8. The principal results of the Fifty-Third Official OPCW Proficiency Test can be summarised as follows:

   (a) All regular test participants submitted their analytical reports within the test period.

   (b) Five regular participants identified and reported all of the spiking chemicals with sufficient analytical data for all of the spiking chemicals.

   (c) Two regular participants identified and reported six out of the seven spiking chemicals with sufficient data.

   (d) Six regular participants identified less than half of the seven spiking chemicals.

   (e) No score was assigned to the two trial participants.

   (f) One regular participant provided the incorrect data for a non-scoring chemical and received a performance rating of F.

   (g) Five non-scoring chemicals were reported.

   (h) The sample preparation laboratory submitted its report and was awarded the maximum performance rating of A.

   (i) The evaluating laboratory submitted its report and was awarded the maximum performance rating of A.

   (j) There are seven As, two Bs, six Ds, and one F in the test scores for the 14 regular participants and the two assisting laboratories.

9. The final results for all of the laboratories participating in the test are presented in the table in the Annex hereto.

10. The participating laboratories are reminded that if they have made any errors or reported false positives or false negatives (arising from a failure to find a spiking chemical or to provide sufficient supporting data for a chemical that is found), they should take immediate remedial action. Before participating in the next test, each such laboratory is required to submit a detailed follow-up report to the Secretariat stating the cause of the problem and any remedial action it has taken. Any such laboratory failing to submit the required report, including details of the remedial action it has taken, will not be permitted to participate in the next proficiency test.

Annex: Results of the Fifty-Third Official OPCW Proficiency Test

Annex

RESULTS OF THE FIFTY-THIRD OFFICIAL OPCW PROFICIENCY TEST

Participant Code Laboratory	**No. of Spiking Chemicals Reported**[2]	**No. of Chemicals Scored**	**Rating**	**Comments**
35 **Algeria** Institut National de Criminalistique et de Criminologie de la Gendarmerie Nationale	**7**	**7**	**A**	
19 **Belgium** Defensielaboratoria-Laboratoires de la Défense (DLD)	**7**	**7**	**A**	-
12 **Denmark** Danish Emergency Management Agency	**7**	**0**	**D**	Insufficient data for the reported spiking chemicals, A, B, C, D, E, F, and G
Germany Bundeswehr Research Institute for Protective Technologies and NBC Protection	**-**	**-**	**A**	Sample preparation assistance
40 **Italy** Italian Customs and Monopolies Agency, Antifraud Directorate, Central Laboratory	**3**	**0**	**D**	Spiking chemicals A, C, D, and E were not reported. Insufficient data for the reported chemicals B, F, and G
01 **Kenya** Government Chemist Department	**7**	**0**	**#**	Trial participant
37 **Japan** Chemical School, Japan Ground Self-Defense Force	**7**	**7**	**A**	-

[2] The spiking chemicals were as follows:

A 3,3-Dimethylbutan-2-yl acetate
B, C, E, G Diisopropyl methylphosphonate
D, F Diethyl methylphosphonate

Participant Code Laboratory	**No. of Spiking Chemicals Reported**[2]	**No. of Chemicals Scored**	**Rating**	**Comments**
15 **Malaysia** Department of Chemistry	**6**	**6**	**B**	Spiking chemical A was not reported
03 **Malaysia** Science and Technology Research Institute for Defence	**3**	**2**	**F**	Spiking chemicals A, E, F, and G were not reported; insufficient data for reported spiking chemical D. As the identification of non-scoring chemical H was based on erroneous analytical data, this chemical was categorised as a false positive chemical in accordance with subparagraph 9(b) of QDOC/LAB/WI/PT04
04 **Nigeria** NAFDAC Central Laboratory	**6**	**2**	**D**	Spiking chemical A was not reported; and insufficient data for reported spiking chemicals B, C, F, and G
30 **Republic of Korea** CBRN Defense Research Institute, ROK Defense Command	**7**	**7**	**A**	-
02 **Romania** Research and Innovation Center for CBRN Defense and Ecology, Chemical Analysis Laboratory	**7**	**6**	**B**	Insufficient data for reported spiking chemical A
31 **Slovakia** Section of chemical laboratories, military unit	**7**	**2**	**D**	Insufficient data for reported spiking chemicals A, D, E, F, and G
11 **South Africa** Protechnik Laboratories	**7**	**0**	**D**	Insufficient data for reported spiking chemicals A, B, C, D, E, F, and G

Participant Code Laboratory	**No. of Spiking Chemicals Reported**[2]	**No. of Chemicals Scored**	**Rating**	**Comments**
Sweden Swedish Defence Research Agency (FOI), Sweden	**-**	**-**	**A**	Evaluation assistance
08 **Türkiye** Chemical Warfare Agents Identification &Verification Laboratory	**7**	**7**	**A**	-
07 **Tùrkiye** University of Health Sciences, Department of Medical CBRN Defense	**2**	**0**	**#**	Trial participant
United Republic of Tanzania Government Chemist Laboratory Authority	**-**	**-**	**-**	Laboratory was withdrawn before start of proficiency test
23 **Viet Nam** Center of Technology Environmental Treatment – Ministry of Defense	**1**	**0**	**D**	Spiking chemicals A, B, C, D, E, and G were not reported; and insufficient data for reported spiking chemical F.

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