

**NOTE BY THE TECHNICAL SECRETARIAT****UPDATE ON EVENTS ORGANISED BY THE TECHNICAL SECRETARIAT
IN THE AREA OF INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AND ASSISTANCE
MAY TO AUGUST 2018****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”), and in particular Articles VII, X, and XI thereof. This Note covers the period 1 May to 31 August 2018.

IMPLEMENTATION SUPPORT – ARTICLE VII**Mentorship/Partnership Programme for Representatives of National Authorities**

2. Three visits under the Mentorship/Partnership Programme were implemented during the reporting period. These included the return visit by the National Authority of Cuba to the Plurinational State of Bolivia from 14 to 18 May 2018; the visit by the National Authority of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to Nigeria from 25 to 29 June 2018; and the visit by the National Authority of Brazil to Panama from 20 to 24 August 2018. These visits provided the mentor States Parties with opportunities to follow up on Convention implementation since the first visits had been conducted, as well as to provide further support and advice. They serve as a means to continue the good cooperation between mentors and mentees for effective implementation of the Convention.
3. During the reporting period, four regional meetings were organised in Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe, and Latin America and the Caribbean, as follows:
 - (a) The seventeenth regional meeting of National Authorities of States Parties in Eastern Europe took place in Prague, the Czech Republic, from 7 to 9 May 2018. Forty-seven participants from 20 States Parties in Eastern Europe attended.



- (b) The sixteenth regional meeting of National Authorities of States Parties in Africa took place in Marrakesh, Morocco, from 19 to 21 June 2018. Ninety participants from 39 States Parties in Africa attended.
 - (c) The sixteenth regional meeting of National Authorities of States Parties in Asia took place in Thimphu, Bhutan, from 19 to 21 June 2018. Forty-one participants from 22 States Parties in Asia attended.
 - (d) The nineteenth regional meeting of National Authorities of States Parties in Latin America and the Caribbean, preceded by a high-level panel discussion, took place in Montego Bay, Jamaica, from 9 to 11 July 2018. Forty participants from 22 States Parties in Latin America and the Caribbean attended.
4. The regional meetings are intended for representatives of National Authorities and relevant stakeholders and are aimed at addressing and discussing various aspects of implementation of the Convention, taking into account the specific context of every region. This year's regional meetings focused mainly on the respective roles of customs administrations and National Authorities in enforcing the Convention's control regime for scheduled chemicals. The meetings provided an opportunity for National Authorities, customs administrations, and stakeholders, as well as representatives of regional and international organisations, to share their views on how to strengthen their cooperation and improve control over cross-border movements of chemicals at the regional level. Various aspects of national Convention implementation and the draft "national implementation framework" were also discussed. The regional meetings were successful and achieved the anticipated objectives.
 5. The nineteenth session of the Internship Programme for Legal Drafters and National Authority Representatives took place from 6 to 10 August 2018 at OPCW Headquarters in The Hague. The programme was attended by four participants from Guinea and Chad.
 6. This programme is aimed at providing technical assistance to States Parties that have yet to develop comprehensive Convention implementing legislation.
 7. As a concrete outcome of the programme, participants successfully prepared draft legislation covering all the initial measures that are suitable for adoption by the relevant authorities, as well as an indicative road map to take the adoption process forward.

ASSISTANCE AND PROTECTION – ARTICLE X

8. A joint basic and advanced training course for Russian-speaking first responders to incidents of chemical contamination was held from 14 to 23 May 2018 at the International Rescue Training Centre of the University of Civil Protection of the Ministry of Emergency Situations of Belarus in Svetlaya Roshcha, Belarus. The main objective of the course was to provide participants with basic and advanced training in the use of individual and collective protective equipment, in monitoring, detection, and decontamination, as well as in techniques and appropriate responses and

countermeasures in the event of incidents involving chemical warfare agents or toxic chemicals. The training course was attended by 15 experts from 9 States Parties.

9. The sixth edition of the training course in conducting sampling and analysis in a highly contaminated environment was conducted from 7 to 11 May 2018 at the Polish Central School of the State Fire Service, located in the city of Czestochowa. The course provided 15 participants from 14 States Parties with hands-on training in chemical, biomedical, and environmental sampling techniques commonly employed in situations where chemical and/or biological warfare agents have been allegedly used. This knowledge was combined with skills in the use of individual protective equipment associated with self-contained breathing apparatus, with the aim of exposing participants to the additional difficulties that may arise during the sampling process.
10. A training course for instructors was held in Lázně Bohdaneč, the Czech Republic, from 16 to 24 May 2018. The purpose of the course was to provide instructors from States Parties with knowledge in planning, preparing, conducting, and evaluating response operations in contaminated areas in the event of incidents involving chemical warfare agents or toxic industrial chemicals. The course included a component on complex emergency responses to crisis situations involving chemical weapons or toxic industrial chemicals. Fifteen experts from nine States Parties received advanced instruction on the use of individual protective equipment, on detection and reconnaissance, on decontamination, and on the medical aspects and management of responses.
11. The seventh advanced regional assistance and protection course and exercise on chemical emergency response for States Parties from the Latin America and Caribbean Group (GRULAC) took place from 21 to 26 May 2018 in Buenos Aires, Argentina. The objective of the course, which followed the basic training initiated in Panama in April 2018, was to reinforce participants' practical knowledge and raise it to exercise level. Practical elements of chemical emergency response simulated in real-life scenarios constituted the main part of the course. The training, which involved 24 participants from 17 GRULAC States Parties, was the second and final stage of the full-cycle regional assistance and protection training project that started with a basic course in Panama City, Panama in April 2018.
12. A basic training on assistance and protection for Portuguese-speaking participants was held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, from 21 to 25 May 2018. It was the first phase of a new training cycle designed for Portuguese-speaking participants. The course was intended to provide participants with comprehensive knowledge about chemical warfare agents and toxic industrial chemicals, individual protective equipment, detection and decontamination equipment, sampling and analysis techniques, and emergency response. The follow-up advanced training course will be held next year in Portugal. Forty-two participants from eight States Parties attended the training.
13. The thirteenth edition of the advanced course on assistance and protection for States Parties from the Asia Region was held in Seoul, the Republic of Korea from 4 to 8 June 2018. The course was part of the regional training cycle initiated in Nepal for the Asia Region in April 2018. The course was intended to equip first responders from the region with knowledge on emergency response to chemical incidents,

including various topics such as identification and detection of chemical warfare agents, protection of personnel during a chemical emergency, decontamination operations, as well as rescue and first aid in contaminated areas. The course also facilitated the exchange of information and experiences regarding the implementation of Article X of the Convention and provided a forum to enhance cooperation among participating representatives from Member States. It was attended by 19 first responders from Asian States Parties.

14. A “live-agent training for experts” course was held in Zemianske Kostol’any, Slovakia from 4 to 14 June 2018. The course provided 15 participants from 15 States Parties with comprehensive didactic knowledge and information emphasising safe practices, medical countermeasures, protective equipment, and physical and chemical properties of the live agents themselves. Furthermore, participants were introduced to the challenges of collecting samples from a variety of surfaces in a field environment. The training was successfully completed and achieved its anticipated objectives. Participants will now join the ever-growing group of trained professionals who are working to enhance safety and security in their respective countries.
15. A basic training course on assistance and protection took place from 25 to 29 June 2018 at the training centre of the Turkish Disaster and Emergency Management Authority in Ankara, Turkey. This course was the first part of an OPCW international training cycle that was to be followed by an advanced course in September in Beijing, China. It provided 19 first responders from 16 States Parties with basic training in the use of individual protective equipment, as well as in monitoring, detection, and decontamination methods. Trainees also experienced working in a confined contaminated environment, allowing them to familiarise themselves with the challenges related to the use of personal protective equipment. Participants visited the decontamination wing of the Health Sciences University Hospital during the instruction segment on medical countermeasures.
16. The annual basic course on assistance and protection took place from 2 to 6 July 2018 in Spiez, Switzerland. The course will supplement the OPCW assistance and protection efforts, and was aimed at improving States Parties’ preparedness in the field of assistance and protection against chemical incidents or attacks involving chemical warfare agents. The course provided 21 participants from 21 States Parties with knowledge on the proper use of individual protective equipment and on monitoring, detection, sampling, evacuation, and decontamination techniques used in the field when responding to incidents involving chemical warfare agents and toxic industrial chemicals.
17. A training course for police first responders from States Parties from the GRULAC region took place in Bogota, Colombia, from 23 to 27 July 2018. The purpose of the course was to provide relevant knowledge to a new target group in this region (police first responders). The course provided 21 participants from 12 GRULAC States Parties with an introduction to basic toxicology, the types and uses of individual protective equipment, reconnaissance, detection, and decontamination, with particular emphasis on sampling and crime scene management techniques.
18. The seventh regional assistance and protection course for instructors from African States Parties was held from 13 to 24 August 2018 in South Africa. The training

provided 20 African experts with knowledge and information on various aspects of the management of protection and response measures to chemical emergency situations involving chemical warfare agents and toxic industrial chemicals, including planning and preparation and conduct and evaluation of response operations in contaminated areas. The course also included a table-top exercise and practical exercises.

19. A planning and coordination meeting of OPCW Member States that are also members of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) took place from 15 to 17 August 2018 in Khartoum, the Sudan. As part of the approach developed by the Secretariat for Africa, the objective of this planning and coordination meeting was to discuss how to improve regional capacities and emergency response against chemical threats, including regional activities and the development of a regional mutual assistance mechanism within the IGAD Member States. Twenty-one participants attended the meeting, which achieved its anticipated objectives. As a concrete outcome, the participants agreed on a work plan for the next three years to address regional priorities as well as a monitoring and evaluation framework.
20. An exercise on assistance and protection for States Parties in the GRULAC region took place from 27 to 31 August 2018 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. The exercise enabled 30 first responders from five States Parties in the region to confirm the knowledge and consolidate the skills they had acquired during the basic and advanced courses held for this group in Costa Rica in 2017.

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION – ARTICLE XI

21. The “Review and Evaluation Workshop of the Components of an Agreed Framework for the full implementation of Article XI (see decision C-16/DEC.10, dated 1 December 2011) was held at OPCW Headquarters on 2 May 2018, in accordance with the decision of the Conference of the States Parties at its Twenty-Second Session in December 2017 (paragraph 17.3 of C-22/5*, dated 1 December 2017). The workshop proceedings included a thematic session and three group discussions on three main areas of the Secretariat’s capacity-building activities under Article XI: integrated chemicals management, enhancing laboratory capabilities, and promoting chemical knowledge. This was followed by a plenary session to review the outcomes of the discussions. The workshop led to the preparation by the facilitator, with the support of the Secretariat, of a paper listing ideas, lessons, and suggestions drawn from the presentations, as well as statements and views expressed during the workshop. Drawing on the experience of the 2017 edition of the workshop, delegations agreed to combine the list of ideas that emerged from both the 2017 and 2018 workshops. Though this was an informal paper that was not agreed upon by States Parties, this list provides guidance to the Secretariat in developing future capacity-building programmes. The workshop was attended by 70 participants from 41 States Parties representing National Authorities, Permanent Representations to the OPCW, and relevant stakeholders.
22. A seminar on the Convention and chemical safety and security management for Member States of the OPCW in the Asia Region was held in Siem Reap, Cambodia, from 7 to 9 May 2018. This programme, attended by 37 governmental representatives, chemical industry associations, and managers involved in chemical

- safety and security and in the Responsible Care[®] programme in 14 Asian States Parties, focused on a mechanism for setting up and managing an effective safety and security framework in a chemical plant to mitigate risks to chemical safety and security.
23. The tenth edition of the analytical chemistry course under the OPCW Programme to Strengthen Cooperation with Africa on the Chemical Weapons Convention was held at Protechnik Laboratories in Pretoria, South Africa from 7 to 18 May 2018. This course was intended for chemistry professionals from industry, government, and academia who are involved in the analysis, synthesis, or quality control of chemicals related to the Convention. The course enabled 20 participants representing 20 States Parties from Africa to gain a sound working knowledge of gas-chromatography (GC) and gas chromatography-mass spectrometry (GC-MS) analysis principles and procedures, so that they could develop a greater understanding and competence in the theoretical and practical relationships between the analytical techniques.
 24. The second edition of the course for analytical chemists from laboratories supporting customs services was held at the OPCW Laboratory in Rijswijk, the Netherlands from 28 May to 1 June 2018. The course provided nine participants from nine States Parties with sound working knowledge of the principles, procedures, and applications of GC-MS, portable GC-MS, fourier-transform infrared (FTIR) spectroscopy, and portable FTIR and Raman spectroscopy for the analysis of chemicals related to the Convention. In addition, the participants gained practical knowledge on the Automated Mass Spectral Deconvolution and Identification System (AMDIS) chemical software and on the OPCW Central Analytical Database (OCAD) for the identification of chemicals under the Convention. During the course, the participants also had the opportunity to visit the Dutch Customs Laboratory in Amsterdam.
 25. The third edition of the Symposium on Women in Chemistry was held at the Headquarters of Global Affairs Canada in Ottawa from 25 to 26 June 2018. The symposium provided participants with the opportunity to highlight the challenges and opportunities experienced by women working in chemistry-related fields. Participants also shared their experiences, particularly in the field of chemical safety and security management as seen through the lenses of academia, chemical industry, government agencies, and laboratories. Thirty participants from 20 States Parties attended the symposium, including representatives from government agencies, scientific communities and academia, the chemical industry, and civil society.
 26. The third edition of the basic analytical chemistry course for women chemists took place in Rijswijk, the Netherlands from 26 to 28 June 2018. The course was intended to assist qualified women analytical chemists from Member States whose economies are developing or in transition in acquiring further knowledge and experience, specifically on analysis of chemicals related to the Convention and on good laboratory practices and quality standards, with a special focus on GC-MS, AMDIS, the OCAD, and techniques for the analysis of chemicals related to the Convention. Ten participants from 10 countries attended the course, specifically from government laboratories, universities, and research institutes.
 27. The nineteenth edition of the OPCW Associate Programme was launched at OPCW Headquarters in The Hague on 3 August 2018 and will conclude on 5 October 2018.

The main purpose of the programme is to raise participants' awareness and enhance their knowledge and skills in integrated chemicals management. The training curriculum combined lectures and exercises at OPCW Headquarters in The Hague and specialised institutions in the Netherlands, a chemical engineering 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. A total of 31 participants from 31 Member States are participating in this edition of the programme, which is funded using resources from the regular budget.

28. A workshop on needs assessment and best practices on chemical safety and security management for States Parties in the GRULAC region was held in Santiago, Chile from 3 to 5 July 2018. The workshop provided a platform for 35 participants from 23 States Parties representing government agencies, chemical industries, academia, and relevant stakeholders to share needs, experiences, lessons learned, and best practices related to chemical safety and security management in respective GRULAC Member States, in order to promote knowledge exchange and the development of relevant mechanisms on chemical safety and security.
29. A course on chemical safety and security management for laboratories in States Parties in the GRULAC region took place in Buenos Aires, Argentina, from 16 to 20 July 2018. The course, intended for personnel working in the application of occupational safety measures in chemical laboratories, enabled 18 participants from 12 Member States in the region to gain and improve their knowledge about the policy and practical aspects of safety and security management in chemical laboratories.
30. During the reporting period, one fellowship for a Cameroonian (to Spain) was completed and four fellowships commenced and are ongoing (Botswana-France, Cameroon-Germany, China-Netherlands and Uganda-South Africa). Nine conferences in seven States Parties have been sponsored under the Conference Support Programme, namely in Brazil, Croatia, China, Italy, Mauritius, the Philippines, and Poland. Thirty-nine participants in total have been sponsored to attend the events in question.