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ENGLISH only

NOTE BY THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL

TRAINING OPPORTUNITY FOR OFFICIALS THE ASSER INSTITUTE'S ELEVENTH ANNUAL TRAINING PROGRAMME ON DISARMAMENT AND NON-PROLIFERATION OF WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION THE HAGUE, THE NETHERLANDS 28 SEPTEMBER - 2 OCTOBER 2020

1. On behalf of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), the Director-General wishes to bring to the attention of the Permanent Representations to the OPCW the opening of applications for the “Eleventh Annual Training Programme on Disarmament and Non-Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction”, to be held at the Asser Institute for International Law in The Hague, the Netherlands, from 28 September to 2 October 2020.
2. Launched in 2010, the Training Programme has been jointly developed by the OPCW and the Asser Institute and provides a multidisciplinary education on nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons and threats through a historic, legal, technical, diplomatic, and geopolitical framework.
3. The Training Programme is designed for early- to mid-career professionals working for government entities such as national export control bodies, National Authorities for the implementation of the Chemical and Biological Weapons Conventions, and national nuclear (energy) agencies. The programme is also open to professionals working for non-governmental organisations such as think tanks addressing concerns related to weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and for research centres in related disciplines. Newly arrived diplomats in The Hague are especially encouraged to sign up for the Training Programme.
4. The challenges posed to international security by nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons are as urgent today as they were during the Cold War. There is an increasing demand for professionals in the field of WMD to tackle the challenges of today’s non-proliferation and disarmament agenda with a more integrated understanding of these issues.
5. The Training Programme provides clear insights into the functioning of the four international WMD treaty organisations, and illustrates the main challenges each currently faces. During this intensive, week-long programme, participants are provided with a comprehensive overview of WMD, starting with a historical overview of arms control concepts and approaches. The Training Programme seeks to strike a balance between the legal, scientific, diplomatic, and geopolitical issues relating to the broad spectrum of WMD in a contemporary world.



6. The 2020 Training Programme offers an integrated approach to WMD. It will address the non-proliferation and disarmament efforts made separately and cooperatively with respect to chemical, nuclear, and biological weapons, with more cross-cutting aspects discussed during high-level panels.
7. The specific objectives are to provide participants with:
 - (a) hands-on knowledge of the diplomatic, legal, and technical aspects of disarmament and non-proliferation across nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons and threats;
 - (b) insight into the work of seasoned WMD professionals; and
 - (c) unique networking opportunities with speakers and participants from diverse backgrounds.
8. The Training Programme's interdisciplinary content is delivered by specialised academics from institutes in the Netherlands and abroad, together with experienced practitioners and officials from the Biological Weapons Convention Implementation Support Unit, the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization, the International Atomic Energy Agency, and the OPCW. The programme's blend of academic and practical knowledge and its comprehensive scope have been well received by participants and will be continued in 2020.
9. Classwork during the 2020 Training Programme will be supplemented by field visits to the OPCW Laboratory in Rijswijk and to the nuclear research reactor at the Delft University of Technology. The field visits offer participants direct experience in chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear preparedness, and in the way international treaties on WMD are implemented at the international and national levels.
10. The provisional programme is attached as the Annex to this Note.
11. The registration fee is EUR 1,495. This fee includes lectures, study materials, study visits, water/tea/coffee and lunch during working days, one reception, and an opening dinner. It does not cover international travel costs, domestic travel to and from airports, accommodation, insurance, or other expenses.
12. The Asser Institute is seeking support to provide a limited number of full scholarships for outstanding applicants from developing countries or countries with economies in transition who wish to participate in the 2020 programme. For updates and details, contact the Asser Institute directly via email (educationtraining@asser.nl).
13. The Asser Institute is a not-for-profit, inter-university institute that focuses on the broad field of international law. It is based in The Hague and is partly supported with funding from the Government of the Netherlands. The OPCW collaborates with the Institute in designing the agenda, providing senior staff as speakers, mobilising the participation and support of other WMD-related international organisations, and promoting participation by OPCW stakeholders.

14. The Technical Secretariat encourages Permanent Representations and their National Authorities to promote the Training Programme among potentially interested groups and to consider sponsoring the participation of outstanding national applicants who have demonstrated an interest in disarmament and non-proliferation, and who can be expected to make a significant professional contribution in this area.
15. Participants are requested to obtain any necessary visas (including transit visas) before traveling to the Netherlands. When applying for visas, they should present the Embassy or Consulate of the Netherlands with a copy of the acceptance letter from the Asser Institute. Participants are required to approach the Embassy or Consulate of the Netherlands immediately after receiving their acceptance letter.
16. All activities during the programme are conducted in English. Participants are therefore expected to have a good oral and written command of this language.
17. The application form is downloadable from the Asser Institute website (<https://www.asser.nl/education-events/training-programme-on-disarmament-and-non-proliferation-of-wmd/>) and can also be accessed through the OPCW website. Interested applicants should submit the form directly to the Asser Institute as soon as possible.
18. Additional information about the Training Programme may be obtained from the Asser Institute via email (educationtraining@asser.nl).

Annex: Provisional Programme

Annex

**ELEVENTH ANNUAL PROGRAMME ON DISARMAMENT AND
NON-PROLIFERATION OF WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION
THE HAGUE, THE NETHERLANDS
28 SEPTEMBER – 2 OCTOBER 2020**

PROVISIONAL PROGRAMME¹

Time	Event
Day 1 – General WMD Issues; Nuclear Weapons Monday, 28 September 2020	
08:30 – 09:00	<i>Registration</i>
09:00 – 09:30	Opening and round of introductions
09:30 – 10:30	Keynote address
10:30 – 10:45	<i>Coffee break</i>
10:45 – 11:45	Weapons of mass destruction (WMD) from a geopolitical perspective
11:45 – 12:45	International law and the use of force
12:45 – 13:45	<i>Lunch</i>
13:45 – 14:45	The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT)
14:45 – 15:00	<i>Coffee break</i>
15:00 – 16:00	Nuclear safeguards
16:00 – 16:15	<i>Coffee break</i>
16:15 – 17:15	The Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW)
18:00	<i>Opening dinner</i>
Day 2 – Nuclear Weapons Tuesday, 29 September 2020	
09:00 – 10:00	The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty
10:00 – 10:15	<i>Coffee break</i>
10:15 – 11:15	United States of America-Russian Federation relations and their effect on international arms control
11:15 – 12:15	Risk and benefits of artificial intelligence: Crime prevention, non-proliferation and arms control – TBD
12:15 – 13:00	<i>Lunch</i>
13:00 – 14:00	<i>Transport to the Technical University (TU) Delft Nuclear Research Reactor</i>
14:00 – 17:30	Field Visit: TU-Delft Nuclear Research Reactor
17:30 – 18:30	<i>Transport from TU-Delft Nuclear Research Reactor to the Asser Institute</i>

¹ Please note that the programme may be subject to change.

Day 3 – Biological and Chemical Weapons; Export Controls Wednesday, 30 September 2020	
09:00 – 10:30	The Biological Weapons Convention
10:30 – 10:45	<i>Coffee break</i>
10:45 – 12:30	Scientific and technological developments: Biological and chemical disarmament in a technologically evolving world
12:30 – 13:30	<i>Lunch</i>
13:30 – 14:45	Export control regimes
14:45 – 15:00	<i>Coffee break</i>
15:00 – 17:00	Simulation exercise on export controls
17:00 – 18:00	Optional: Professional opportunities in the sphere of WMD
Day 4 – Chemical Weapons Thursday, 1 October 2020	
09:00 – 9:30	<i>Welcome at the OPCW building, small tour through main halls.</i> OPCW staff
09:30 – 10:30	The Chemical Weapons Convention
10:30 – 10:45	<i>Coffee break</i>
10:45 – 11:45	The Chemical Weapons Convention’s mechanism of verification – From declarations to inspections
11:45 – 12:45	Chemical terrorism: threat and response
12:45 – 13:45	<i>Lunch</i>
13:45 – 14:30	The OPCW Investigation and Identification Team (IIT)
14:30 – 15:15	<i>Travel from OPCW HQ to the OPCW Laboratory and Equipment Store</i>
15:15 – 17:00	Field Visit: OPCW Laboratory and Equipment Store in Rijswijk OPCW Laboratory and Equipment Store staff
17:00 – 17:45	<i>Travel from the OPCW Laboratory and Equipment Store to the Asser Institute</i>
Day 5 – Current Challenges Friday, 2 October 2020	
09:00 – 10:00	The Chemical Weapons Convention in practice: Case study on the Syrian Arab Republic
10:00 – 10:15	<i>Coffee break</i>
10:15 – 11:15	When non-proliferation fails: Case study on the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea
11:15 – 12:15	The Islamic Republic of Iran and nuclear weapons: What is next?
12:15 – 13:15	<i>Lunch</i>
13:15 – 15:15	The Future of WMD disarmament and non-proliferation (panel discussion)
15:15 – 15:30	<i>Coffee break</i>
15:30 – 16:30	Programme summary and evaluation Asser Institute Staff
16:30 – 18:00	Closing reception