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TECHNICAL SECRETARIAT

BACKGROUND PAPER ON ASSISTANCE AND PROTECTION PROGRAMMES

1. Summary

- 1.1 By joining the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction (hereinafter, “the Convention”), States Parties renounce any option to use chemical weapons. In return, each State Party has the right to request and, subject to the procedures set forth in paragraphs 9, 10 and 11 of Article X of the Convention, receive assistance and protection against the use, or threat of use, of chemical weapons. Assistance is defined in the Convention as “.. the coordination and delivery to States Parties of protection against chemical weapons, including, inter alia, the following: detection equipment and alarm systems; protective equipment; decontamination equipment and decontaminants; medical antidotes and treatments; and advice on any of these protective measures”. This positive security guarantee will be an essential part of the Convention for as long as chemical weapons exist, for as long as States remain outside the Convention, and for as long as the threat of use of these weapons by terrorist groups continues to cast a shadow over our lives.
- 1.2 Article X provides that any State Party has the right to request, and to receive, assistance and protection against the use or threat of use of chemical weapons. In this context, the Convention requires each State Party to provide assistance through the Organisation and elect to undertake one or more of the following: to contribute to the voluntary fund for assistance; to conclude a bilateral agreement with the Organisation, within 180 days after the Convention enters into force, concerning the procurement of assistance upon demand; or to declare the kind of assistance it might provide in response to an appeal by the Organisation. States Parties cooperate with the OPCW in facilitating the coordination and delivery of assistance and protection to minimise the consequences of an attack involving chemical weapons, in countering the threat of use of chemical weapons, and in eliminating the threats posed by activities prohibited under Article I of the Convention.
- 1.3 In order to be able to implement the provisions of Article X, the OPCW is required to develop a state of readiness to provide timely, adequate, and efficient assistance to a State Party which may request such assistance, and to maintain such readiness. As a result, the OPCW should be in a position to mobilise the mechanisms established for



rendering assistance, to coordinate its assistance-related activities with those of all relevant national agencies and international organisations, so the Technical Secretariat (hereinafter “the Secretariat”) can manage assistance from the international community, and to ensure that such assistance reaches the requesting State Party. In the area of national capacity-building, the Secretariat is required to establish, for use by any requesting State Party, a data bank containing freely-available information concerning means of protection against chemical weapons, as well as such additional information as may be provided by States Parties. Furthermore, the Secretariat is obliged to provide, within the resources available to it, and at the request of a State Party, expert advice, and to assist the State Party in identifying how its programmes for the development and improvement of a protective capacity against chemical weapons could be implemented.

- 1.4 The activities and programmes of the Assistance and Protection Branch (hereinafter, “APB”) therefore concentrate on two main areas: national capacity building against chemical weapons, and international capacity building to ensure that the OPCW can respond to requests for assistance in cases of use, or threat of use, of chemical weapons. APB is therefore mandated to develop and maintain a state-of- readiness to enable the OPCW to respond effectively to requests for assistance and protection pursuant to Article X of the Convention. This includes providing advice to States Parties on the improvement of their protection programmes, maintaining the data bank on protection, arranging a coordinated response to requests for assistance, ensuring that the Secretariat can manage assistance, and that the assistance reaches the requesting State Party.
- 1.5 Prior to the reorganisation of the International Cooperation and Assistance Division, two separate branches - Emergency Assistance, and Protection – were responsible for carrying out this mandate. The Protection branch was largely devoted to the concept of long-term capacity building as described in paragraphs 3, 4 and 5 of Article X. The Emergency Assistance branch dealt with requests for assistance, thereby ensuring that the Secretariat was able to respond to such requests. The reorganisation which took place in December 2000 was aimed at overcoming the somewhat artificial separation of these two closely related areas by accommodating under one roof all aspects of the implementation of Article X. The Note by the Secretariat on Strengthening the International Cooperation and Assistance Activities of the Organisation (S/232/2000, dated 6 December 2000) stressed the fact that the enlarged mandate would allow the Branch to respond more effectively to the needs of States Parties in strengthening their protection capabilities and receiving assistance and protection against chemical weapons, while also making sure that such requests for assistance were more efficiently handled by the Secretariat.
- 1.6 Two important problems have had a drastic effect on the activities and programmes of the Branch. While the Emergency Assistance branch and the Protection branch each had a staff of four, the new consolidated Branch was allocated only three. Although having an expert on loan from the Swedish Government for two years, and allocating three or four inspectors, as available, to various projects alleviated the hardship to some extent, understaffing remains a serious obstacle to achieving the objectives of the Branch. The second problem was the OPCW’s financial situation over the past two years.

- 1.7 An agreement among the States Parties during the First Special Session of the Conference of the States Parties to Review the Operation of the Chemical Weapons Convention (hereinafter “the First Review Conference”) and discussions on the future scope and direction of the OPCW’s assistance and protection programmes, are expected to contribute to the full implementation of Article X of the Convention. Two documents: a Note by the Director-General in relation to the programme and budget for 2000 (EC-XV/DG.4, dated 17 March 1999); and a Note by the Secretariat on the implementation of Article X (S/272/2001, dated 1 October 2001) provide background information for these discussions.

2. Background

- 2.1 The OPCW was established with the sole purpose of implementing the Convention, whose mandate includes providing States Parties assistance and protection in the event of use, threat of use, or perceived threat of use of chemical weapons. The right to protection is established under Articles II and X of the Convention. Article X reaffirms the rights of States Parties to engage in activities necessary to protect themselves against chemical weapons, and gives them the right to participate in the fullest possible exchange of equipment, material and scientific and technological information concerning means of protection against chemical weapons. These activities should be carried out openly enough for States Parties to be convinced that the activities are in keeping with the object and purpose of the Convention.
- 2.2 Effective implementation of the Convention implies the cooperation of the States Parties with the OPCW in:
- (a) facilitating the coordination and delivery of assistance and protection;
 - (b) minimising the consequences of an attack involving chemical weapons;
 - (c) countering the threat of use of chemical weapons; and
 - (d) eliminating the threats posed by activities prohibited by Article I.

3. Developments since entry into force of the Convention

National capacity building (protection)

- 3.1 At entry into force, the International Cooperation and Assistance Division commenced activities related to Articles X and XI. The corresponding responsibilities involved in the implementation of Article X were entrusted to the Assistance and Protection Branch. At its Second Session, however, the Conference of the States Parties decided to divide these tasks into emergency assistance and protection, and entrusted the respective activities to two branches. At the end of 2000 the Director-General reorganised the Division, and all activities regarding the implementation of Article X were transferred to the Assistance and Protection Branch.

3.2 The following is a brief description of these activities:

(a) Submission of declarations on national programmes on protection

“For the purposes of increasing the transparency of national programmes related to protective purposes, each State Party shall provide annually to the Technical Secretariat information on its programme, in accordance with procedures to be considered and approved by the Conference pursuant to Article VIII, paragraph 21 (i).” (Article X, paragraph 4). The Conference of the States Parties has yet to approve the procedures for submission of declarations under this paragraph. This is probably one reason why less than 20 percent of States Parties have complied with this obligation. As at 31 December 2002, only 35 States Parties had made submissions under this paragraph. Each year, the Secretariat sends reminders to States Parties which have not filed their declaration. Copies of declarations are provided to States Parties upon request.

(b) Databank on protection

“The Technical Secretariat shall establish, not later than 180 days after entry into force of this Convention and maintain, for the use of any requesting State Party, a data bank containing freely available information concerning various means of protection against chemical weapons as well as such information as may be provided by States Parties.” (paragraph 5 part 1). At its Session, the Conference of the States Parties decided that the data bank “... on protection against chemical weapons be established as a part of a library in the Technical Secretariat, and that this repository of information be indexed by a database...” (C-I/DEC.53, dated 16 May 1997). It further decided that the database, used for indexing the data bank on protection against chemical weapons, should be commercially or otherwise available, and include a bibliographical programme allowing for the inclusion of data types, such as those indicated in Annex 1 to the decision referred to above. Finally, the Conference adopted the illustrative lists of some categories of information for the data bank on protection contained in Annex 2 to the decision. Only one State Party provided information in accordance with Appendix 4 (Illustrative Format for Provision, by States Parties, of Information under Article X, paragraph 5). The Branch lacked both staff and financial resources to pursue this project.

(c) Expert advice to States Parties on protection

“The Technical Secretariat shall also, within the resources available to it, and at the request of a State Party, provide expert advice and assist the State Party in identifying how its programmes for the development and improvement of a protective capacity against chemical weapons could be implemented.” (paragraph 5, part 2). This expert advice is being provided through various means, including: use of the Protection Network to provide expert advice and act as resource persons at training courses; long-distance communications (fax, telephone and electronic communications); bringing personnel from requesting States Parties to The Hague; and sending experts to States Parties. These measures include:

- (i) National courses. When a State Party submits a request, the Branch prepares the draft of a specific programme for the requesting State Party. The courses thus differ from one another. States Parties have varying abilities to provide protection, and other factors such as the structure of the emergency response system, the geographical and climatic conditions, and the size and distribution of the population differ from country to country. So far, three national courses have been held, in Ethiopia, Jordan and Pakistan, for over 100 first responders from these States Parties.
- (ii) Regional courses are conducted at regional or sub-regional level to provide general training on protection against chemical weapons, initiate cooperation between the civil protection units and the first responders of the States Parties in the region, and establish a joint networking on protection related activities. Since entry into force, three regional courses have taken place. Brazil hosted the first assistance and protection workshop for Latin America and the Caribbean; Kuwait hosted a protection course for the six States Parties of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC); and the regional course on protection for Baltic States was held in Lithuania. The latter hosted 36 first responders from Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia, and was funded by a contribution from Norway.
- (iii) International courses on protection are being provided by those States Parties which have made substantial offers of assistance and possess high-calibre expertise. These courses include:
- The annual chief instructor course (CITPRO) and the Swiss Emergency Field laboratory course (SEF-Lab), both held in Switzerland. CITPRO is a basic course conducted every year for 40 specialists and experts who are, or will be, associated with chemical weapons (hereinafter, "CW") protection training of civilians in their own countries. Its main purpose is to assist States Parties to establish a basic CW protection capability that will directly benefit the civilian population. The participants train with equipment offered by Switzerland under paragraph 7 of Article X. The SEF-Lab courses provide basic training for 16 experts and specialists from States Parties who are, or will be, associated with CW detection training in their own countries. The participants receive training in the use of detection equipment pledged by Switzerland under paragraph 7 of Article X. Since entry into force, five CITPRO and six SEF-Lab courses and one advanced course, SEF-TRAD, have been conducted by Switzerland, at no charge to the Organisation.
 - Sixteen experts have attended each one of the four annual Swedish assistance and protection training courses held to date in Revinge, Sweden. This course provides basic training for CW response teams and planners and assists States Parties in

their efforts to establish a basic CW protection capability. While the Swiss courses are based on individual training, the Swedish one emphasises team building and a team approach to rescue activities in contaminated areas.

- A course on medical defence against chemical weapons is held annually in the Islamic Republic of Iran. The participants are provided with the latest updates on the treatment administered, over the past 15 years, to the Iranian casualties of CW exposure. The medical doctors and disaster medicine specialists attending the course are also provided with the unique experience of examining patients undergoing long-term treatment for complications derived from exposure to chemical weapons. The first course was provided to medical doctors and paramedics of the Secretariat, and the subsequent courses were provided for 20 to 30 participants from States Parties.
- The Czech government offers a protection course, free of charge, for up to 20 specialists from States Parties on an annual basis. During this course, the participants become familiar with the offer of the Czech Republic under paragraph 7 of Article X, and receive basic training on protection. Similar ad hoc protection courses have been organised in other States Parties.

(d) The Protection Network

The Secretariat has established a Protection Network (hereinafter, “PN”), consisting of internationally recognised experts in protection, to advise States Parties on developing and improving their capacities for protection. These experts also teach in the national protection courses organised by the OPCW. Twenty-two experts were nominated in their personal capacity as PN members. The PN did not meet for some time due to the OPCW’s lack of funds. It did meet, however, in 2001 and 2002 in The Hague; each of its meetings was followed by a two-day protection workshop and display of protection equipment on the OPCW premises. It is intended to hold this event annually during the second half of November in The Hague; the two-day meeting of the PN will be followed by a thematic workshop on protection and a display of equipment. In 2002, 19 companies presented their equipment intended to for the protection of civilians.

International capacity building in the area of assistance

3.3 The States Parties have undertaken “... to provide assistance through the Organization and to this end to elect to take one or more of the following measures:

- (a) To contribute to the voluntary fund for assistance to be established by the Conference at its first Session;

- (b) To conclude, if possible not later than 180 days after this Convention enters into force for it, agreements with the Organization concerning the procurement, upon demand, of assistance;
- (c) To declare, not later than 180 days after this Convention enters into force for it, the kind of assistance it might provide in response to an appeal by the Organization. If, however, a State Party subsequently is unable to provide the assistance envisaged in its declaration, it is still under the obligation to provide assistance in accordance with this paragraph.

Each State Party has the right to request and, subject to the procedures set forth in paragraph 9, 10, and 11, to receive assistance and protection against the use or threat of use of chemical weapons if it considers that:

- (a) Chemical weapons have been used against it;
- (b) Riot control agents have been used against it as a method of warfare; or
- (c) It is threatened by actions or activities of any State that are prohibited for States Parties by Article I.” (Article X, paragraphs 7 and 8).

3.4 In order to observe the rights and fulfil the obligations of the OPCW, the Branch plans and develops strategies to face potential needs and threats; to develop assistance packages; and to ensure that they arrive where and when they are required. In operational terms, this could be achieved as follows:

- (a) Internationally, by mobilising the existing mechanisms and coordinating a response:
 - (i) Declarations of unilateral offers of assistance have been compiled and analysed. The voluntary fund for assistance was created in accordance with Article VIII, paragraph.21(j)). The fund has a credit balance of EUR 1,086,614.84. The guidelines for use of the voluntary fund were adopted by the Conference of the States Parties. They state how the fund is to be applied in the event of use, or threat of use, of chemical weapons. One bilateral agreement concerning the procurement of assistance has been concluded, while seven more are being negotiated with as many States Parties. Annual reminders are sent to those States Parties which have not met their obligations under paragraph 7 of Article X. Sixty-five States Parties, a little over one-third of the OPCW membership, have complied with their obligations under this paragraph.
 - (ii) The Branch organises an annual assistance coordination workshop to review the previous year’s activities related to Article X, present the plans and projects for the following year, and address all technical aspects of the coordination of offers of assistance. Other matters such as legal aspects of providing assistance, airlifting equipment and personnel and logistical problems are also discussed at this meeting.

- (iii) After five years of study and discussion, a comprehensive concept for assistance (S/272/2001) was developed and presented by the Director-General to the States Parties for consideration. This concept was the subject of informal discussions by the Executive Council in 2002. The Council endorsed some of the results of the informal consultations, including the establishment of the assistance coordination and assessment team (hereinafter, "ACAT") for assessment tasks. However, other matters, including the possible role of ACAT for coordinating assistance, need to be discussed further. A few technical workshops on assistance have also been held both in The Hague and in States Parties. Detailed discussions were held with those States Parties regarding the conclusion of bilateral agreements.
- (iv) The First OPCW Exercise on the Delivery of Assistance (ASSISTEX 1) was held from 10 to 14 September 2002 in Zadar, Croatia. The overall objective of the exercise was to assess the OPCW's preparedness (both within States Parties and at the Secretariat) when a request for assistance is received, and its response thereto. The other objectives of ASSISTEX 1 were to evaluate the following:
- current standard operating procedures (SOPs) and working instructions (WIs);
 - command and control mechanisms;
 - communications, notifications and activation procedures; and
 - field operations, and to determine resources and response requirements.

About 1000 individuals, 100 tonnes of equipment and 12 States Parties were involved in this exercise, along with the ACAT.

- (b) Increasing the Secretariat's capacity to manage assistance from the international community: several actions were undertaken to develop the Secretariat's capacity to manage the OPCW's response to requests for assistance. This is made possible by adopting a multi-faceted approach. The Secretariat carried out two exercises in investigating alleged use of chemical weapons (IAU), in the Czech Republic in 1999 and in Poland in 2000. These exercises were preceded by special training programmes both in the Netherlands and in other States Parties. Furthermore, the ACAT was established specifically to be dispatched to the requesting State Party within hours after receipt of a request for assistance. The team was trained in-house, led the ASSISTEX 1 exercise in Croatia and participated in other international exercises. The Branch has established contacts with relevant international organisations with a mandate to deliver emergency assistance, i.e., the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), World Food Programme (WFP), and International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). This allows the OPCW to benefit from the experience and expertise of such organisations; it also helps to avoid duplication of effort in the field; and to manage on-site activities more efficiently. Draft bilateral agreements are being prepared with OCHA and with WFP to identify areas of cooperation with these organisations. The Branch has also benefited from States Parties'

expertise provided States Parties through members of the Protection Network and qualified experts.

- (c) Ensuring that assistance reaches the requesting State Party. Article X requires the OPCW to provide assistance. The question of airlifting has been approached from three angles; provision of an aircraft by the Host Country (the Netherlands) or another State Party nearby; provision of aircraft by States Parties as part of their offers under Article X (e.g. Ukraine, Portugal); or provision of aircraft by international organisations and private companies. Bilateral arrangements need to be finalised between the OPCW and the governments of Ukraine and Portugal, as well as with international organisations, on the use of these means of transport. The Secretariat presently lacks any capability regarding delivery in the field. However, it has initiated discussions with relevant international organisations on the possibility of procuring such services on-site.

The delivery of assistance requires adequate transport arrangements to be made. The Branch and those States Parties which had made related offers, have discussed matters such as removing any national legal obstacles to dispatching teams and units outside the country; customs and immigration problems, vaccination and inoculation of team members, and other related practical matters. The Branch aims to conclude bilateral arrangements with those States Parties to address all these concerns and identify the areas of responsibilities for each party to the agreement.

Activities under Article X require constant review and improvement in order to enable the Organisation to carry out its obligations and to have a reliable mechanism for providing timely, efficient and adequate assistance. The unique characteristic of these activities is that any shortcoming may cost precious human lives.

4. Analysis of acquired experience

- 4.1 The experience gained so far indicates that the Secretariat may not be ready to assess the declarations on national protection programmes received to date, among other things because not all States Parties expected to have a programme have declared one, and because the declarations which have been received are so different that they cannot be compared with one another. Some States Parties have developed protection programmes according to their specific needs, e.g., climate - Sweden's and Finland's protection systems are best suited to sub-arctic conditions. Some States Parties have chosen to declare as little as possible, and in terms as general as possible.
- 4.2 Several States Parties with known, or expected, national protective programmes have not yet made a declaration. These fall into four categories:
 - (a) industrialised countries which are expected to have a programme, e.g., Greece, New Zealand, Poland, and Portugal;
 - (b) some of the former Soviet republics, e.g., the Russian Federation;

- (c) regional powers and/or States Parties in sensitive areas, e.g., India, Indonesia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, and Pakistan; and
- (d) developing countries, or countries in less sensitive areas.

- 4.3 An analysis of activities related to paragraph 5 of part 1 of Article X during the past five years reveals that implementation of this provision as well as of the decision of the First Session of the Conference of the States Parties requires much greater resources than are presently available. The Branch needs staff to develop and maintain a databank, to procure information, to manage the database, to contact companies and institutions in order to acquire data, to collate such information, to ensure limited translation where necessary, to scan internet links and to respond to enquiries by States Parties, etc. It also needs financial resources to purchase books, magazines and data; to set up and run a database; and to pay for subscriptions to electronic information. In the wake of the terrorist attack on the United States of America on September 11 2001, awareness was heightened of the threat of use of weapons of mass destruction by terrorists. As a result, States Parties are now increasingly invoking the provisions of Article X by requesting assistance from the Secretariat in developing their protection capability against chemical weapons.
- 4.4 The Branch has been providing expert advice to States Parties requesting it in developing or improving their protection capability in accordance with the second part of paragraph 5 of Article X. The number of these requests has risen sharply, and the Branch does not have adequate means to meet them all. The three national and three regional courses on protection held in the past five years point to a need to develop modules and teaching packages in several languages, and then to adapt them to the specific needs of States Parties. Since the participants in such courses are mainly from civil protection or civil defence agencies, “fighter fighters”, or first responders in States Parties, the curriculum needs to be expanded to include familiarisation with the mandate of the OPCW. Many developing countries have requested assistance in establishing their emergency response systems to counter an attack involving chemical weapons. The requests made in 2001 and 2002 by Togo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Armenia, Uzbekistan, the Islamic Republic of Iran and several others have been delayed until such time as the Branch has adequate resources to meet them. The Branch is exploring ways and means of channelling these requests to those States Parties which had offered such assistance. So far, Sweden and Switzerland have been receptive to this approach.
- 4.5 The international courses provided by States Parties, i.e., the Czech Republic, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Switzerland, and Sweden, are among the best and least expensive courses. They are basically funded by the host countries, and the financial involvement of the OPCW is minimal. These courses have become annual events over the past five years, and have contributed towards assembling a team of protection experts whose expertise will be helpful to their respective countries and to the OPCW's efforts in international capacity building. Nearly 500 individuals have been trained in these courses so far, and advanced courses are being considered for some of them. Switzerland conducted an advanced course, combining CITPRO and SEF-Lab trainees into a SEF-Trad (Swiss Emergency Field Training Advanced) course in December 2002. It is necessary to create a link between national, regional and international courses.

- 4.6 The Protection Network is a group of internationally recognised experts in fields related to various aspects of protection. They were appointed in their individual capacities to provide advice to the Secretariat when called upon to do so and to serve as resource persons on courses related to protection. Several ideas and proposals put forward at the annual meeting in The Hague need to be followed up. The PN members, however, are not able to allocate more time to pursue them, and the Branch presently lacks the means.
- 4.7 The first OPCW exercise on the delivery of assistance (Assistex 1), held in Croatia from 10 to 14 September 2002, illustrated the concept of increasing capacity at an international level, and provided practical insights to both the participating States Parties and the OPCW on the operational aspects of this activity. Although the evaluation is incomplete, it indicates the need for further discussions and possibly a wider approach, both quantitatively and qualitatively. The Convention defines assistance as the coordination and delivery of protection against chemical weapons. States Parties have yet to clarify the terms "coordination" and "delivery", and how they could be translated into practical actions. In the case of use, or threat of use, of chemical weapons, the States Parties and the Secretariat will be faced with a challenging function involving multilateral interaction among the requesting State Party, which is the ultimate decision making authority, the States Parties which had offered assistance under their own system and decision-making powers, and the Secretariat staff. This last is the sole repository of information regarding the nature and scope of the offers, as well as the potential compatibility-related problems that might result from their simultaneous operation while covering an individual request. The role of each individual in the on-site operation coordination centre (hereinafter, "OSOCC"), the field activities under command and control, the definitions of "coordination" and "delivery" of appropriate mandates, equipment and training for Secretariat staff are only a few of the many matters which the States Parties need to address in an appropriate forum. An analysis of Assistex and the lessons learned forms the subject of a separate document which will be presented shortly to States Parties. As matters stand, the ability of the OPCW (both States Parties and Secretariat) to implement the provision on assistance contained in Article X remains in doubt.
- 4.8 Another major development which the Review Conference needs to consider is the new approach by international organisations towards weapons of mass destruction in general, and towards chemical weapons in particular. Following the September 11 terrorist attacks, international organisations responsible for providing emergency assistance have included, in their threat analysis, the possibility of operating in areas contaminated with chemical warfare agents. While IAEA and WHO are approached on matters related to nuclear and biological weapons, these organisations contact the OPCW for assistance in three main areas:
- (a) advice and recommendations on matters involving CW;
 - (b) awareness training, so that personnel knows to leave a contaminated area; and
 - (c) assistance in carrying out their humanitarian mandate.

- 4.9 The Secretariat has been participating in various meetings with these international organisations during the past two years, but it needs guidance from the States Parties regarding policy in this demanding area.
- 4.10 Article X proceeds on the basis that the assistance procedures are triggered by a request from a State Party. It would be advisable for the First Review Conference to consider the matter of requests originating from elsewhere, e.g., an international organisation. The Convention provides that if the United Nations requests help from it, the resources of the OPCW shall be placed at the disposal of the Secretary General of the United Nations.

5. Matters that should be considered

5.1 Article X, paragraph 4:

- (a) adoption by States Parties of a format and procedures for declarations of national protection programmes pending from the First Session of the Conference of the States Parties;
- (b) provision of on-site assistance to States Parties in filing such declarations, if they so request;
- (c) establishment of a database for such submissions; and
- (d) possible use of these submissions for development or improvement of national capacity to render assistance.

5.2 Article X, paragraph 5 (parts 1 and 2):

- (a) establishment of a database and a data bank in accordance with the provisions of the Convention and the decision taken by the Conference of the States Parties at its First Session;
- (b) adoption of a reliable plan of interaction between the Secretariat and States Parties to enrich the databank;
- (c) guidance by States Parties on the nature and format of a databank - should the Secretariat be the prime source of information, or an auxiliary one? In either case, what will be the liability of each aspect? Is a disclaimer sufficient to avoid responsibility when providing such information?
- (d) decisions on training modules and packages, with limited translations, on the provision of expert advice; how would States Parties contribute in terms of literature, material and other resources required for making these modules available (material, instructors, financial contributions etc.)?
- (e) decisions on how to provide expert advice to States Parties in accordance with the second part of paragraph 5;

- (f) addressing the Secretariat's requirements (financial and staffing) in the light of decisions reached by States Parties under paragraph (e) above; and
- (g) involvement of the Protection Network for both national and international capacity building.

5.3 Article X paragraphs 7-11:

- (a) serious consideration by States Parties of how to ensure that the OPCW (States Parties and the Secretariat) is prepared to respond adequately and in a timely manner to requests for assistance, including the conduct of (IAU). The concept document developed by the Secretariat (S/272/2001), the results of informal consultations by EC-X on this topic and the results of Assistex 1, as well as other activities during previous years, provide a sound basis for such consideration;
- (b) rendering assistance is an extremely complicated operation, both politically and technically. It requires long-term preparation and planning. The coordination function has a political dimension (interacting with national and international agencies, with potentially conflicting objectives and mandates) and this should be considered by States Parties;
- (c) an assistance operation is likely to be carried out in principle in an unstable situation or a dangerous environment. Those involved should be able first of all to protect themselves in a contaminated environment, and then carry out their functions. Technical aspects such as safety matters, logistics, avoiding contamination, medical counter-measures, specific equipment, etc., need to be addressed so that assistance operations may be carried out safely and efficiently. The Branch has to be equipped to deal with such challenges. These requirements have also been stipulated in EC-XV/DG.4; and
- (d) there is a need for a clear approach to relevant international organisations. Areas of interaction and cooperation should be identified. This will enable both sides to avoid duplication of tasks, minimise costs, reinforce on-site operations, and conclude bilateral agreements and memoranda of understanding with relevant international organisations.