

**NOTE BY THE TECHNICAL SECRETARIAT****UPDATE ON EVENTS ORGANISED BY THE TECHNICAL SECRETARIAT  
IN THE AREA OF INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AND ASSISTANCE  
JANUARY TO APRIL 2020****INTRODUCTION**

1. The aim of this Note is to provide the Member 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 Member 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 January to 30 April 2020.
2. In line with the Notes by the Director-General S/1863/2020 (dated 20 March 2020) and S/1870/2020 (dated 17 April 2020) regarding the impact of the outbreak of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) on the Organisation, a number of capacity-building events during the latter half of the period covered by this report have been postponed in consultation with the hosting States Parties. The International Cooperation and Assistance Division (ICA) will continue to engage with States Parties to explore rescheduling options. At the same time, the Division is in the process of organising select events that will be held on online platforms or other similar arrangements, so as to enable States Parties to continue participating in capacity-building opportunities during this challenging period. The details of these events will be communicated to States Parties as they become available.

**IMPLEMENTATION SUPPORT – ARTICLE VII****Lessons Learned Workshop on the Mentorship/Partnership Programme,  
The Hague, the Netherlands, 30 – 31 January 2020**

3. This workshop addressed the cumulative lessons learned by the States Parties that participated in the Mentorship/Partnership Programme and demonstrated evidence of the Programme’s effectiveness. The content presented will also provide better guidance to National Authorities that express interest in the Programme in future. The workshop comprised presentations by participants and breakout group discussions.
4. One outcome of the workshop was the compilation of a list of Programme results and recommendations in six categories, as well as recommendations. These categories are: the structure of the National Authority and how it functions; national legislation



supporting the implementation of the Convention and related laws; education and outreach; implementation of industry-related obligations; cooperation with customs agencies; and the development of protective measures and response capacity.

5. The event was attended by 19 participants representing National Authorities from 16 OPCW Member States. The workshop reached its objectives, as its participants identified specific results achieved and best practices for forming effective partnerships, as well as for organising visits within the Programme. They also provided recommendations on how to enhance the Programme's effectiveness.

#### **ASSISTANCE AND PROTECTION – ARTICLE X**

##### **International Course on Pre-Hospital Medical Care for Chemical Casualties, Doha, Qatar, 17 – 20 February 2020,**

6. This course was jointly organised by the Secretariat and Qatar's National Committee for Prohibition of Weapons (NCPW). It was designed primarily for medical responders, including physicians, specialised paramedics and nurses, representatives of emergency services, and scene officers involved in both the provision of pre-hospital medical care for chemical casualties and mitigation of the consequences of chemical incidents.
7. The course was aimed at strengthening the capacities of the emergency response systems of participating States Parties, particularly in preparedness for and response to chemical incidents. Focus was placed on improvements to pre-hospital medical care for chemical casualties through enhanced skill levels, improved performance, shortened rescue, first aid, and treatment procedure times, and reduced error rates. The course included theoretical training, a table-top exercise, practical training, and a field exercise.
8. A total of 45 experts attended the course, of which 20 were local participants and 25 were OPCW-sponsored participants from 19 States Parties representing all geographical regions.

##### **Regional Table-Top Exercise on Chemical Emergency Response for States Parties from Latin America and the Caribbean, Quito, Ecuador, 17 – 21 February 2020**

9. The Regional Table-Top Exercise on Chemical Emergency Response for States Parties from Latin America and the Caribbean was offered to the GRULAC region for the fifth consecutive time as part of the regional capacity-building portfolio for Article X implementation. The course was jointly organised by the Secretariat and the Ecuadorian National Authority to the Convention, which is composed of the Ministry of National Defence and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, with support from the Firefighter Corps of the City of Quito.
10. The participants of this event gained enhanced knowledge and developed skills required for the successful coordination and management of responses to chemical attacks and incidents involving toxic chemicals based on the Incident Command System approach in a tailored scenario, according to the requirements of the region. Participants also paid a visit to the National System of Civil Protection and Hazard

Management of Ecuador (ECU-911). A total of 35 experts from 13 regional States Parties attended the exercise, which was led by the Secretariat and a team of instructors from Argentina, Ecuador, Peru, Spain, and Uruguay.

**National Basic Training Course on Assistance and Protection against Chemical Weapons for Rwanda's Airport, Border, and Police Personnel, Kigali, Rwanda, 2 – 6 March 2020**

11. At the request of the Government of the Republic of Rwanda, a national basic training course on assistance and protection against chemical weapons for Rwanda's airport, border, and police personnel was jointly organised and conducted by the Secretariat and the Rwanda Directorate General of Immigration and Emigration. The course successfully addressed core theoretical foundations and provided an opportunity for practical training on chemical warfare agents and toxic industrial chemicals, which covered the use of protective equipment, as well as monitoring, detection, and decontamination techniques.
12. The course was delivered by Secretariat experts and East Africa Community instructors, and was attended by 22 participants from Rwanda's airport, border, and police personnel. Four representatives from Kenya and Tanzania took part under the Instructor Development and Exchange Programme run by the Assistance and Protection Branch.

**INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION – ARTICLE XI**

**Proficiency Testing Course within the Project to Assess and Enhance the Capacity of Analytical Laboratories in African and GRULAC Member States, San Martin de la Vega, Spain, 27 – 31 January 2020**

13. This programme was intended for representatives of two Brazilian laboratories, the Army Technological Centre (CTEx), and the Navy Technological Centre, which are provided assistance as part of the project aimed at assessing and enhancing the capacity of analytical laboratories in African and GRULAC Member States, funded by a voluntary contribution from the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.
14. The course participants gained theoretical knowledge and practical skills in the analysis of chemicals under the Convention, specifically on the use of techniques required to participate in OPCW proficiency testing, such as high performance liquid chromatography, micro-synthesis, and semi-quantitative gas chromatography–mass spectrometry (GC-MS). The programme was offered by LAVEMA, an OPCW designated laboratory in Spain that has partnered with the Secretariat to carry out selected activities under this project.
15. Six laboratory staff members—three from each laboratory—have benefited from the programme.

**Training Course on the Analysis of Chemical Weapons Convention-Related Chemicals and Preparation for the OPCW Proficiency Test under the Project to Assess and Enhance the Capacity of Analytical Laboratories in African and GRULAC Member States, Helsinki, Finland, 10 – 14 February 2020**

16. This programme was offered to two laboratories—one in Kenya (the Government Chemists Department) and one in Nigeria (the National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control)—as part of the project aimed at assessing and enhancing the capacity of analytical laboratories in African and GRULAC Member States, funded by a voluntary contribution from the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.
17. The participants gained theoretical knowledge and basic practical skills in the areas of chemical analysis under the Convention, specifically focusing on techniques and procedures required to perform successfully in OPCW proficiency testing and the Chemical Analysis Competency Test (CFACT). The programme was offered by VERIFIN, an OPCW designated laboratory in Finland.
18. Six laboratory personnel—three from each laboratory—have benefited from the programme.

**The Fifteenth Annual Chemical Weapons Convention Workshop, Regional Arms Control Verification and Implementation Assistance Centre (RACVIAC), Zagreb, Croatia, 25 – 26 February 2020**

19. This workshop was organised for representatives of National Authorities and relevant stakeholders (such as emergency management agencies and civil defence, among others). The main purpose of this event was to discuss issues related to the implementation of the Convention in Southeast Europe. This year's workshop focused on advanced approaches to addressing chemical safety and security management using scenario-based planning.
20. Workshop participants shared best practices in and gained knowledge of the management of chemical hazards and risk reduction. A total of 18 participants from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Romania, Serbia, and Turkey were in attendance.

**Seminar on the Chemical Weapons Convention and Chemical Safety and Security Management for Member States of the OPCW in the Asia region, Doha, Qatar, 4 – 6 February 2020**

21. This programme was intended for representatives of the governments, chemical industry associations, and academic communities of Asian States Parties, as well as managers from that region in the Responsible Care® programme involved in chemical safety and security.
22. The participants gained knowledge and a better understanding of various aspects of chemical safety and security management, including the development of a national framework on safety and security management through SWOT analysis, the process of safety audit mechanisms, chemical safety and security management through scenario-based strategies, industrial applications on highly toxic chemicals, and table-top exercises on process safety. The meeting also provided an opportunity to raise awareness of regional issues related to the implementation of the Convention.

23. The event was attended by 42 participants from 11 Asian States Parties. Funding was provided through a voluntary contribution from the Government of Qatar.

**Training Course on the Analysis of Chemical Weapons Convention Related Chemicals and Preparation for the OPCW Proficiency Test under the Project to Assess and Enhance the Capacity of Analytical Laboratories in African and GRULAC Member States, Rijswijk, The Netherlands, 2 – 6 March 2020**

24. This training course was provided to three Chilean laboratories, namely the Public Health Institute, the Investigations Police of Chile, and the Agriculture and Livestock Service, which are provided with assistance under the project aimed at assessing and enhancing the capacity of analytical laboratories in African and GRULAC Member States, funded by a voluntary contribution from the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.
25. The participants gained basic theoretical knowledge of and practical skills in chemical analysis under the Convention, and specifically on the use of the most relevant techniques, such as GC-MS and proper sample preparation to competitively perform in CCACT. The programme was offered by the Secretariat at the Rijswijk Training Facility.
26. Six laboratory staff members—two from each laboratory named above—have benefited from the programme.

**Fellowship, Research Project, and Conference Support Programmes**

27. Over the reporting period, five fellowships were ongoing for fellows from Algeria, Cameroon, and Serbia. One sponsorship for Turkey was initiated under the Research Project Support Programme. Two conferences in two States Parties, South Africa and Bangladesh, were sponsored under the Conference Support Programme. In total, six participants, including three participants from the Africa Region, have been sponsored.