

**NOTE BY THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL****REPORT PURSUANT TO PARAGRAPH 20 OF DECISION C-SS-4/DEC.3
(DATED 27 JUNE 2018) ON ADDRESSING THE THREAT
FROM CHEMICAL WEAPONS USE**

1. Following the adoption of the decision entitled “Addressing the Threat from Chemical Weapons Use” (C-SS-4/DEC.3, dated 27 June 2018) by the Conference of the States Parties (hereinafter “the Conference”) at its Fourth Special Session, the Director-General submits the following to the Conference at its Twenty-Third Session, with reference to paragraph 20 of the aforementioned decision.
2. Paragraph 20 of C-SS-4/DEC.3 states that the Conference “[d]ecides that the Director-General, if requested by a State Party investigating a possible chemical weapons use on its territory, can provide technical expertise to identify those who were perpetrators, organisers, sponsors or otherwise involved in the use of chemicals as weapons, and further decides that, in this context, the Director-General may enlist support as appropriate from outside experts with relevant qualifications and professional experience, and invites the Director-General to submit to the Conference at its next regular session specific proposals to establish such independent, impartial, expert arrangements”.

**MEASURES TO BE IMPLEMENTED TO PROVIDE TECHNICAL
EXPERTISE TO REQUESTING STATES PARTIES**

3. Pursuant to the aforementioned paragraph of C-SS-4/DEC.3, the Director-General can provide technical expertise to requesting States Parties. The Technical Secretariat (hereinafter “the Secretariat”), therefore, will establish and maintain a capability to provide this expertise by implementing the measures presented below.
4. Capacity building that seeks to expand the existing skills of relevant Secretariat staff will be the primary means of meeting the above requirement. The Secretariat is currently developing a detailed plan for these activities, which will be implemented starting in 2019. These activities will include:
 - (a) training to further build investigative capabilities in areas such as crime scene management, witness interviews, evidence collection, and forensics;
 - (b) the procurement of relevant software and equipment; and,
 - (c) the revision of job descriptions for relevant posts.



5. With regard to training, relevant staff will be selected for further training to enhance skills and expertise related to requests for assistance under paragraph 20 of C-SS-4/DEC.3. The Contingency-Planning and Capacity-Building Cell in the Inspectorate Division will play an important role in organising and conducting these training activities.
6. In selecting staff that will support the Secretariat's response to these requests for assistance, the Director-General's obligations under paragraph 44 of Article VIII of the Chemical Weapons Convention (hereinafter "the Convention") will be adhered to. In the subsequent implementation of activities under paragraph 20 of C-SS-4/DEC.3, all staff members involved in these activities will adhere to the obligations established under paragraph 46 of Article VIII of the Convention.
7. Relevant software and equipment to be procured will include case management systems, digital forensics software, forensic sampling kits, and specialised photographic, audio, and video recording equipment.
8. Revisions to job descriptions will include skills and expertise that generally are not available within the Secretariat and that may be applicable to activities under paragraph 20 of C-SS-4/DEC.3.
9. The above capacity-building measures will be implemented by using existing regular budget funds and, if required, by seeking voluntary contributions.
10. It should be noted that the aforementioned training activities will be incorporated into the existing training plans and duties of the relevant Secretariat staff as additional activities.
11. The Secretariat's goal in planning these capacity-building measures will be to have a basic capability to provide technical expertise to investigations under paragraph 20 of C-SS-4/DEC.3 before the end of the anticipated period during which the Attribution Team (AT) – to be set up for identifying perpetrators of chemical weapons attacks in the Syrian Arab Republic (paragraph 10 of C-SS-4/DEC.3) – will be operational. During this period, the Secretariat will also seek to benefit from the presence of the AT, should a request be submitted under paragraph 20, and to contribute to the establishment of a sustainable paragraph 20 capability. As part of their work, staff of the AT will be asked to engage in the transfer of knowledge to relevant Secretariat staff to increase their investigative skills and expertise. These knowledge management-related activities will complement the aforementioned capacity-building efforts.

PROPOSALS TO ESTABLISH INDEPENDENT, IMPARTIAL, EXPERT ARRANGEMENTS

12. While the above measures will result in the enhancement of the Secretariat's ability to provide technical expertise to States Parties in their national investigations as defined in paragraph 20 of C-SS-4/DEC.3, these measures may need to be complemented with additional outside expertise to ensure the Secretariat's ability to meet States Parties' needs. Therefore, the Secretariat must be prepared, as necessary, to engage external experts in responding to a State Party's request for assistance in an investigation of possible chemical weapons use on its own territory. Following the invitation by the

Conference to the Director-General to “submit to the Conference at its next regular session specific proposals to establish such independent, impartial, expert arrangements”, the relevant proposals are presented below.

13. One proposed modality for setting up such arrangements would be through the establishment of agreements with other relevant international organisations and with independent and internationally respected professional institutes and associations, to secure the provision, as needed, of investigative and/or analytical capabilities which may not be available within the Secretariat. The Secretariat is currently working to identify appropriate organisations, institutes, and associations in this regard, and will further inform States Parties of the progress made, as appropriate. Such measures could supplement the Secretariat’s existing skill set and knowledge relevant to the provision of assistance requested by a State Party under paragraph 20 of C-SS-4/DEC.3.
14. In addition to the types of agreements referred to above, the Secretariat proposes to explore mobility options within the United Nations system, for example, by seeking membership of the Inter-Organization Mobility Agreement, as a means of obtaining additional expertise on a temporary basis from relevant organisations that are part of the United Nations Common System. In the case of all formal arrangements, any external parties contributing to the Secretariat’s response to a request for assistance under paragraph 20 of C-SS-4/DEC.3 would be required to sign a secrecy agreement with the Organisation and adhere to the OPCW’s confidentiality policy, rules, and regulations.
15. With all of the aforementioned arrangements put in place over a period of a few years, the Secretariat will be in a position to offer a variety of technical assistance activities in response to a State Party’s request submitted under paragraph 20 of C-SS-4/DEC.3. The extent of the assistance the Secretariat will be able to provide at any given moment will nevertheless be subject to available resources and the additional external expertise made accessible to the Secretariat by the independent, impartial, and expert arrangements that are put in place.
16. With regard to the implementation of paragraph 20 of C-SS-4/DEC.3, the Director-General will keep States Parties informed, inter alia, through regular reporting in accordance with paragraph 24 of C-SS-4/DEC.3.