

**NOTE BY THE TECHNICAL SECRETARIAT****THE CONTENT OF THE ASSISTANCE-AND-PROTECTION DATA BANK
AND ITS USE****Introduction**

1. According to paragraph 5 of Article X of the Chemical Weapons Convention (hereinafter “the Convention”), 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”.
2. At its First Session, the Conference of the States Parties adopted a decision requesting the Technical Secretariat (hereinafter “the Secretariat”) to establish and maintain a data bank containing the above-mentioned information concerning various means of protection against chemical weapons (C-I/DEC.53, dated 16 May 1997).
3. The Executive Council at its Forty-Sixth Session requested the Secretariat “to finish setting up the data bank on information on assistance and protection” (paragraph 5.24 of EC-46/4, dated 7 July 2006). In December 2006, the assistance-and-protection data bank was established at the OPCW Headquarters for the Permanent Representatives of the States Parties, as well as for the internal use of the Secretariat, as required under paragraph 5 of Article X.
4. A version of the data bank prepared for the extranet was made available for the use of National Authorities and Permanent Representatives to the OPCW through the OPCW extranet, which has been under authentication since the end of 2007.
5. The Second Special Session of the Conference of the States Parties to Review the Operation of the Chemical Weapons Convention (hereinafter “the Second Review Conference”) noted the progress made on setting up the OPCW data bank on protection and “encouraged the Secretariat to update the information available on it regularly concerning assistance, protection equipment and knowledge offered by States Parties” (paragraph 9.98 of RC-2/4, dated 18 April 2008). The Second Review Conference also requested the Secretariat “to report periodically to the Council on the content of the data bank and its use” (paragraph 9.98 of RC-2/4).
6. In June 2010 the Secretariat issued a Note on the content and use of the data bank (EC-61/S/4, dated 2 June 2010). The present Note serves to update this information.



7. The Third Special Session of the Conference of the States Parties to Review the Operation of the Chemical Weapons Convention requested the Secretariat to review and keep up to date the OPCW data bank on protection (subparagraph 9.118(h) of RC-3/3*, dated 19 April 2013).

Content of the assistance-and-protection data bank

8. The data bank contains the following information: the annual submission of information by States Parties under paragraph 4 of Article X, offers of assistance under paragraph 7 of Article X, lists of experts suggested by the Member States, and other freely available information on protection against chemical weapons. The data bank serves as an initial source of information for a State Party, but it cannot replace the specific technical advice provided by the Secretariat in accordance with Article X.
9. The information available in the data bank is organised into eight categories: general; submissions/annual information; voluntary donations; bilateral agreements; unilateral offers (that is, equipment, expertise, transportation, or generic); experts; events (for example, training/workshops/exhibitions, as well as the lists of participants who have attended these events); and other sources of information about protection.
10. All categories of information on the data bank can be queried by country or by region. The information contained in each of the eight categories of the data bank has been classified and grouped, and can be also accessed by means of a search of the following:
 - (a) in the category of submissions/annual information: by reporting period and by the existence of national protection programmes;
 - (b) in the category of voluntary donations: by the date of the contribution;
 - (c) in the category of bilateral agreements: by type and sub-type of agreement and the date of submission;
 - (d) in the category of unilateral offers: by type and sub-type of offer (that is, kinds of equipment (medical, detection, decontamination, and protection), expertise (technical, medical, training, and manuals), transportation, and generic information);
 - (e) in the category of experts: by the names of experts and the areas of their expertise;
 - (f) in the category of events: by type of event, the date it took place, and the participants who attended;
 - (g) in the category of other sources of information: information about protection; and
 - (h) in the category of general: a summary of all the other categories by country or by region.

11. All the information available in the data bank is non-confidential. With regard to the information related to experts and applicants or participants in the different events organised in accordance with Article X, only the name, the country, and the area of expertise are available; no other personal contact details can be accessed through the data bank.

Access to the assistance-and-protection data bank

12. The data bank has been accessed 2,013 times (171 times between 1 June 2014 and 1 June 2015) since it was made available in December 2007. These queries were made by the Permanent Representatives, National Authorities of the Member States, and by the Secretariat.

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