



### **NOTE BY THE TECHNICAL SECRETARIAT**

#### **THE CONTENT OF THE PROTECTION AND ASSISTANCE DATABANK AND ITS USE**

#### **Introduction**

1. Pursuant to paragraph 5 of Article X of the Chemical Weapons Convention (hereinafter “the Convention”), the “Technical Secretariat shall establish, not later than 180 days after entry into force of this Convention and maintain, for the use of any requesting State Party, a data bank containing freely available information concerning various means of protection against chemical weapons as well as such information as may be provided by States Parties”.
2. At its First Session, the Conference of the States Parties adopted a decision requesting the Technical Secretariat (hereinafter “the Secretariat”) to establish and maintain a databank containing the above-mentioned information (C-I/DEC.53, dated 16 May 1997).
3. In December 2006, the Protection and Assistance Databank (PAD) was established at the OPCW Headquarters, as required by paragraph 5 of Article X of the Convention. Since 2007, it has been made available through the OPCW extranet for the use of National Authorities of States Parties and Permanent Representations to the OPCW.
4. The Third Special Session of the Conference of the States Parties to Review the Operation of the Chemical Weapons Convention requested the Secretariat to review and keep up to date the OPCW databank on protection (subparagraph 9.118(h) of RC-3/3\*, dated 19 April 2013).

#### **Upgrades to the Protection and Assistance Databank**

5. The legacy databank contained the annual submissions of information by States Parties under paragraph 4 of Article X of the Convention (provided such information was not classified), offers of assistance under paragraph 7 of Article X, lists of experts suggested by States Parties, and other freely available information provided by States Parties on protection against chemical weapons.
6. In a Note circulated in 2018 (EC-88/S/5, dated 14 June 2018), the Secretariat informed the Executive Council of efforts that were under way to re-engineer the databank for improved functionality and usefulness. This upgraded PAD and its user interface were successfully tested in 2020, with the support of interested States Parties, and they are now universally available.



### **Content and use of the Protection and Assistance Databank**

7. The new PAD contains options for States Parties to provide the following:
  - (a) requests for capacity-building support;
  - (b) annual submissions of information on national programmes related to protective purposes pursuant to paragraph 4 of Article X (provided such information is not classified); and
  - (c) offers of assistance under paragraph 7 of Article X, lists of experts, as well as other freely available information on protection against chemical weapons.
8. In early 2021, the Secretariat circulated a user manual to all States Parties in order to provide them with a better understanding on how to use the platform and make submissions. The user manual has also been uploaded on the PAD platform itself and can be found under the tab “user manuals”. The Secretariat remains available to assist any State Party in successfully connecting to and navigating through the various features of the PAD.
9. All information available in the databank is non-confidential and is visible to all users. For States Parties using other available means to provide their submissions under paragraph 4 of Article X in a protected format, the PAD will be updated by the Secretariat to reflect that the national submission has been made for the year in question, and indicating only whether that State Party has declared the existence of a national programme related to protective purposes.