

**NOTE BY THE TECHNICAL SECRETARIAT****ONGOING AND PLANNED AWARENESS-RAISING, EDUCATION AND OUTREACH  
ACTIVITIES**

1. In the political declaration agreed at the Third Special Session of the Conference of the States Parties to Review the Operation of the Chemical Weapons Convention (hereinafter “the Third Review Conference”), States Parties underlined their determination to “maintain the Convention’s role as a bulwark against chemical weapons; to that end to promote, inter alia, outreach, capacity building, education and public diplomacy.” In accordance with this declaration and specific recommendations from the Third Review Conference, the Technical Secretariat (hereinafter “the Secretariat”) has undertaken a range of activities in 2013 and will continue to further enhance such activities in 2014 and in the coming years, particularly in the light of the award of the Nobel Peace Prize in 2013 and the centenary in 2015 of the first large-scale use of chemical weapons. This Note provides information on ongoing and planned awareness-raising, education, and outreach activities by the Secretariat.
2. In its activities, the Secretariat is guided by the advice that it receives from the Scientific Advisory Board (SAB), particularly from its temporary working group (TWG) on education and outreach in science and technology relevant to the Chemical Weapons Convention (hereinafter “the Convention”). The TWG, comprising of 13 international experts on the Convention and chemistry education, is chaired by Professor Djafer Benachour of Algeria, and has to date convened three meetings. The TWG is an extremely valuable source of guidance and advice for the Secretariat, particularly with regard to recommendations for sustainable approaches to education and outreach in the long term.
3. The final report of the Third Review Conference (RC-3/3\*, dated 19 April 2013) sets forth four recommendations that specifically address education, outreach, and awareness-raising. Proposals for implementing these recommendations were put forward in a non-paper by the Secretariat in September 2013, and this Note summarises activities undertaken and planned in response to each one.



### **Recommendation 1**

**“Encouraged the Secretariat, in concert with the SAB temporary working group on education and outreach, to assist States Parties, upon request, in implementing education and outreach activities, including by disseminating materials, conducting workshops and regional meetings” (subparagraph 9.103(e) of RC-3/3\*)**

4. The Secretariat included the topic of education and outreach on the programme of the Fifteenth Annual Meeting of National Authorities in November 2013 to encourage States Parties to share best practices and exchange information, and to enable the Secretariat to present available educational materials. In April 2014 the Secretariat, together with the Government of Argentina, co-organised a regional meeting for States Parties in the GRULAC<sup>1</sup> region which was attended by representatives of 44 National Authorities and universities from 22 States Parties in the region (see EC-76/NAT.1, dated 5 June 2014). Furthermore, the Secretariat has included education and outreach as a core element of the regional meetings of National Authorities, including the recent regional meeting in Nairobi for National Authorities of Africa, where the session on education and outreach was facilitated by a member of the TWG. Education and outreach will continue to feature on the programmes of such future regional meetings, and on the programme of the Sixteenth Annual Meeting of National Authorities in November 2014.
5. The Secretariat has used these meetings to inform National Authorities about the following educational materials:
  - (a) Two short films which are available as part of the “Fires” project, a series of video documentaries that profile individuals with compelling personal stories to tell in relation to chemical weapons, warfare, and disarmament, produced with the OPCW’s own audiovisual capacities. The films can be found at <http://www.thefiresproject.com/>. The first of the films has already been subtitled into all official OPCW languages with financial support from the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. An accompanying lesson plan for use by teachers, also translated into all official languages, has already been produced for the first film;
  - (b) An educational module for use by high school chemistry students entitled “Chemistry in Conflict”. The student workbook, and an accompanying guide for teachers, has been developed by a group of teachers from Dutch and international schools in The Hague, in cooperation with the International Baccalaureate Organisation, Leiden University, and the Municipality of The Hague, with financial support from the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. The module will soon be freely available for use in high schools around the world; and
  - (c) An interactive website entitled “Multiple Uses of Chemicals”, developed in cooperation with the International Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry (IUPAC) and experts at the King’s University College in Canada, with

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Group of Latin American and Caribbean States.

financial support from the European Union. The website is a much updated and improved version of an earlier OPCW/IUPAC activity conducted several years ago. The website can be found at <http://multiple.kcvs.ca/site/index.html>.

6. Much wider dissemination of such material is planned, as is its translation into all official OPCW languages later in 2014. The Secretariat will also seek voluntary funding to establish a global network of educators for the exchange of information and best practices, and also to facilitate “train-the-trainer” programmes at the national or regional level.

## **Recommendation 2**

**“Encouraged the Secretariat to continue to develop relationships and partnerships with other relevant bodies, national and international, that are working to promote the peaceful and responsible use of chemistry, including capacity building” (subparagraph 9.131(j) of RC-3/3\*)**

7. The Secretariat already benefits from valuable relationships and partnerships in this area, most notably with IUPAC. In 2012, the Director-General gave a keynote speech at IUPAC’s International Conference on Chemistry Education in Rome, and again (via video link) at the IUPAC World Chemistry Congress in Istanbul in 2013. However, this existing partnership is being broadened and deepened, through a more systematic partnership with IUPAC. The Secretariat also works closely with the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) Implementation Support Unit, and frequently participates in BWC meetings in Geneva.
8. Partnerships with other such organisations, for example the International Council for Science and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), are also being established. Such partnerships could include, inter alia, the joint organisation of meetings on relevant topics and reciprocal participation in meetings and conferences of each organisation, joint awareness-raising and outreach activities, and coordinated dissemination of educational materials.
9. As appropriate, the Secretariat will share experiences and best practices with other relevant international bodies and organisations, particularly the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization, the International Atomic Energy Agency, the World Health Organization, and the BWC Implementation Support Unit. A workshop, co-organised by the Secretariat and the Vienna Center for Disarmament and Non-Proliferation, bringing together many of these organisations, took place in Vienna in November 2013 with financial support from the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

### **Recommendation 3**

**“Encouraged the Secretariat to continue to develop relations and partnerships as appropriate with relevant regional and international organisations, as well as chemical industry associations, the private sector, academia, and civil society, in order to raise awareness of the activities of the OPCW” (subparagraph 9.131(l) of RC-3/3\*)**

10. Raising awareness about the activities of the OPCW is a multifaceted activity within the Secretariat. In the specific area of education, the following activities are of note:
  - (a) In May 2014, the Secretariat actively participated in the annual conference of the European Network of Science Centres and Museums, which took place in The Hague and was attended by roughly 1,000 senior representatives of such institutions worldwide. The Secretariat had a presence in the conference exhibition space and welcomed conference participants for a tour of the OPCW Headquarters. In addition, the Director-General gave a keynote speech to the conference on 24 May 2014;
  - (b) On 20 June 2014, the Secretariat hosted the annual “Day of Excellence” for the science sector within higher education in the Netherlands. The meeting was attended by the Minister of Education, Culture and Science of the Netherlands, Dr Jet Bussemaker, and around 100 senior representatives from higher education institutions across the Netherlands. Secretariat staff members and external partners were able to inform participants about the activities and programmes of the OPCW and the availability of the educational materials mentioned in paragraph 5 above;
  - (c) Since 2010, the Secretariat has collaborated with the TMC Asser Institute in The Hague to co-organise an annual summer programme on weapons of mass destruction (WMD) disarmament and non-proliferation. The programme, now in its fifth year, involves speakers from partner organisations, and is specifically designed for advanced graduate students and young to mid-level professionals who are interested in pursuing careers in the field of non-proliferation and disarmament of WMD (see S/1172/2014, dated 10 April 2014);
  - (d) The Secretariat welcomes visits by student groups to the OPCW Headquarters and has recently revitalised its visits programme. Since visits resumed in early 2014, approximately two groups per week have visited the OPCW, including trainee diplomats, government officials, and students from around 15 different States Parties. Some of these groups have been participating in Model United Nations simulations. Every year, two large Model United Nations conferences take place in The Hague, and the Secretariat has reached out to both; the Deputy Director-General addressed the opening ceremony of The Hague International Model United Nations in January 2014 and participants in The European International Model United Nations will visit the OPCW in July 2014;

- (e) The Secretariat already cooperates with the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs by providing OPCW information and material for use in its disarmament education programme. Strengthened activities by the Secretariat in this area also contribute to the implementation of the recommendations contained in the 2002 report of the United Nations Secretary-General's Group of Governmental Experts on Disarmament and Non-Proliferation education (A/57/124).

#### **Recommendation 4**

**“Called upon States Parties and the Secretariat, as part of efforts to promote the ethical norms of the Convention, to encourage and promote efforts by the appropriate national and international professional bodies to inculcate awareness amongst scientists and engineers at an early stage in their training that the knowledge and technologies used for beneficial purposes should only be used for purposes not prohibited under this Convention” (subparagraph 9.155(d) of RC-3/3\*)**

11. As mentioned above, the Secretariat has collaborated with IUPAC for many years, including on the development of educational materials on the multiple uses of chemicals and on guidelines for codes of conduct. The Secretariat has also worked with national professional bodies and academies of science in many States Parties in order to generate awareness of the potential risks posed by toxic chemicals. The Secretariat intends to intensify such efforts and encourages States Parties to involve such bodies in any national education and outreach activities.
12. The Secretariat also plans to initiate relations at the international level with IAP – the Global Network of Science Academies and the InterAcademy Council, and at the regional level with the Association of Academies and Societies of Sciences in Asia, the European Academies' Science Advisory Council, the InterAmerican Network of Academies of Sciences, and the Network of African Science Academies.
13. The educational materials described in paragraph 5 above make reference to ethical issues connected with the responsible use of chemistry, and can be used to raise awareness among science and engineering students. The Secretariat is disseminating information about these materials as widely as possible, including to the organisations mentioned in paragraph 12 above.

#### **Conclusion**

14. From 22 to 23 September 2014, the Secretariat will organise a conference entitled “Education for Peace: New Pathways for Securing Chemical Disarmament” at OPCW Headquarters (see S/1190/2014, dated 16 June 2014). The event will provide a forum for wide-ranging discussions and the exchange of ideas and best practices on ways of raising awareness about disarmament and non-proliferation issues, especially in educational institutions. This will include demonstrations of materials and tools in various media formats. The objective will be to identify new approaches and synergies arising from discussions between different representative groups in order to better inform future efforts in this area.