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BILATERAL COOPERATION BETWEEN NATIONAL AUTHORITIES: REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MENTORSHIP/PARTNERSHIP PROGRAMME FOR NATIONAL AUTHORITIES FOR THE PERIOD 2012 TO 2019

Introduction

1. The Third Special Session of the Conference of the States Parties to Review the Operation of the Chemical Weapons Convention noted the value of bilateral assistance and networking among States Parties and encouraged the Technical Secretariat (hereinafter “the Secretariat”) to develop, within existing resources, activities that will enhance South-South, regional, and subregional cooperation, as well as special programmes towards the full implementation of Article VII of the Chemical Weapons Convention (hereinafter “the Convention”) (subparagraph 9.103(f) of RC-3/3*, dated 19 April 2013).
2. In 2012, the Secretariat launched the Mentorship/Partnership Programme for National Authorities, with the goal of facilitating bilateral cooperation between National Authorities for advancing the status of their national implementation of the Convention by supporting their partnerships and strengthening their cooperation through mutual visits.
3. The objectives of the National Authority Mentorship/Partnership Programme are to:
 - (a) enhance the functioning of the National Authority that receives assistance (“mentee”) through the sharing of the knowledge, skills, and experience of the National Authority that provides assistance (“mentor”);
 - (b) share best practices related to implementation of the Convention at the national level;
 - (c) familiarise the mentee, through practical support, on the use of the facilities, tools, and information provided by the Secretariat in support of national implementation; and
 - (d) establish long-standing partnerships and strengthen cooperation between the participating National Authorities.

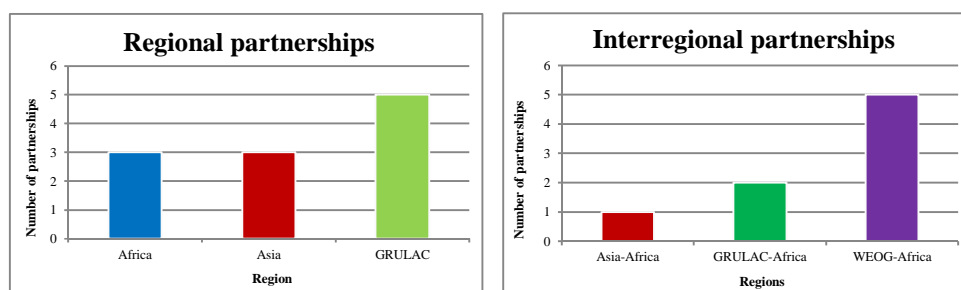


4. Within the Programme, representatives of the paired National Authorities are provided with an opportunity to pay a visit to each other to meet with relevant stakeholders and discuss various thematic issues and best practices related to implementation of the Convention. Such cooperation is expected to enhance the capacity of the mentee to better identify and address gaps in Convention implementation based on the guidance and recommendations provided by the mentor.
5. In 2016, to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of the programme, the Secretariat introduced a results-based management approach by requiring all prospective mentees to complete a results framework document outlining a number of themes that can be addressed in respect of Convention implementation, and requesting the planning of specific results at the output and outcome levels that should be achieved through implementation of the Programme. When formally accepted for participation in the Programme, the results framework document should be finalised by the mentee in consultation with the mentor and under the guidance of the Secretariat.

Overview of Programme implementation from 2012 to 2019

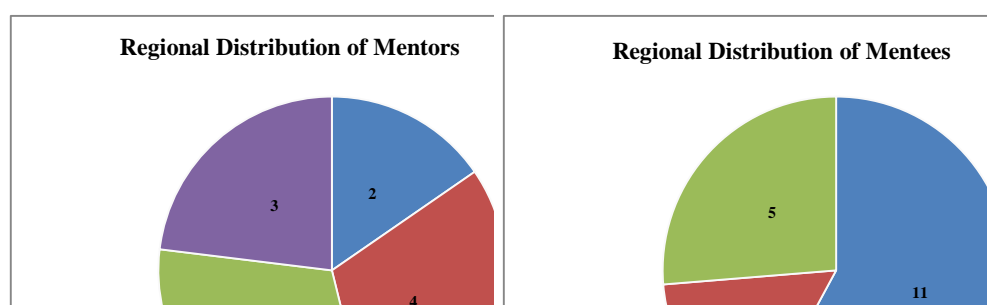
6. Since its launch, representatives of National Authorities from 32 States Parties (see list in Annex 1), representing 17% of all National Authorities, have formed 19 partnerships within the Programme (see Annex 2).
7. The programme has been most popular among African National Authorities (with 13 participating), followed by States Parties from the Group of Latin America and Caribbean States (GRULAC) (nine), the Asia region (seven), and the Western Europe and Other States Group (WEOG) (three), which participated in the capacity of either mentee or mentor. To date, no National Authority from Eastern Europe has participated in the Programme.
8. National Authorities formed 11 regional and eight interregional partnerships. Most regional partnerships (five) were formed by GRULAC National Authorities, followed by Asia and Africa (three for each region). The most popular pairs of National Authorities within interregional partnerships are those of WEOG and Africa States Parties (see Figure 1 below).

FIGURE 1: REGIONAL AND INTERREGIONAL PARTNERSHIPS



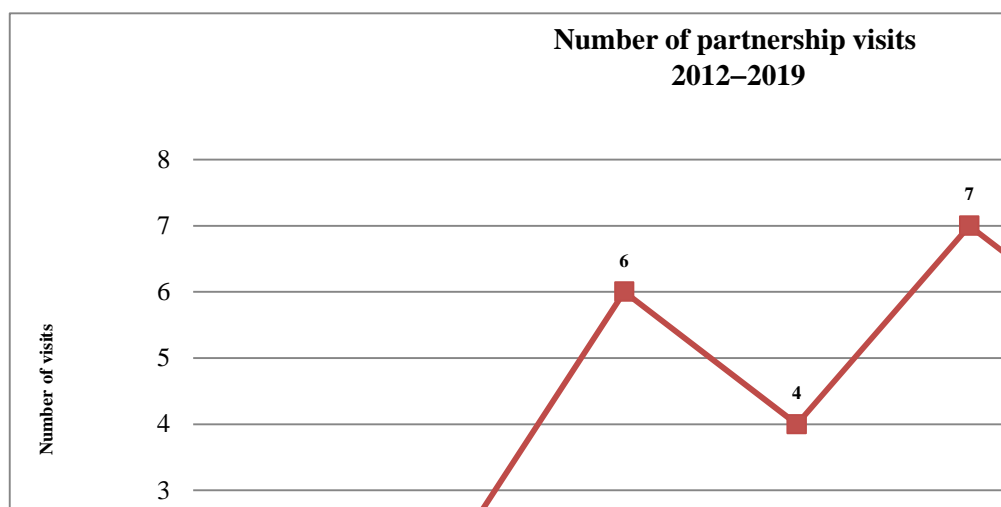
9. While mentees were expected to participate in the Programme only once, mentors have been eligible to provide assistance within partnerships more than once, provided that there had been interest expressed by mentees to cooperate with them. As a result, four National Authorities participated in the Programme more than once: the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and Brazil (three times each), and Algeria and Cuba (twice each).
10. Mentors come from all four regions involved in the implementation of the Programme, while mentees come mostly from the Africa region (see Figure 2 below).

FIGURE 2: REGIONAL DISTRIBUTION OF MENTORS AND MENTEES



11. Priority in the selection of mentees for participation in the Programme has been given to National Authorities that have not had comprehensive national implementing legislation on the Convention. This has been done under the assumption that participation in the Programme would result in progress being made in the process of adoption of such legislation. However, out of 16 States Parties that have been enrolled in the Programme without comprehensive national implementing legislation, only two have succeeded in adopting such legislation after completion of the Programme. The other 14 are still at varying stages of the adoption process.
12. Within the Programme, the Secretariat sponsors two five-day working visits: one hosted by the mentor and another by the mentee. While the Secretariat provides general guidance and advice related to the programme of the visit, the dates of the visits and specific details of its programme are discussed and agreed between the National Authorities involved.
13. Until 2019, the expectation was that both visits within the Programme would take place during the same calendar year when National Authority partnerships were formed. However, with time it has become clear that such a requirement has not been the most practical since, on the one hand, it was rather challenging to arrange visits that quickly and, on the other hand, it was advisable to have a longer period between two visits to allow the mentee time to start implementing recommendations provided by the mentors on the first visit.
14. Therefore, in 2019, the Secretariat's Note on the Programme (S/1714/2019, dated 6 February 2019) required only the first visit to take place during the year in which the partnership was formed, while the return visit could take place in the following year. While the Secretariat offers to support a maximum of eight visits every year, the number of visits organised by National Authorities in recent years has not come close to this limit (see Figure 3 below).

FIGURE 3: NUMBER OF VISITS ORGANISED UNDER THE MENTORSHIP/PARTNERSHIP PROGRAMME PER YEAR



15. The Secretariat sponsors two representatives of each National Authority. However, in most cases the delegation of the mentees consists of three or four officials, as governments decided to enhance the benefits of participation in the Programme by sponsoring additional participants at their own cost. In the period under review, mentors normally had a delegation of two officials, while in one case the mentor sponsored its own delegation of nine participants.
16. The visits organised through the Programme were intended to focus on priority thematic areas identified jointly by the mentor and the mentee in order to achieve specific results in these areas. A non-exhaustive list of thematic areas suggested by the Secretariat in its results framework document included the following themes: structure and functioning of the National Authority, national implementing legislation on the Convention, chemical safety and security, economic and technological development, national capacity in assistance and protection, conducting national industry inspections and receiving OPCW inspections, import and export of scheduled chemicals, and education and outreach.
17. The participants in the Programme have been expected to submit interim reports to the Secretariat after each visit, providing details of the activities organised during the visit, an analysis of the relevant thematic issues addressed, and recommendations for follow-up action. In addition, since 2017, a joint final report on implementation of the whole Programme and initial results achieved by the mentee has been expected to be submitted within six months of the end of the Programme.
18. The opportunities offered by the Programme, as well as the benefits and results achieved through participation, have been regularly presented by the Secretariat and relevant National Authority representatives at regional and annual meetings of National Authorities.

Lessons Learned Workshop in 2020

19. To further promote the culture of results through evaluation and drawing lessons from its programmes and activities, the Secretariat organised a lessons learned workshop on the Mentorship/Partnership Programme on 30 and 31 January 2020 in The Hague, the Netherlands. The workshop aimed at drawing lessons from the diverse experiences of the States Parties that participated in the Programme, in order to produce evidence of its effectiveness and to identify best practices that can serve as guidance to National Authorities intending to participate in the Programme in the future.
20. Concrete objectives of the workshop included: identification of examples of results achieved through participation in the Programme; identification of best practices demonstrated within the Programme for further dissemination among all interested National Authorities; and discussion and review of recommendations by National Authorities in relation to future modalities of Programme implementation.
21. The workshop was attended by representatives of 16 National Authorities who had previously participated in the Mentorship/Partnership Programme. The participants came from: Afghanistan, Algeria, Argentina, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, France, the Gambia, Guatemala, Malawi, Morocco, Namibia, Nigeria, the Sudan, Togo, and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. Participants included six representatives of mentor States Parties and 20 representatives of mentee States Parties, and represented 10 National Authorities from Africa, three from GRULAC, two from WEOG, and one from the Asia region.
22. All participants in the workshop presented their experiences and lessons learned from participation in the Programme. Following the Secretariat's guidance, their presentations included thematic priority areas that had been identified to be addressed through the Programme, a description of activities organised during the visits, the short and long-term results achieved, the good practices identified, the status of cooperation with the partner National Authority, as well as recommendations for implementation of future Mentorship/Partnership Programmes.
23. The findings of the workshop can be divided into three categories: examples of results achieved, best practices identified, and recommendations for future modalities of Programme implementation.

Results achieved as a result of participation in the Programme

24. Workshop participants identified a number of concrete results that had been achieved by their States Parties in Convention implementation through their participation in the Programme. Although all specific results have been achieved by mentees, mentors stressed that they also benefited from participation in the Programme, since visits to their mentees enhanced their understanding of various challenges related to Convention implementation. Additionally, by hosting visits they had to reach out to many national stakeholders, which helped them further appreciate the holistic nature of the Convention and the importance of a comprehensive approach to its implementation.

25. The results identified can be classified into a number of categories: structure and functioning of the National Authority; national implementing legislation on the Convention; outreach to and coordination of stakeholders; cooperation with the industry and implementation of industry-related obligations; cooperation with customs authorities; and the development of protective measures and response capacity.
26. Since a well-functioning National Authority is key for effective coordination of national stakeholders in the process of Convention implementation, the objective of **improving effectiveness of the National Authority** is one of the priority areas within the Programme. Results achieved in this area relate to improvements in the human and financial capacity of the National Authority and in the structure and functioning of the related technical or advisory bodies. In addition, effective coordination of stakeholders and implementation of the Convention is hardly possible without a comprehensive action plan that assigns tasks to all relevant stakeholders and establishes timelines for their implementation. Examples of the results achieved in this area include:
 - (a) granting of premises and allocation of additional staff to the National Authority;
 - (b) reorganisation of the structure of the National Authority and its technical and advisory bodies;
 - (c) allocation of additional government funding for disarmament matters;
 - (d) improvement of the system of nomination of relevant candidates for OPCW courses;
 - (e) establishment of a database of participants trained by the OPCW;
 - (f) a signed memorandum of understanding (MoU) between National Authorities and their key stakeholders; and
 - (g) drafting of a national action plan on the Convention and incorporation of Convention-related issues in the national chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear (CBRN) action plan.
27. Assistance in development and adoption of **the national implementing legislation** on the Convention has been another thematic priority area within the Programme. Apart from providing technical advice on various provisions of such legislation and sharing experience on advocating for the adoption of legislation, the visit of the mentors to the mentees raised the awareness of key stakeholders involved in the adoption process on the importance of the national Convention implementing legislation. Some examples of results in this area include:
 - (a) preparation and/or revision of draft national implementing legislation on the Convention and other relevant laws (such as disaster bills);
 - (b) increased awareness on Convention-related legislation by senior government officials and parliamentarians;

- (c) improved strategies in lobbying the National Assembly towards domestication of the Convention ; and
 - (d) draft legislation related to the structure and functioning of the National Authority.
28. **Education and outreach** is important in promoting ethics in chemistry and the peaceful uses of chemicals, in sensitising various national stakeholders on the importance of implementation of the Convention, and in raising their awareness of the specific roles they have in the implementation process. In particular, outreach to and sensitisation of the chemical industry are key to the effective implementation of the verification regime under the Convention. Examples of results achieved in this area include:
- (a) increased awareness of stakeholders about the existence and work of the National Authority, as well as awareness of the State's obligations under the Convention;
 - (b) involvement of the Ministry of Education in the discussion of Convention implementation, including in the preparation of educational materials and in chairing the Education and Outreach Committee;
 - (c) regular consultations with relevant parliamentary committees;
 - (d) the establishment or strengthening of cooperation with chemistry-related associations;
 - (e) increased awareness of the industrial sector in respect of the Convention through visits to industry;
 - (f) the creation of a National Authority's website and publication of its own magazine;
 - (g) the drafting of a guiding document for the chemical industry on Convention-related obligations, based on the document provided by the mentoring National Authority; and
 - (h) the inclusion of a component on the Convention in the Master's degree in chemistry curriculum.
29. The Secretariat's capacity-building initiatives are well complemented by cooperation and discussions within the Programme on **industry-related obligations**. The key focus of discussions in this area has been on the identification of declarable facilities, the completion of industry declarations, and the receiving or holding of industry inspections. Examples of results achieved in this area include:
- (a) the identification of declarable facilities and the establishment of a system for the identification of such activities;
 - (b) the establishment of a database of producers, importers, and exporters of chemicals and the development of a chemical industry catalogue;

- (c) improved cooperation between the National Authority and the Ministry of Industry, when the latter provided all required information about chemical industries, such as periodic industrial surveys and industrial risk mapping;
 - (d) the submission of initial and annual Article VI declarations;
 - (e) initiation of the process of submitting electronic declarations using OPCW software;
 - (f) the organisation of national industry inspections and/or inspection simulation exercises; and
 - (g) improvements in collecting data through the establishment of a centralised online system for the collation of data for OPCW declarations.
30. **Cooperation with customs** is important for ensuring control of the trade in toxic chemicals, to exclude the possibility of them falling into the wrong hands and to report on the transfers of scheduled chemicals as part of the declaration data to be submitted to the Secretariat under the verification regime. Some examples of results in this area include:
- (a) improved understanding by customs of their obligations under the Convention;
 - (b) improved awareness about customs clearance software;
 - (c) inclusion of scheduled chemicals into the national control list; and
 - (d) agreement of traders to report transfers of scheduled chemicals to the National Authority.
31. Although National Authorities are often not directly involved in the **development of protective measures and response capacity** of their States Parties, some results have also been achieved in this area, namely:
- (a) development of an emergency preparedness and response plan; and
 - (b) identification of the industry facilities that should be included in the emergency response plan.

Best practices identified within the Programme

32. A number of approaches undertaken through partnerships can be considered as best practice, and serve as guidance for those National Authorities that anticipate taking part in the Programme in the future. Such best practices can be divided into two broad categories: (1) the establishment of effective cooperation, and (2) the organisation of and participation in the visit.
33. Identified best practices that are related to the **establishment of effective cooperation** include:
- (a) establishing a lead contact in each National Authority to take the Programme forward;

- (b) identifying thematic focus areas and expected results;
 - (c) performing a needs assessment related to the implementation of the Convention by the National Authority in cooperation with other key stakeholders before submitting an application for the Programme;
 - (d) setting an itinerary and interactive work programmes based on the agreed framework aims and objectives;
 - (e) providing as much support and assistance to partners as possible, such as assistance with visas, preparation of letters of invitation, and internal travel;
 - (f) preparing interim reports with detailed analysis of thematic issues and recommendations and collaborating on the visit reports; and
 - (g) providing detailed recommendations from mentors to mentees and agreeing on the next steps after each visit.
34. Identified best practices related to the **organisation of and participation in the visit** include:
- (a) forming a diverse national delegation consisting of professionals responsible for activities under Articles VI, VII, X, and XI of the Convention;
 - (b) inviting media to cover the visit to promote public awareness of the Convention;
 - (c) inviting visiting mentee/mentor representatives as observers for a regular meeting of the National Authority;
 - (d) organising meetings with officials and experts involved in the drafting of the mentor's Convention legislation;
 - (e) organising a meeting with the mentee's parliamentarians to sensitise them to the need to adopt Convention legislation;
 - (f) organising practical activities for the identification of declarable facilities;
 - (g) providing assistance in the drafting of industry declaration forms;
 - (h) organising a one-day Convention implementation workshop during the visit, with the involvement of all relevant stakeholders;
 - (i) sharing by mentors of guiding documents, such as declaration and legislation manuals, best practices on chemical safety and security management, professional practice and codes of conduct for chemists, as well as relevant national legislation;
 - (j) presentation by mentees of all national legislation of potential relevance to the implementation of the Convention, including legislation covering the control of chemical substances, safety and security, and emergency response;

- (k) organising field visits to chemical industry and customs authorities; and
- (l) sponsoring of participants' own participation in the Programme as mentors.

Recommendations on further implementation of the Programme

35. Recommendations regarding the future of the Programme concern its preparatory, implementation, and post-implementation stages. All workshop participants recommended that the Secretariat continue implementation of the Programme, with a possible increase in the number of partnerships per year, subject to available additional resources. Other recommendations, some of which have already been reflected in the 2020 call for expressions of interest in the Mentorship/Partnership Programme (S/1848/2020, dated 20 February 2020), include:
- (a) pairing National Authorities from the same region or subregion (preferably with the same language) to ensure that they have a similar context of Convention implementation;
 - (b) scheduling, when possible, by the Secretariat of an initial bilateral meeting between the paired States Parties to discuss the road map for the Programme's implementation;
 - (c) extending the composition of the mentee's delegation to ensure broader exposure to the knowledge and information provided by the mentor;
 - (d) allowing considerable time between two visits within the Programme, so that mentees can make initial improvements to their implementation process based on the mentor's recommendations;
 - (e) supporting participation in the Programme of the same mentees four to five years after their initial participation, provided they can demonstrate the concrete results achieved through the Programme in the past and clearly outline the gaps that are still to be addressed;
 - (f) requiring mentees to develop, in cooperation with their mentors, a detailed Convention implementation action plan at the end of their participation in the Programme;
 - (g) maintaining cooperation between the paired National Authorities after completion of the Programme through bilateral meetings and consultations in the margins of the regional and annual meetings of National Authorities as well as other OPCW activities and programmes;
 - (h) further promotion of the Programme by the Secretariat and participating National Authorities in order to increase awareness about its benefits and results, and to encourage other National Authorities to participate; and
 - (i) including the results framework document in the Secretariat's calls for expressions of interest in participation in the Mentorship/Partnership Programme, and providing report templates to the National Authorities as soon as they have been accepted for participation in the Programme.

36. Workshop participants also emphasised the important role of the Secretariat in the monitoring and evaluation of Programme activities, which can be strengthened through participation in a number of visits within the Programme, as well as the role of the Secretariat in following up on the implementation of the mentees' Convention national action plans through formal update requests.
37. Finally, all workshop participants highly appreciated the Secretariat's initiative of organising a lessons-learned workshop, and suggested that similar workshops be organised regularly, with the next one to be scheduled in three to four years' time. The Secretariat plans to organise the next lessons-learned workshop on the Mentorship/Partnership Programme in 2023 and will continue to publish a Secretariat Note on results and best practices, as well as recommendations received regarding the Programme's implementation modalities for each period of implementation.

Annexes:

- Annex 1: List of States Parties that Participated in the Mentorship/Partnership Programme in the Period 2012 to 2019
- Annex 2: List of Partnerships Formed and Visits that Took Place Under the Mentorship/Partnership Programme in the Period 2012 to 2019

Annex 1**LIST OF STATES PARTIES THAT PARTICIPATED
IN THE MENTORSHIP/PARTNERSHIP PROGRAMME
IN THE PERIOD 2012 TO 2019**

No.	State Party	No.	State Party
1.	Afghanistan	17.	Malaysia
2.	Algeria	18.	Morocco
3.	Angola	19.	Namibia
4.	Argentina	20.	Niger
5.	Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	21.	Nigeria
6.	Brazil	22.	Pakistan
7.	Burkina Faso	23.	Panama
8.	Côte d'Ivoire	24.	Paraguay
9.	Cuba	25.	Peru
10.	El Salvador	26.	Sao Tome and Principe
11.	France	27.	Sudan
12.	Gambia	28.	Switzerland
13.	Guatemala	29.	Syrian Arab Republic
14.	India	30.	Togo
15.	Iran (Islamic Republic of)	31.	United Kingdom
16.	Malawi	32.	Yemen

Annex 2

**LIST OF PARTNERSHIPS FORMED AND VISITS THAT TOOK PLACE UNDER
THE MENTORSHIP/PARTNERSHIP PROGRAMME IN THE PERIOD 2012 TO 2019**

No.	Partnerships	First Visit	Return Visit
1.	Algeria – Niger	Niger (11 – 15 June 2012)	Algeria (9 – 12 July 2012)
2.	Malaysia – Sudan	Malaysia (16 – 20 December 2013)	Sudan (8 – 12 June 2014)
3.	Yemen – Pakistan	Yemen (8 – 12 June 2013)	Pakistan (13 – 17 January 2014)
4.	Algeria – Burkina Faso	Burkina Faso (7 – 12 December 2014)	Algeria (25 – 31 December 2014)
5.	Cuba – Paraguay	Paraguay (6 – 10 October 2014)	Cuba (3 – 7 November 2014)
6.	Brazil – Sao Tome and Principe	Sao Tome and Principe (26 – 30 January 2015)	Brazil (9 – 13 March 2015)
7.	Islamic Republic of Iran – Syrian Arab Republic	Syrian Arab Republic (23 – 27 February 2015)	Islamic Republic of Iran (23 – 27 May 2015)
8.	Switzerland – Namibia	Switzerland (8 – 11 February 2016)	Namibia (8 – 11 August 2016)
9.	Peru – El Salvador	Peru (24 – 26 August 2016)	El Salvador (13 – 15 December 2016)
10.	United Kingdom – Malawi	United Kingdom (5 – 8 September 2016)	Malawi (6 – 9 March 2017)
11.	Brazil – Angola	Angola (19 – 23 September 2016)	Brazil (24 – 28 October 2016)
12.	United Kingdom – Nigeria	United Kingdom (19 – 23 June 2017)	Nigeria (7 – 11 May 2018)
13.	Cuba – Plurinational State of Bolivia	Cuba (13 – 17 October 2017)	Plurinational State of Bolivia (14 – 18 May 2018)
14.	Brazil – Panama	Brazil (26 February – 2 March 2018)	Panama (20 – 24 August 2018)
15.	Argentina – Guatemala	Argentina (31 July – 4 August 2017)	Guatemala (9 – 13 October 2017)
16.	Morocco – Togo	Morocco (15 – 19 October 2018)	Togo (25 – 29 March 2019)
17.	India – Afghanistan	India (29 April – 3 May 2019)	<i>Planned for 2020</i>
18.	United Kingdom – Gambia	United Kingdom (8 – 12 April 2019)	<i>Planned for 2020</i>
19.	France – Côte d'Ivoire	France (2 – 6 December 2019)	<i>Planned for 2020</i>