



NOTE BY THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL

ESTABLISHMENT OF AN ADVISORY BOARD ON EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

BACKGROUND

1. Education and outreach have been recognised as essential elements in maintaining and strengthening the global norm against chemical weapons established by the Chemical Weapons Convention (hereinafter “the Convention”). As the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) shifts its focus, in the short to medium term, from chemical disarmament to preventing the re-emergence of chemical weapons, the role of education and outreach in implementing the Convention will take on greater importance. As such, education and outreach will become long-term strategic tools for the Organisation as it implements its mandate.
2. 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”), held from 8 to 19 April 2013, made several references to the key role of education and outreach in the continued implementation of the Convention in its report (RC-3/3*, dated 19 April 2013):
 - (a) In the political declaration (paragraph 9.15): “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”;
 - (b) Also in the political declaration (paragraph 9.16): “Desire to improve interaction with chemical industry, the scientific community, academia, and civil society organisations engaged in issues relevant to the Convention, and cooperate as appropriate with other relevant international and regional organisations, in promoting the goals of the Convention”;
 - (c) Under “National implementation measures” (paragraph 9.101): “[A]cknowledged the role of education, outreach and awareness-raising as a relevant activity for the national implementation of the Convention, including awareness among academia and relevant scientific communities of the provisions of the Convention, the domestic laws and regulations relevant to the Convention. Accordingly, the Third Review Conference welcomed the



establishment of the SAB¹ temporary working group on education and outreach”;

- (d) Also under “National implementation measures” (subparagraph 9.103(e)): “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”;
 - (e) Under “Economic and technological development” (subparagraph 9.131(l)): “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”; and
 - (f) Under “The general functioning of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons” (subparagraph 9.155(d)): “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.”
3. The Executive Council (hereinafter “the Council”) has also recognised the increasing role and importance of education and outreach for the implementation of the Convention, noting, for example, in the report of its Seventy-Sixth Session (EC-76/6, dated 11 July 2014), that “[d]ue to the importance of education and outreach, the Council agreed to consider having regular discussions of this item in the future sessions of the Council.”
4. At its Seventeenth Session, the SAB recommended the establishment of a temporary working group (TWG) on education and outreach (paragraph 16.6 of SAB-17/1, dated 23 November 2011). The Director-General endorsed this recommendation and, in accordance with the terms of reference of the SAB, established the TWG on Education and Outreach in Science and Technology Relevant to the Convention, appointing Djafer Benachour of Algeria as its Chair.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE TEMPORARY WORKING GROUP

5. In its final report (SAB/REP/2/14, dated 25 November 2014²), the TWG noted that education and outreach in the context of the Convention serve a number of specific purposes, inter alia:

¹ SAB = Scientific Advisory Board.

² Available at https://www.opcw.org/index.php?eID=dam_frontend_push&docID=18014

- (a) raising awareness of the Convention among the broad community of relevant professionals who should be aware of the Convention, including students, educators, the global scientific community and the chemical industry;
 - (b) stressing the potential risks posed by the multiple uses of chemicals;
 - (c) contributing to national implementation of the Convention;
 - (d) contributing to the prevention of the misuse of toxic chemicals;
 - (e) facilitating chemical safety and chemical security;
 - (f) building skills and capabilities in areas relating to the peaceful uses of chemistry; and
 - (g) educating future generations of the societal benefits of upholding a world free of chemical weapons and the need to prevent their re-emergence.
6. Also in its final report, the TWG made, inter alia, the following recommendations:
- (a) “Education and outreach with respect to the responsible use of science, particularly as it is relevant to the Chemical Weapons Convention, should remain a core activity of the OPCW, so as to achieve and maintain a world free of chemical weapons”; and
 - (b) “An ongoing expert advisory group on education and outreach with respect to the responsible use of science, particularly as it is relevant to the CWC, should be established to help OPCW fulfil its mandate for education and outreach, and to ensure that activities and practices are grounded in science education and communication research findings and effective practices.”
7. In light of the background above, and pursuant to the above recommendations of the Third Review Conference and of the TWG, the Director-General recommends the establishment of a permanent Advisory Board on Education and Outreach.

FUNCTION OF THE ADVISORY BOARD ON EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

8. The proposed function of the Advisory Board on Education and Outreach is to advise and assist the Director-General and States Parties on all aspects of education and outreach relevant to the Organisation’s mandate, with a view to ensuring that the Organisation’s education and outreach activities are effective, sustainable, cost-effective, and benefit from the latest advances in education and outreach theory and practice, and that States Parties may receive expert advice and support on education and outreach issues in the context of their national implementation of the Convention. The members of the Advisory Board, given their international standing, would be expected to play a role in the Organisation’s education and outreach activities.

9. In carrying out its mandate, the Advisory Board should have due regard to the range of audiences for education and outreach activities relevant to the Organisation's mandate, including scientists, industry, educators, students, civil society, and policymakers.
10. The draft terms of reference (annexed to draft decision EC-79/DEC/CRP.4, dated 29 May 2015) provide more detail on the Advisory Board's proposed remit.

STRUCTURE OF THE ADVISORY BOARD ON EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

11. It is proposed that the Advisory Board on Education and Outreach should consist of 15 members with appropriate expertise in education (both in STEM³ and other relevant disciplines), science communication, the chemical industry, dual/multiple-use issues related to chemistry and the life sciences, and the Convention and related international measures. The members of the Advisory Board should be appointed from an appropriate mix, inter alia, of national institutions, international organisations, educational institutions, industry associations, and scientific unions. The Advisory Board should be authorised to invite observers to attend and participate in its meetings. In view of the important and continuing contribution of the International Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry (IUPAC) to education and outreach with regard to the Convention, it is recommended that IUPAC be designated as a permanent observer.
12. Appointments to the Advisory Board should be made by the Director-General, having due regard both to ensuring a balance and depth of expertise and to ensuring that the Advisory Board includes at least one member from each regional group. Members of the Advisory Board should serve in their personal capacity.
13. The Advisory Board should report regularly to the Director-General on its activities. The Director-General should, in turn, report to the Council and the Conference of the States Parties (hereinafter "the Conference") on the activities of the Advisory Board. During the first three years, the Advisory Board should meet twice per year, ordinarily for two working days.
14. The draft terms of reference (annexed to EC-79/DEC/CRP.4) provide more detail on the Advisory Board's proposed structure and working methods.

NEXT STEPS

15. Subparagraph 21(f) of Article VIII of the Convention provides for the establishment by the Conference of subsidiary organs. This provision has, in the past, provided the basis for the establishment of the Advisory Body on Administrative and Financial Matters and the Committee on Relations with the Host Country. The Conference may establish subsidiary organs directly, or it may delegate this function to the Council or the Technical Secretariat (hereinafter "the Secretariat").

³

Science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.

16. Options for establishing the Advisory Board on Education and Outreach within this framework should now be considered so that the policy-making organs may take appropriate decisions to allow the Advisory Board to begin its work in early 2016. The Secretariat considers that the nature of the Advisory Board's proposed functions and responsibilities would militate in favour of having the Conference, upon a recommendation of the Council, request the Secretariat to set up such an Advisory Board.

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