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NOTE BY THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL

STATUS OF THE OPCW'S CONTRIBUTION TO GLOBAL ANTI-TERRORISM EFFORTS

INTRODUCTION

1. As decided by the Executive Council (hereinafter “the Council”) in paragraph 12.4 of the report of its Sixtieth Session (EC-60/3, dated 22 April 2010), and consistent with the Council’s request contained in paragraph 16 of its decision entitled “Addressing the Threat Posed by the Use of Chemical Weapons by Non-State Actors” (EC-86/DEC.9, dated 13 October 2017), the Director-General hereby submits for the Council’s consideration at its 102nd Session this annual Note to keep the Council informed about the OPCW’s contribution to global anti-terrorism efforts, as well as its efforts in implementing the aforementioned decisions.
2. The activities of the Technical Secretariat (hereinafter “the Secretariat”) summarised in this Note, covering the period from 4 February 2022 to 7 February 2023, have continued to be based on the approach outlined in the decision by the Council at its Twenty-Seventh Session entitled “The OPCW’s Contribution to Global Anti-Terrorist Efforts”, namely, that “the full and effective implementation of all provisions of the Convention is in itself a contribution to global anti-terrorist efforts” (paragraph 1 of EC-XXVII/DEC.5, dated 7 December 2001).
3. The outcome document of the Third Review Conference,¹ held in April 2013 (RC-3/3*, dated 19 April 2013), also continued to provide reference for, and guide, the activities of the Secretariat.
4. Furthermore, in paragraph 1 of decision EC-86/DEC.9, the Council underscored the “role of the Organisation within its mandate with respect to preventing and responding to the threat posed by the use of chemical weapons by non-State actors to the object and purpose of the Convention” and, in doing so, provided additional impetus to the Secretariat’s activities.
5. Decision EC-86/DEC.9 also recognised the important role of assistance and cooperation in support of capacity building to achieve full and effective national implementation, and in assisting States Parties in investigating and prosecuting non-State actors for crimes related to the Chemical Weapons Convention (hereinafter “the Convention”), or in countering terrorism as it relates to chemical weapons (paragraphs 9 and 11 of EC-86/DEC.9). The Secretariat will continue to examine and implement cooperation and assistance for States Parties in this regard.

* Reissued in English for technical reasons.

¹ Review Conference = Special Session of the Conference of the States Parties to Review the Operation of the Chemical Weapons Convention.



6. The Open-Ended Working Group on Terrorism (OEWG-T) remains the primary platform for the States Parties to interact with international experts and to exchange their views on the challenges posed by chemical terrorism, as well as on ways the OPCW can further address this subject through the full and effective implementation of the Convention. In 2022, the Secretariat supported the convening of three OEWG-T meetings.

THE OPCW'S SUPPORT FOR INTERNATIONAL COUNTER-TERRORISM COOPERATION

7. In 2022, the OPCW continued its active participation in the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact, to which it became a signatory in 2018, and in the Compact's Working Group on Emerging Threats and Critical Infrastructure Protection. The OPCW acted as vice-chair of the Working Group alongside the United Nations Office of Disarmament Affairs and the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI), under the chairmanship of the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL). In this framework, implementation of the third phase of a project to enhance interagency interoperability and public communications in the event of a chemical or biological attack, jointly developed by the OPCW along with the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the World Health Organization, INTERPOL, UNICRI, and the Biological Weapons Convention Implementation Support Unit, began in 2022.
8. The Secretariat and the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1540 Committee Group of Experts continued to collaborate in strengthening States Parties' awareness of their relevant obligations, and to offer practical assistance in the areas in which the Convention and United Nations Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) are mutually reinforcing; namely, national legislation, chemical security, and customs and border control. The Secretariat participated in the open consultations on the comprehensive review of the implementation of the resolution in New York, the United States of America, from 31 May to 2 June 2022. A statement delivered by the Secretariat highlighted OPCW activities in support of capacity building to address the threat of chemical weapons use by non-State actors. It also underscored relevant obligations under the Convention that correspond with the resolution.

ACTIVITIES CARRIED OUT BY THE TECHNICAL SECRETARIAT

Support to the policy-making process

9. The first meeting of the OEWG-T, on 22 February 2022, featured a review of the status of the Secretariat's contribution to global anti-terrorism efforts. The second meeting, on 27 June 2022, focused on regional approaches to coordination on chemical terrorism and provided States Parties with an opportunity for an initial exchange on relevant points for consideration in the context of the Fifth Review Conference. At its third meeting, on 30 September 2022, the OEWG-T considered the outcome of a survey to gauge the views of States Parties on the main elements of the OPCW's role in countering chemical terrorism, as a contribution to the preparatory process for the Fifth Review Conference.

10. During a meeting of the Open-Ended Working Group for the Preparation of the Fifth Review Conference (OEWG-RC) held on 6 September 2022, the Secretariat updated States Parties on its strategy for chemical safety and security, which is comprised of an integrated approach involving a wide range of stakeholders, including the chemical industry, governmental institutions, and first responders, as well as the scientific community and academia.
11. At a meeting of the OEWG-RC held on 15 November 2022, the Chairperson of the OEWG-T and the Secretariat gave presentations on the responses to the survey referred to above and on suggestions for the consideration of countering chemical terrorism in the preparatory process for the Fifth Review Conference.

Criminalisation of activities prohibited by the Chemical Weapons Convention

12. The criminalisation of activities prohibited by the Convention, such as stockpiling, developing, and acquiring a chemical weapon, is a key element in preventing the use of a chemical weapon by a non-State actor. Given the transnational nature of the terrorism threat, penal legislation concerning such activities needs to be in place, and effective, in all States Parties.
13. The importance of States Parties' adoption of effective national legislation to criminalise acts prohibited by the Convention, as required by Article VII, has been highlighted by the OEWG-T discussions, and also prominently reflected in paragraphs 5 and 6 of decision EC-86/DEC.9.
14. Currently, 122 of 193 States Parties have reported having enacted legislation covering all initial measures.² However, a notable global legal gap remains, as 36 States Parties have reported having legislation covering only some of the initial measures, while 35 States Parties have yet to report on the adoption of legislation.
15. The Secretariat continued to support States Parties that have yet to adopt national implementing legislation covering all initial measures. The Secretariat organised a national legislative review forum with Malawi on 30 May, with the Niger on 14 July, and with Kenya on 20 October 2022. These States Parties received targeted support in assessing national legislative and administrative frameworks and in implementing obligations under the Convention. Eight (Malawi), three (the Niger), and four (Kenya) delegates participated in the respective forums.
16. A global stakeholders forum on the adoption of national legislation implementing the Convention was held from 13 to 15 September 2022 in The Hague, the Netherlands. The forum sought to build knowledge of national stakeholders regarding comprehensive implementing legislation and regarding their respective roles in the legislative adoption process. During the forum, participants updated national roadmaps on the adoption of such legislation and committed to undertaking specific actions to advance the process, including by developing country-specific key messages on the importance of national implementation. Thirty-one delegates from 10 States Parties took part.

²

See annual reports on the status of implementation of Article VII of the Convention in 2022 (EC-101/DG.13* C-27/DG.9, dated 9 September 2022 and Add.1, dated 3 October 2022; EC-101/DG.14 C-27/DG.10, dated 12 September 2022; and EC-101/DG.16 C-27/DG.12, dated 15 September 2022).

17. A regional workshop for French-speaking African States Parties on the role of national implementing legislation in addressing threats from non-State actors, held in Dakar, Senegal, from 16 to 18 November 2022, was a key activity promoting the understanding of how national implementation contributes effectively to countering chemical terrorism. Organised with financial support from France, the workshop benefited 51 representatives of 14 States Parties and included participation of representatives from UNICRI and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime.
18. Noting that decision EC-86/DEC.9 encouraged States Parties “to examine their national laws to ensure that there are appropriate offences which could be used to prosecute indirect perpetrators of Convention-related crimes at the domestic level”, and also requested them “to consider whether additional mutual legal assistance arrangements would be useful in ensuring the accountability of non-State actors” (paragraphs 7 and 8), the Secretariat continued to stand ready to provide assistance and advice in this regard.

Measures to prevent the hostile use of toxic chemicals by non-State actors

19. The enhancement of global chemical security in all stages of the chemical life cycle, for instance, throughout the stages of research and development, manufacture, transport in the supply chain, storage, and disposal of toxic chemical waste, continued to serve as a useful framework for considering the OPCW’s further contribution to global efforts to prevent chemical terrorism.
20. Furthermore, decision EC-86/DEC.9, which underscored the “obligation of each State Party under paragraph 2 of Article VI of the Convention to ‘adopt the necessary measures to ensure that toxic chemicals and their precursors are only developed, produced, otherwise acquired, retained, transferred, or used’ for purposes not prohibited under the Convention” (paragraph 4), is not limited to the physical aspects of security throughout the chemical life cycle, but includes the overall management of this life cycle. This management may exist in a national chemical security programme and may include measures such as regulations, policy, and national risk assessments, as deemed necessary by each State Party.
21. The Secretariat continued to advance its global and regional capacity-building activities under the OPCW Chemical Safety and Security Management Programme. In 2022, 34 capacity-building training courses and events under Article XI of the Convention were held, benefiting 747 participants.
22. Pursuant to paragraph 10 of decision EC-86/DEC.9, which requested the Secretariat “to enhance its capacity-building programmes that facilitate the sharing of chemical safety and security best practices among States Parties”, the Secretariat organised 12 tailor-made courses in 2022 on chemical safety and security management for States Parties in Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe, and Latin America and the Caribbean (GRULAC). These focused, inter alia, on raising awareness of scheduled chemicals and supply chain safety and security strategies to prevent the misuse of dual-use and highly toxic chemicals. Several training events were held, including a table-top exercise based on a scenario involving a chemical accident at a storage site.
23. On 28 April 2022, the Secretariat organised an online event entitled “Forum on the Peaceful Uses of Chemistry”, aimed at enhancing knowledge and understanding of chemical safety and security management among chemists, chemical engineers, and relevant professionals. The event also featured the sharing of lessons learned and best practices to foster a culture of chemical responsibility.

24. During the reporting period, the Secretariat, with financial support from the European Union, launched a new capacity-building programme for youth on the peaceful uses of chemistry. Targeting young academics and researchers in chemistry, the programme aims to enhance understanding of, inter alia, the importance of chemical safety and security management in ensuring the peaceful use of chemicals.
25. From 4 to 6 April 2022 in Wuppertal, Germany, the Secretariat held the first workshop on developing “Indicative Guidelines for Transportation of Hazardous Chemicals by Road”. The workshop aimed to develop a non-binding guidance document on transportation of hazardous chemicals by road, building on the publication in 2021 of the “Indicative Guidelines for Chemical Safety and Security in Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises to Foster the Peaceful Uses of Chemistry”. Concerning the latter, during the Annual Meeting of National Authorities held from 22 to 25 November 2022, a panel comprised of guideline contributors discussed challenges and opportunities in the use of the guidelines.
26. Chemical safety and security aspects were also addressed in a series of events for laboratory personnel. From 1 August to 7 October 2022, the Secretariat, in cooperation with the International Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry and the Chemical Industries Association of Uruguay, organised the second safety training programme e-learning course for States Parties in the GRULAC region. The objective was to provide an update on the current standards, policies, and best practices in occupational safety and chemical hazards. A workshop on general aspects of chemical safety and security in laboratories was organised for global participants in Milan, Italy, from 20 to 22 September 2022, and a course on chemical safety and security management in laboratories, with a focus on the GRULAC region, was held in Buenos Aires, Argentina, from 24 to 27 October 2022. Participants examined policy and practical aspects of the management of chemical laboratory infrastructure. Emphasis was placed on waste management, personal protection measures, emergency management, toxicology regulations, management of toxic chemicals, and the Global Harmonized System.
27. In 2022, the Secretariat held two regional workshops on best practices in the development of legislative and regulatory frameworks on chemical security: for States Parties in Asia from 27 to 29 July 2022 in Bangkok, Thailand, and for States Parties in the GRULAC region from 27 to 29 September 2022 in San Salvador, El Salvador. Delegates shared information on their legal and regulatory frameworks on chemical security and discussed approaches to the development of measures. Participants also discussed methodologies for assessing risks and gaps in existing legal regimes and ways of engaging different stakeholders.
28. The Secretariat, in cooperation with the World Customs Organization (WCO), held an online training course on the enforcement of the Convention’s scheduled chemicals transfers regime from 16 to 18 May 2022. The course equipped frontline customs officers with the skills and knowledge required to effectively monitor the cross-border movement of toxic chemicals, while also underscoring the role of the Convention in supporting global, regional, and national security.
29. The Secretariat, together with the WCO, organised a course for representatives of customs training institutions from 6 to 9 September 2022 in The Hague. The course enhanced capacities of National Authorities and customs training institutions on

technical aspects of the transfers regime and increased participants' awareness of generating timely and fit-for-purpose trade data on scheduled chemicals. Forty-nine participants from 18 States Parties attended the course.

30. The Secretariat organised a subregional forum on national implementation of the Convention for Pacific Island States Parties from 17 to 20 October 2022 in Brisbane, Australia. The forum revitalised the Secretariat's engagement with the subregion by bringing together 11 Pacific Island States Parties and key regional counterparts to promote cooperation through the sharing of experiences, challenges, and good practices. The participating States Parties renewed their commitment to implementation of the Convention, specifically with regard to the subregional trade in toxic chemicals; the importance of legislation implementing the Convention; legislation related to chemical safety and security; and appropriate chemical safety and security management. Forty-five delegates from 19 States Parties attended the forum.
31. The Secretariat delivered three training courses on fulfilling declarations and inspections obligations under Article VI: from 7 to 25 February 2022 and 25 April to 11 May 2022 (both online), and from 4 to 7 October 2022 in Quito, Ecuador. The training enhanced participants' knowledge of Article VI obligations and facilitated delegates' sharing of experiences and best practices related to Article VI implementation. The training also provided delegates with practical guidance to facilitate receiving and escorting OPCW inspections. Seventy-seven participants from 34 States Parties attended the first training; 19 participants from 12 States Parties attended the second; and 42 participants from 18 States Parties attended the third.
32. Further information specific to the Programme to Strengthen Cooperation with Africa on the Chemical Weapons Convention (hereinafter "the Africa Programme") is detailed below.

Ensuring an effective response to the hostile use of toxic chemicals

33. Enhancing global capacity to respond to the hostile use of a toxic chemical has continued to be a priority area for the OPCW. The Secretariat's efforts were aimed at supporting national and regional response capacities, enhancing the OPCW's own capacity to respond and provide assistance, and improving the collective response of the United Nations and other international organisations.
34. In acknowledging decision EC-86/DEC.9, which noted in its final preambular paragraph "the need to continue to enhance the Secretariat's capacity and readiness, in response to alleged incidents of chemical weapons use, to provide technical assistance, to deploy emergency measures of assistance under Article X of the Convention at the request of a State Party, and to enhance the Secretariat's readiness to conduct investigations of alleged use under Article IX and Article X of the Convention and Part XI of the Verification Annex to the Convention", the activities below are highlighted.
35. Throughout 2022 the Secretariat continued to enhance its investigative capabilities through a series of training activities offered to relevant staff. Building up investigative skills is relevant in the non-State actor context, notably in case of requests for a technical assistance visit under subparagraph 38(e) of Article VIII of the Convention, requests for assistance pursuant to paragraphs 11 and 13 of decision EC-86/DEC.9, and in case of requests made under paragraphs 19 and 20 of decision C-SS-4/DEC.3 (dated 27 June 2018).

36. Within the scope of assistance under Article X of the Convention, the Secretariat can assist States Parties in the identification of munitions, explosive devices, or remnants of war suspected of holding chemical warfare agents or toxic chemicals and utilised by non-State actors. In 2022 the Secretariat worked to further enhance this capacity by pursuing advanced certification of inspectors in non-destructive evaluation equipment and implementing a specialised training programme for innovative techniques to evaluate improvised explosive devices that can be used by non-State actors as chemical weapons agent dissemination tools.
37. The Secretariat continued to provide support to States Parties in the development of their national programmes for protective purposes, pursuant to paragraph 4 of Article X. The Secretariat launched a regional joint review of chemical emergency preparedness and response for States Parties from the South African Development Community based on the Online Self-Assessment Tool, which enables States Parties to review their existing risks, capabilities, and capacities, with a view to improving their national protective programmes. A workshop was conducted in Cape Town, South Africa, from 28 to 30 March 2022 to discuss policy issues and practical implementation strategies aimed at protective capacities to respond to chemical incidents and strengthen cross-regional cooperation, as well as Secretariat capacities to deliver tailor-made assistance in response to existing and potential chemical risks.
38. The Secretariat offered online and hybrid activities to States Parties mainly in the first quarter of 2022, followed by face-to-face courses for first responders and emergency managers from the second quarter. The experience gathered from virtual training during the COVID-19 pandemic helped to improve and strengthen relevant capacity-building programmes in 2022. Ultimately, States Parties benefited from 37 events supporting implementation of Article X, involving over 1,300 first responders and other relevant stakeholders. A new regional and global training cycle concept was further developed for 2023.
39. Further information specific to the Africa Programme is detailed below.

Enhancing laboratory capacity at the OPCW and in States Parties

40. The capability to safely analyse a wide range of chemicals and types of samples, both within the Secretariat itself and within each State Party, is of fundamental importance to the full and effective implementation of the Convention. Such capability can take a number of practical forms, ranging from the detection of chemicals in the field with hand-held equipment, such as by customs agencies, to the analysis of samples in a laboratory to identify chemicals used in an attack or to determine the likely provenance of a chemical weapons agent. Forward-looking research and development is also key to making practical advancements, such as in medical countermeasures. Addressing the need to develop, nurture, and enhance this capability in a sustainable way remains a priority for the Organisation, including in the context of the non-State actor threat.
41. The Secretariat continued to support States Parties in the building of their laboratory capacity across a wide range of areas (from “basic” up to, and including, the ability to undertake proficiency testing with the aim of receiving OPCW designated laboratory status). Fourteen training courses and events were aimed at enhancing laboratory capacities, including skills on analysis of Convention-related chemicals by gas and liquid chromatography coupled to mass spectrometry, sample preparation and derivatisation techniques, laboratory quality management, and other topics.

42. In 2022, the Secretariat continued to implement the project “Assessing and Enhancing Capacity of Analytical Laboratories from African and GRULAC Member States” with a voluntary contribution from the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, aimed at laboratories from the Africa and GRULAC regions that are seeking OPCW designation. The third phase was completed on 31 March 2022 and resulted in further enhancement of the capacity of six laboratories from Brazil (one), Chile (three), Kenya (one), and Nigeria (one). In 2022, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland renewed the funding for the project up to March 2023. Capacity-building activities are being conducted in cooperation with Finland and Spain.
43. The OPCW Laboratory Twinning Initiative is aimed at assisting laboratories in States Parties with economies that are either developing or in transition to improve their performance in the OPCW proficiency tests, which must be successfully completed in order to become an OPCW designated laboratory. Assisting laboratories offer their resources with support from the Secretariat to implement a series of training and mentorship visits, aiming to enhance the capacity of assisted laboratories in the analysis of environmental and biomedical samples. In 2022, implementation of a twinning project between VERIFIN – Finnish Institute for Verification of the Chemical Weapons Convention and the University of Belgrade’s Faculty of Chemistry (Centre for Instrumental Analysis), Serbia, continued. Progress was also made in the development of a twinning project between the Bundeswehr Research Institute for Protective Technologies and CBRN³ Protection in Germany and the National Institute of Criminalistics and Criminology of the National Gendarmerie in Algeria, in which context a series of training courses took place. Twinning arrangements for another project, between the Forensic Science Centre of Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory of the United States of America and the National Laboratory of Morocco, were ongoing.
44. Additionally, within the area of analysis of Convention-related chemicals in 2022, the Secretariat supported five visits under the Fellowship Programme, 10 research projects under the Programme for Support of Research Projects, and participation of one expert under the Conference Support Programme.
45. Further information specific to the Africa Programme is detailed below.

The role of the Scientific Advisory Board

46. Through its work in assessing and reporting on developments in scientific and technological fields that are relevant to the Convention, the OPCW’s Scientific Advisory Board (SAB) has an important role to play in ensuring that the Secretariat and States Parties are better placed to mitigate the threat posed by the use of chemical weapons by non-State actors. The SAB endeavours to stay abreast of emerging technologies and developments that may be attractive to non-State actors. In 2022, the Board held three sessions in which numerous briefings were given by OPCW staff and external experts on topics relating to non-State actors.
47. In 2021, the Director-General established a temporary working group (TWG) of the SAB on the analysis of biotoxins. The objective of the TWG is to review the science and technology relevant to the analysis of biotoxins, as well as considerations that need to be

³ CBRN = chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear.

taken into account in investigations of their alleged use. A major focus of the TWG, which is comprised of both SAB members and external experts in the field of toxins, is the potential use of biotoxins by non-State actors. The Group met three times during 2022 and will look to complete its work and generate its final report in early 2023.

The OPCW Centre for Chemistry and Technology and the network of designated laboratories

48. Once operational, the Centre for Chemistry and Technology (ChemTech Centre) will provide expanded and enhanced analytical, operational, and capacity-building capabilities that will help States Parties to better prepare for and respond to threats and uses of chemical weapons by non-State actors. The project reached a major milestone in 2022 with the completion of the construction of the building, including testing and commissioning. The Secretariat maintained rigorous contract management to ensure vendor delivery in accordance with agreed terms. Transition phase activities also started in 2022, including preparations for training of future users of the facility. Preparations also began for the Secretariat's testing and approval of the building ahead of acceptance in early 2023.
49. While many of the activities at the ChemTech Centre will continue or enhance existing activities, the facility will also allow for additional programmes to strengthen the Secretariat's ability to fulfil its mandate more effectively. In 2022, the Secretariat summarised and outlined potential new programmes to be implemented at the ChemTech Centre that would require additional financial and human resources. These relate to enhancement of the OPCW Laboratory capabilities, inspectors' routine and non-routine readiness and training, international cooperation and assistance, and knowledge management and scientific collaboration.
50. By the end of the reporting period, EUR 34.25 million in funding from 54 countries, the European Union, and other donors had been received for the ChemTech Centre.
51. The OPCW network of partner laboratories that were available for off-site analysis of samples has increased since 2021; 25 laboratories from 21 States Parties met the requisite criteria to become or to retain their status as OPCW designated laboratories for the analysis of environmental samples.
52. In 2022, the Secretariat conducted the Seventh Biomedical Proficiency Test. The OPCW network of partner laboratories has increased since 2021, with 20 laboratories from 14 States Parties having met the requisite criteria to become or to retain their status as OPCW designated laboratories for the analysis of biomedical samples.
53. In December 2022, the OPCW Laboratory began the seventh exercise on the analysis of biologically derived toxins. These exercises further enhance the OPCW partner laboratories' capabilities in this area and help arrive at commonly accepted analysis and reporting criteria.
54. The OPCW Laboratory continued to monitor scientific progress and developments in the field of chemical forensics and is actively pursuing the transfer of methods among the network of laboratories for in-depth evaluation. Such methods will enlarge the toolkit available to the designated laboratories for the analysis of samples and the determination of chemical signatures.

Efforts by the OPCW to enhance chemical security and counter-terrorism efforts as part of the Programme to Strengthen Cooperation with Africa on the Chemical Weapons Convention in 2022

55. Africa continues to face particular challenges from terrorist threats and attacks in several countries. The potential use of chemicals by non-State actors, including terrorist and violent extremist groups, to perpetrate terrorist attacks remains a serious threat. In 2022 the Secretariat continued to devote special attention to Africa through the fifth phase of the Africa Programme, with a view to responding to African States Parties' needs and priorities, including the promotion of peaceful uses of chemistry for a developed, safe, and secure Africa.
56. In terms of preventing and responding to chemical terrorism in Africa, the fifth phase continued to follow an integrated approach aimed at enhancing chemical security in the continent. This approach is multidimensional and focuses on developing the capacities of African States Parties in the areas listed below.
57. As 2022 was the concluding year of the fifth phase, consultations were held throughout the year between the Secretariat and African States Parties, leading to the design of a sixth phase that will follow the same integrated approach.

Advancing national implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention in Africa

58. The Secretariat continued to provide relevant training and technical assistance to African States Parties in 2022, with a view to further developing their capacities to effectively implement the Convention. Such activities were offered on a regional basis (for example, the general training course on the Convention and national obligations for personnel of National Authorities and other national stakeholders, which took place in Lomé, Togo, from 23 to 25 August), as well as to individual States Parties (the national legislative review forums for Malawi, the Niger, and Kenya).
59. In addition, African participation was secured in global training courses on technical aspects of implementation of the Convention, such as declarations and inspections obligations under Article VI, held online from 7 to 25 February and from 25 April to 11 May, and the global stakeholders forum held in The Hague from 13 to 15 September.
60. Highlighted earlier in this report, the regional workshop for French-speaking African States Parties held in Dakar, Senegal, from 16 to 18 November 2022, underscored the role of national implementation in countering chemical terrorism.
61. Furthermore, the Secretariat facilitated the active participation and contribution of African States Parties in regular annual OPCW meetings in 2022, notably the Twentieth Regional Meeting of African National Authorities, held online from 31 May to 2 June; the ninth Annual Meeting of Representatives of Chemical Industry and National Authorities of States Parties to the Convention, held in Qatar from 18 to 20 October; and the Twenty-Fourth Annual Meeting of National Authorities, held in The Hague from 22 to 25 November. Also, in the context of the regular consultations and exchanges between the OPCW and States Parties in the Africa region, the Secretariat convened productive information and coordination meetings with the Steering Committee of the Africa Programme on 24 June and 15 November and with the African delegations based outside The Hague on 10 November.

Control of cross-border transfers of toxic chemicals

62. Thirteen participants from nine African States Parties took part in an online global training course, organised with the WCO from 16 to 18 May 2022, on the enforcement of the Convention's scheduled chemicals transfers regime. Twenty-eight other participants from 13 African States Parties benefited from a train-the-trainer course organised from 6 to 9 September in The Hague for customs training institutions and academies, focusing on the technical aspects of the transfers regime of the Convention.
63. In addition, with financial support from the United States of America, the Secretariat organised, jointly with the Institute of Industrial Organic Chemistry (IPO) of Poland, a specialised analytical chemistry course for laboratories supporting customs services in African Member States. Held in Warsaw from 10 to 14 October, the course benefited 20 participants from 16 African States Parties.

Advancing chemical safety and security culture, standards, and practices in Africa

64. In 2022, the Secretariat organised a series of awareness-raising and capacity-building activities in the areas of chemical safety and security management that benefited a total of 98 participants from 33 States Parties in Africa. Activities organised included a seminar on chemical safety and security management in Harare, Zimbabwe, from 10 to 12 May and an advanced course on chemical safety and security management, held in Port Louis, Mauritius, from 11 to 13 October.

Enhancing protection and response capabilities against chemical incidents and attacks

65. In 2022, the Secretariat arranged the participation of African States Parties in a series of training courses aimed at developing capacities in areas of assistance and protection. Topics of these courses, organised in collaboration with international partners, included the handling of toxic chemical incidents; decontamination of chemical warfare agents and toxic industrial chemicals; and sampling and analysis in a highly contaminated environment. These activities, including 13 capacity-building activities organised specifically for the Africa region, benefited a total of 461 participants from 40 African States Parties. Several of these events were offered specifically to African subregions, in collaboration with Regional Economic Communities.
66. In addition, in 2022 the Secretariat finalised and launched the Online Self-Assessment Tool, with technical and financial support from France, Germany, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and the European Union. This tool assists States Parties, initially those in the Southern African Development Community, in identifying critical needs related to their national protection against chemical weapons and necessary improvement measures.

Strengthening and developing chemical laboratory competencies and infrastructure

67. In the year under review, the Secretariat ensured the participation of 81 participants from 26 African States Parties in eight regional and global analytical skills development courses. Specialised proficiency test training was provided to 13 participants representing two African States Parties. Furthermore, under the Laboratory Twinning Initiative, in addition to the ongoing twinning project between two laboratories in the Netherlands and South Africa, progress was made in the development of two laboratory twinning projects between two laboratories in Algeria and Germany, and two in Morocco and the United States of America.