



S/2150/2023  
7 March 2023  
ENGLISH only

### NOTE BY THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL

#### **TRAINING OPPORTUNITY: ASSER INSTITUTE PROGRAMME ON DISARMAMENT AND NON-PROLIFERATION OF WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION THE HAGUE, THE NETHERLANDS 18 – 22 SEPTEMBER 2023**

1. On behalf of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), the Director-General wishes to inform Member States that registration is now open for the Annual Training Programme on Disarmament and Non-Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction, to be held from 18 to 22 September 2023 in The Hague, the Netherlands. This training programme is organised by the Asser Institute for International Law, in collaboration with the OPCW.
2. The training programme is designed for early- to mid-career professionals and provides a comprehensive overview of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), striking a balance between the legal, scientific, diplomatic, and geopolitical issues relating to the broad spectrum of WMD in a contemporary world. The training programme will provide clear insights into the functioning of the four international WMD treaty organisations, and illustrate the main challenges each of them currently faces.
3. Permanent Representations and their National Authorities are encouraged to promote the training programme among potentially interested groups. It would benefit individuals 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. Professionals working for non-governmental organisations such as think tanks addressing concerns related to WMD and for research centres in related disciplines, as well as newly arrived diplomats in The Hague, are especially encouraged to register.
4. Member States are encouraged 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.
5. The Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs may offer a limited number of scholarships for applicants who are nationals of and working in countries with low- and lower-middle-income economies (according to the World Bank classification<sup>1</sup>). For updates and details on how to apply for a scholarship, see the Asser Institute website or contact the Asser Institute directly via email ([educationtraining@asser.nl](mailto:educationtraining@asser.nl)).

<sup>1</sup> See: <https://datahelpdesk.worldbank.org/knowledgebase/articles/906519>.



6. The specific objectives of the training programme 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;
  - (b) insight into the work of seasoned WMD professionals; and
  - (c) unique networking opportunities with speakers and participants from diverse backgrounds.
7. 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 2023.
8. The provisional programme is attached as the Annex to this Note.
9. The Asser Institute is a non-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.
10. Interested applicants can register for the training programme, and apply for the scholarship as appropriate, via the Asser Institute website (<https://www.asser.nl/education-events/events/?id=4278>). A link can also be accessed through the OPCW website. Interested applicants should submit the form directly to the Asser Institute as soon as possible.
11. Additional information about the training programme may be obtained from the Asser Institute via email ([educationtraining@asser.nl](mailto:educationtraining@asser.nl)).

Annex: Provisional Programme

## Annex

**ASSER INSTITUTE PROGRAMME ON DISARMAMENT AND  
NON-PROLIFERATION OF WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION  
THE HAGUE, THE NETHERLANDS  
18 – 22 SEPTEMBER 2023**

**PROVISIONAL PROGRAMME**

*Monday, 18 September***Day 1 – General WMD issues; Nuclear weapons**

09:00 – 09:30	<i>Registration</i>
09:30 – 10:00	Opening and round of introductions
10:00 – 10:40	Keynote address by the Director-General of the OPCW Technical Secretariat
10:40 – 11:00	<i>Coffee/tea break</i>
11:00 – 12:30	International arms control law
12:30 – 13:30	<i>Lunch</i>
13:30 – 15:00	WMD in contemporary international affairs
15:00 – 15:20	<i>Coffee/tea break</i>
15:20 – 17:00	The future of nuclear arms control and strategic stability
18:00	<i>Opening dinner</i>

*Tuesday, 19 September***Day 2 – Nuclear weapons**

09:00 – 10:30	The global nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime
10:30 – 10:45	<i>Coffee/tea break</i>
10:45 – 12:15	Nuclear safeguards
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>

*Wednesday, 20 September***Day 3 – Biological weapons; emerging technology; export controls**

09:00 – 10:30	The Biological Weapons Convention
10:30 – 11:00	<i>Coffee/tea break</i>
11:00 – 12:30	Biological weapons, biological threats, and biosecurity
12:30 – 13:30	<i>Lunch</i>
13:30 – 15:00	WMD and emerging technologies
15:00 – 15:30	<i>Coffee/tea break</i>
15:30 – 17:15	Export control regimes and simulation exercise on export controls

**Thursday, 21 September****Day 4 – Chemical weapons**

08:45 – 09:15	<i>Walk from the Asser Institute to the OPCW</i>
09:15 – 09:45	Welcome at the OPCW Headquarters, a tour through main halls with OPCW staff
09:45 – 11:00	The Chemical Weapons Convention
11:00 – 11:15	<i>Coffee/tea break</i>
11:15 – 12:30	The Chemical Weapons Convention’s mechanism of verification – From declarations to inspections
12:30 – 12:45	<i>Coffee/tea break</i>
12:45 – 13:30	Upholding the Chemical Weapons Convention: The work of the OPCW Investigation and Identification Team
13:30 – 14:30	<i>Lunch</i>
14:30 – 14:45	Official group photo at the OPCW
14:45 – 15:15	<i>Travel from the OPCW Headquarters to the OPCW Centre for Chemistry and Technology (ChemTech Centre) (TBC)</i>
15:15 – 17:00	Field visit: OPCW ChemTech Centre (TBC)
17:00 – 17:45	<i>Travel from the OPCW ChemTech Centre to the Asser Institute</i>

**Friday, 22 September****Day 5 – Current challenges**

09:00 – 10:30	Non-proliferation case study: The nuclear issue in the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea
10:30 – 10:45	<i>Coffee/tea break</i>
10:45 – 12:15	Nuclear and radiological security
12:15 – 13:15	<i>Lunch</i>
13:15 – 14:45	Protecting nuclear power plants during armed conflicts
14:45 – 15:15	Programme evaluation
15:15 – 15:30	<i>Coffee/tea break</i>
15:30 – 16:45	Panel discussion: “Fake news” and fact finding – Disinformation about WMD
16:45 – 17:30	<i>Closing reception</i>