

**NOTE BY THE TECHNICAL SECRETARIAT****UPDATE ON EVENTS ORGANISED BY THE TECHNICAL SECRETARIAT
IN THE AREA OF INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AND ASSISTANCE
MAY TO AUGUST 2017****INTRODUCTION**

1. The aim of this Note is to provide the Members States of the OPCW with information on a four-monthly basis regarding the capacity-building activities delivered by the Technical Secretariat (hereinafter “the Secretariat”) through its international cooperation and assistance programmes. These programmes support Members States’ efforts to effectively implement the Chemical Weapons Convention (hereinafter “the Convention”), in particular Articles VII, X and XI thereof. This Note covers the period from 1 May to 31 August 2017.

IMPLEMENTATION SUPPORT – ARTICLE VII**National legal workshop for Georgia on the implementation of the Convention,
Tbilisi, Georgia, 1 and 2 May 2017**

2. The workshop was organised by the National Authority of Georgia to address legal requirements under the Convention, national implementation measures and relevant next steps. The Secretariat was invited to participate and provide technical expertise and presentations.
3. As results of the workshop, Georgia was able to identify gaps in the existing legislative framework on the Convention and successfully drafted texts of provisions that need to be incorporated in its criminal code.
4. Twenty-five participants from different relevant ministries and institutions, including the Parliament, attended the workshop.

Regional meetings of National Authorities

5. During the reporting period, four regional meetings were organised in Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe and the GRULAC¹, as follows:

¹ GRULAC = Group of Latin American and Caribbean States



- (a) The sixteenth regional meeting of National Authorities of States Parties in Eastern Europe took place in Tbilisi, Georgia, from 3 to 5 May 2017. Forty participants from 21 States Parties in Eastern Europe attended.
 - (b) The fifteenth regional meeting of National Authorities of States Parties in Asia took place in Dubai, the United Arab Emirates, from 16 to 18 May 2017. Forty-one participants from 29 States Parties in Asia attended.
 - (c) The eighteenth regional meeting of National Authorities of States Parties in the GRULAC, preceded by a high-level panel discussion, took place in Montego Bay, Jamaica, from 13 to 15 June 2017. Thirty-eight participants from 20 States Parties in the GRULAC attended.
 - (d) The fifteenth regional meeting of National Authorities of States Parties in Africa took place in Banjul, the Gambia, from 18 to 20 July 2017. Sixty participants from 31 States Parties in Africa attended.
6. The aim of the regional meetings was to provide opportunities to address and discuss various aspects of implementation of the Convention among the National Authority representatives and the Secretariat, taking into account the specific context of every region.
 7. The regional meetings were successful and achieved the anticipated objectives, thus facilitating fruitful interaction and deliberation among representatives of the National Authorities and with the Secretariat for effective implementation of the Convention.
 8. These meetings were preceded by events to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the Convention's entry into force. These events were shared with representatives from international and regional partner organisations and entities.
 9. The meetings provided occasions for participants to highlight the achievements and the challenges faced by the Organisation, as well as issues related to regional and global security. The host countries also arranged some national activities, such as exhibitions and performances, to mark the 20th anniversary.

Mentorship/Partnership Programme

10. The Mentorship/Partnership Programme aims to enhance the national capability for effective functioning of the National Authorities through learning and sharing of knowledge, best practices and experiences. It promotes country-to-country support, networking and cooperation.
11. During the reporting period, two Mentorship/Partnership Programmes were implemented.
 - (a) The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and Nigeria met in London, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, from 19 to 23 June 2017. As a result of this visit, the Nigerian National Authority committed to follow up on different recommendations to improve their implementation. The return visit by the National Authority of the United

Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to Nigeria is preliminarily planned for the first quarter of 2018.

- (b) Argentina and Guatemala met in Buenos Aires, Argentina, from 31 July to 4 August 2017. As a result of this visit, the Guatemalan National Authority has made plans to follow up on various recommendations, including to review the structure of its National Authority to be more effective. The return visit by the Argentinian National Authority to Guatemala is planned for October 2017.

The second training-of-trainers course for representatives of customs training institutions on technical aspects of the transfers regime, The Hague, the Netherlands, 20 to 23 June 2017

12. This course was organised in cooperation with the World Customs Organization (WCO). It was intended for representatives of customs training institutions and National Authorities. Its main objective was to build capacity of States Parties to enforce the Convention's transfers regime of scheduled chemicals.
13. The training course enabled participants to gain knowledge of Convention provisions and requirements for its effective implementation, as well as the transfers regime. The participating countries developed road maps to move forward with incorporation of Convention-related elements in their regular national training programmes.
14. The course was attended by 22 participants from nine States Parties. It was funded using resources from the regular budget.

Seventeenth session of the internship programme for legal drafters and National Authority representatives, The Hague, the Netherlands, 7 to 11 August 2017

15. This programme is aimed at providing technical assistance to States Parties that have yet to develop comprehensive implementing legislation on the Convention. This session targeted three French-speaking countries in Africa.
16. Participants were equipped with technical skills and information on the Convention and the work of the OPCW, so as to enable them to complete a draft of national implementing legislation and to pursue its adoption upon their return. At the end of the programme, the participants successfully drafted legislation for their relevant countries covering all the initial measures required under the Convention and which could be considered for adoption by their relevant authorities by 2018 or 2019.
17. The programme was attended by seven participants from four States Parties from Africa. It was funded using resources from the regular budget.

ASSISTANCE AND PROTECTION – ARTICLE X

Planning and coordination meeting for Member States of the Southern African Development Community (SADC), Lusaka, Zambia, 8 to 12 May 2017

18. This meeting was intended for senior emergency management personnel from SADC Member States. It is an integral part of the implementation of objectives 3 and 4 of the Africa Programme². Its aim was to promote understanding of chemical threats and assess the current capacity and needs of States Parties in the SADC to mitigate chemical threats.
19. The meeting led to the development of a report entitled “Assessment of Regional Needs for the Development of National Protection Programs for Southern African Development Community (SADC) Member States” which includes a preliminary strategy for driving national planning on assistance and protection.
20. Subsequently, the Secretariat has recently been informed that the SADC Council of Ministers decided that the aforementioned report is to be included on the upcoming agenda of the Ministerial Committee of the Organs and Politics, Defence and Security. Furthermore, the Council has directed the SADC Secretariat to engage with the Secretariat in coordinating the implementation of this project within the SADC.
21. The meeting was attended by delegations from 11 of the 15 SADC Member States as well as two representatives from the SADC Secretariat. This event was funded using resources from the regular budget.

Basic regional course for specialists in response to chemical warfare agents and toxic industrial chemicals, Montevideo, Uruguay, 8 to 12 May 2017

22. This course was intended for first responders in chemical emergency response and protection against chemical weapons from States Parties of the GRULAC region. The objective of the course was to provide basic knowledge of protective and responsive measures to chemical emergency situations involving the use of chemical warfare agents and toxic industrial chemicals.
23. The course met the foregoing learning objectives, preparing the participants for the advanced assistance and protection training, held in Argentina in May 2017.
24. Twenty-seven participants from 16 State Parties from Latin America and the Caribbean participated in the event. The course was funded using resources from the regular budget.

Basic course on assistance and protection against chemical weapons for Arabic-speaking States Parties, Casablanca, Morocco, 14 to 18 May 2017

25. This course was intended for first responders in chemical emergency response and protection against chemical weapons from Arabic-speaking States Parties. The course provided participants with knowledge of protective and responsive measures to

² The OPCW Programme to Strengthen Cooperation with Africa on the Chemical Weapons Convention.

chemical emergency situations involving the use of chemical warfare agents and toxic industrial chemicals. The programme also included a table-top exercise (TTX) and practical sessions.

26. The training course met its anticipated objectives, preparing the participants for the advanced training to be held in Qatar in December 2017.
27. Thirty-seven participants from nine Arab-speaking States Parties attended the meeting. The course was funded using resources from the regular budget.

Sixth advanced training course on chemical emergency response, Buenos Aires, Argentina, 15 to 19 May 2017

28. The course was intended for first responders of the GRULAC region having completed the basic course in chemical emergency response held in Montevideo, Uruguay, from 8 to 12 May 2017.
29. The primary objective of the course was to equip the participants with the practical component of the basic training by incorporating field exercises of chemical emergency response with realistic scenarios and conditions as the main part of the course.
30. The course resulted in the formation of a well-trained group of first responders prepared to test their new skills and knowledge in a confirmatory exercise, held in Brazil in August 2017.
31. Twenty-six participants from 17 GRULAC States Parties participated in the course. The course was funded using resources from the regular budget.

Joint basic and advanced training course for Russian-speaking first responders to incidents of chemical contamination, Svetlaya Roshcha, Belarus, 15 to 25 May 2017

32. The course was intended for Russian-speaking first responders. The course provided training in planning for, and building a support team for, civil protection, civil defence, and decontamination operations in contaminated areas, as well as in appropriate responses and countermeasures in the event of incidents involving chemical warfare agents and toxic industrial chemicals.
33. The course equipped participants with knowledge and skills on chemical warfare agents, the use of protective equipment, detection and decontamination techniques, as well as first aid for chemical casualties.
34. The course was attended by 20 Russian-speaking participants from 11 States Parties. The course was co-funded using resources from the regular budget and a voluntary contribution from the European Union.

Train-the-trainers course, Lázně Bohdaneč, Czech Republic, 17 to 25 May 2017

35. This specialised training course was intended for expert first responders involved in the provision of training on chemical emergency response. Its main objective was to

provide training covering planning and preparation for, as well as the conduct and evaluation of, response operations in contaminated areas. The course also included a practical exercise.

36. The participants gained knowledge and skills in managing chemical emergency response including command roles.
37. Sixteen participants from 16 States Parties participated in the course. The course was funded using resources from the regular budget.

Regional table-top exercise on response to chemical emergencies, Denpasar, Indonesia, 23 to 25 May 2017

38. The TTX was intended for emergency managers of Asian States Parties. The main objective of the TTX was to discuss and exercise operational frameworks, policymaking, communication, and information sharing at national and regional levels, in order to ensure effective national and regional response and facilitation of international assistance in case of incidents involving chemical weapons agents or other toxic chemicals.
39. The participants gained knowledge and skills to develop solutions to the challenges of managing a chemical incident.
40. Thirty experts from 16 States Parties participated in the event. The TTX was funded using resources from the regular budget and a voluntary contribution from the European Union.

The fifth training course on conducting sampling and analysis in a highly contaminated environment, Częstochowa, Poland, 29 May to 2 June 2017

41. This course was intended for first responders and other experts with professional responsibility in chemical emergency response from all States Parties. The main objective of the course was to further develop the investigative capacity of the participating States Parties. The training focused also on effective command and control as well as on coordination with any specialist supporting elements responding from the Secretariat, such as the Rapid Response and Assistance Mission (RRAM) or the Assistance Coordination and Assessment Team (ACAT).
42. Participants gained knowledge on theoretical considerations and technical methodologies related to the collection of chemical samples in a contaminated environment.
43. The course was attended by 13 participants from nine States Parties. It was funded using resources from the regular budget.

Basic course on assistance and protection against chemical weapons, Kruševac, Serbia, 5 to 9 June 2017

44. This course was intended for first responders from all States Parties in chemical emergency response and protection against chemical weapons. The course provided participants with knowledge in protective and responsive measures to chemical

emergency situations involving the use of chemical warfare agents and toxic industrial chemicals. The programme also included a TTX and practical sessions.

45. The course achieved its anticipated objectives, preparing the participants for the advanced course to be held in Pakistan in November 2017.
46. Nineteen participants from 11 States Parties attended the course. The event was funded using resources from the regular budget.

Train-the-trainers for Russian-speaking instructors, Svetlaya Roshcha, Belarus, 5 to 9 June 2017

47. This specialised training course was intended for Russian-speaking expert first responders involved in the provision of training on chemical emergency response. Its main objective was to provide training covering planning and preparation for, as well as the conduct and evaluation of, response operations in contaminated areas.
48. The participants gained deep knowledge and skills in chemical emergency response management, as well as in the creation and improvement of similar training courses in their home country.
49. The course was attended by 13 Russian-speaking instructors from 11 States Parties. The course was co-funded using resources from the regular budget and a voluntary contribution from the European Union.

First international medical course on pre-hospital care for victims of chemical weapons, Madrid, Spain, 20 to 23 June 2017

50. This course was intended for medical personnel from all States Parties. The course focused on the acute needs of victims suffering from exposure to chemical warfare agents or toxic industrial chemicals, with particular emphasis on the challenges of the pre-hospital theatre of operations.
51. The course enabled the participants to strengthen their skills in the rapid recognition of the effects of exposure to chemical warfare agents or toxic industrial chemicals, and in the medical treatment modalities indicated in such cases. As part of the training course, a field exercise allowed the participants to experience different rescue methods, first aid, decontamination, and evacuation operations in a contaminated area.
52. A total of 20 participants from 19 countries attended the course. It was funded using resources from the regular budget.

Seventeenth annual workshop to coordinate assistance and protection under Article X of the Chemical Weapons Convention, The Hague, the Netherlands, 28 to 30 June 2017

53. The workshop was intended for personnel from States Parties involved in the implementation of Article X. It enabled participants to get updated information since the last such meeting in 2016 and to follow up on new activities of the Secretariat in the area of assistance and protection.

54. Twenty-one participants from 20 States Parties attended the event. It was funded using resources from the regular budget.

Sixth regional basic course on assistance and protection against chemical weapons for Asian States Parties, Tehran, Iran, 28 June to 2 July 2017

55. The course was intended for first responders, with priority given to police officers, on emergency response to chemical incidents in the region. It offered basic theoretical knowledge and practical training regarding chemical warfare agents and toxic industrial chemicals, introduction to the use of protective equipment and monitoring, detection, and decontamination techniques as well as first aid and medical countermeasures for chemical casualties. The participants will attend an advanced course in the Republic of Korea in September 2017.

56. Twenty-four experts from 13 States Parties benefitted from this training. It was funded using resources from the regular budget.

Advanced subregional assistance and protection course, Beijing, China, 3 to 7 July 2017

57. This course was intended for first responders of the States Parties in the Asia and Pacific Islands regions. Its aim was to provide advanced training to the participants of the regional training cycle that started in Sri Lanka in February 2017.

58. The course led to the formation of well-trained group of first responders with deep knowledge and skills in protective and responsive measures as well as in the management of chemical emergency situations involving chemical warfare agents and toxic industrial chemicals. The participants will test their chemical emergency response skills and knowledge in a confirmatory exercise, to be held in Singapore in December 2017.

59. Twenty-one experts from 11 States Parties participated in the training. It was funded using resources from the regular budget.

Swiss basic course, Spiez, Switzerland, 3 to 7 July 2017

60. This course is intended for first responders from all regions. The objective was to support protective capacity building in States Parties, along with the Swiss offer of assistance under Article X.

61. The participants were trained in protective and responsive measures to chemical emergency situations involving the use of chemical warfare agents and toxic industrial chemicals. All training was conducted with a view to facilitating a possible deployment of the Swiss offer of assistance.

62. Nineteen participants from 16 States Parties attended the training. The event was funded using resources from the regular budget.

Sixth OPCW assistance and protection training course for instructors, Tshwane, South Africa, 14 to 25 August 2017

63. This specialised training course was intended for expert first responders on chemical emergency response from States Parties in the East African Community (EAC). Its main objective was to provide training covering all aspects of the management of protection and response measures to a chemical emergency situation involving chemical warfare agents and toxic industrial chemicals, including planning and preparation for, as well as the conduct and evaluation of, response operations in contaminated areas. The course included also a TTX and practical exercises.
64. Twenty-two experts from EAC countries attended the course. It was funded using resources from the regular budget.

Exercise on assistance and protection for Latin America and the Caribbean (EXBRALC II 2017), Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 28 August to 1 September 2017

65. This exercise was intended for first responders of the GRULAC region, and was the third and closing stage of the 2017 regional training cycle. It was aimed at confirming the knowledge acquired by responders and refining the skills they had gained during the basic and advanced courses held, respectively, in Uruguay and Argentina in May 2017.
66. The exercise allowed the participants to confirm, in a practical setting, the knowledge acquired throughout the training cycle on the management of the response to a chemical incident.
67. The course benefited 38 participants from 18 countries of Latin America and the Caribbean. The course was co-funded using resources from the regular budget and a voluntary contribution from the European Union.

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION – ARTICLE XI

Symposium on women in chemistry and the basic analytical chemistry course for women chemists, The Hague, the Netherlands, 2 to 5 May 2017

68. The second symposium on women in chemistry was intended for women involved in chemistry. It was followed by a basic analytical chemistry course for women chemists at the OPCW Laboratory.
69. The main objective of the symposium was to discuss challenges and opportunities experienced by women working in chemistry and related fields. The deliberation led to some recommendations regarding the role of women in chemistry. During the basic analytical chemistry course for women chemists, participants gained knowledge in various aspects of chemistry, including the identification of scheduled chemicals.
70. A total of 50 participants from 40 countries attended the symposium. The analytical course was attended by nine women. These events were funded using resources from the regular budget.

Course on the enhancement of laboratory skills in the use of nuclear magnetic resonance, VERIFIN, Finland, 8 to 19 May 2017

71. This course was intended for laboratory experts from all States Parties. It was aimed at assisting qualified personnel (analytical chemists) in acquiring the necessary analytical skills in the use of nuclear magnetic resonance (NMR) to analyse chemicals related to the implementation of the Convention.
72. The course equipped the participants with knowledge and skills in the analysis of Convention-related chemicals using NMR, and in equipment maintenance and sample collection and storage.
73. The course was attended by four participants from four Member States. It was funded using resources from the regular budget and a voluntary contribution from Finland.

Seminar on the Chemical Weapons Convention and chemical safety and security management for Member States of the OPCW in the Africa region, Algiers, Algeria, 15 to 17 May 2017

74. This programme was intended for African States Parties' governmental representatives, chemical industry associations, and managers involved in chemical safety and security and in the Responsible Care® programme. The seminar was especially designed to enhance knowledge in the area of chemical safety and security management, including security risk assessment, chemical threat reduction, and mitigation strategies.
75. The participants gained a further understanding and knowledge about risk management in terms of chemical safety and security.
76. The seminar was attended by 54 participants from 13 African States Parties. It was funded using resources from the regular budget.

Seminar on the Chemical Weapons Convention and chemical safety and security management for Member States of the OPCW in the GRULAC region, Mexico City, Mexico, 17 to 19 July 2017

77. This programme was intended for GRULAC States Parties' governmental representatives, chemical industry associations, and managers involved in chemical safety and security and in the Responsible Care® programme. The seminar was especially designed to enhance knowledge in the area of chemical safety and security management, including security risk assessment, chemical threat reduction, and mitigation strategies.
78. The seminar equipped participants with understanding and knowledge about risk management in terms of chemical safety and security.
79. The event was attended by 32 participants from 15 Member States. It was funded using resources from the regular budget.

Analytical skills chemistry course for African Member States under the Africa Programme, Pretoria, South Africa, 22 May to 2 June 2017

80. The course was intended for analytical chemists from African States Parties. It offered a comprehensive theoretical and practical training on gas chromatography and gas chromatography/mass spectrometry (GC/MS) analysis of Convention-related chemicals.
81. The course was attended by 22 participants from 21 African Member States. It was funded using resources from the regular budget.

Course on the analysis of chemicals related to the Chemical Weapons Convention in the framework of OPWC proficiency testing for the GRULAC region, Madrid, Spain, 5 to 16 June 2017

82. The course was intended for analytical chemists from 12 GRULAC States Parties. It was aimed at enhancing capacity of laboratories in the GRULAC region.
83. The course enabled the participant to master theory and practice of the use of advanced analytical techniques, sample preparation and interpretation of mass spectra of chemicals. They further learned about the maintenance of laboratory equipment, quality assurance systems in chemical analysis, and opportunities for chemists under the OPCW capacity-building programmes.
84. The course was attended by 15 participants from 12 GRULAC States Parties. It was funded using resources from the regular budget and a voluntary contribution from Spain.

The Associate Programme 2017, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and elsewhere, 28 July to 29 September 2017

85. The 18th edition of the Organisation's Associate Programme was launched on 28 July 2017 at the OPCW Headquarters in The Hague.
86. The programme is mainly aimed at raising participants' awareness and enhancing knowledge and skills in integrated chemical management. The training curriculum combined lectures and exercises at the OPCW Headquarters in The Hague and specialised institutions in the Netherlands, a chemical engineering-oriented skills development course at the University of Surrey in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and attachments at chemical facilities in several States Parties.
87. A total of 32 participants from 31 Member States are participating in this edition of the programme. It is funded using resources from the regular budget.

Course on analytical skills development at the Swedish Defence Research Agency (FOI), Umeå, Sweden, 21 August to 1 September 2017

88. This analytical skills development course was intended for laboratory experts. The course equipped the participants with knowledge and skills in the analysis of

Convention-related chemicals using GC/MS, and in equipment maintenance and sample collection and storage.

89. The course was attended by 19 participants from 19 Member States. It was funded using resources from the regular budget.

Executive programme on integrated chemicals management, Shanghai, China, 29 August to 1 September 2017

90. This programme was intended for chemists, chemical engineers and other relevant professionals from government, industry and other institutions with managerial and leadership responsibilities related to the implementation of the Convention. Its main objective was to help States Parties to develop capacities in and understanding of integrated chemical management.
91. The event was attended by 13 participants. It was funded using resources from the regular budget.

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