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ENGLISH only

NOTE BY THE TECHNICAL SECRETARIAT

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS FOR AN INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE AND PROTECTION SAMPLING COURSE FOR OPCW MEMBER STATES LÁZNĚ BOHDANEČ, THE CZECH REPUBLIC 14 – 19 SEPTEMBER 2024

1. The Technical Secretariat of the OPCW (the Secretariat) wishes to invite States Parties to nominate participants for an international assistance and protection sampling course, which will take place from 14 to 19 September 2024 in Lázně Bohdaneč, the Czech Republic.
2. The course is being organised by the Secretariat in cooperation with the Population Protection Institute of the General Directorate of Fire Rescue Service of the Ministry of Interior of the Czech Republic, and will provide training for up to 20 experts who are involved in emergency response to chemical incidents and would be responsible for conducting sampling and analysis tasks in a highly contaminated environment as a result of a chemical attack or a chemical incident.
3. The course will also provide an overview of the kinds of assistance the OPCW can provide, and will help participating Member States enhance the abilities and skills of their officers in charge of chemical incidents, thus boosting their ability to respond adequately to incidents associated with the intentional or accidental release of chemical warfare agents or toxic industrial chemicals.
4. OPCW Member States that do not yet have sampling capabilities are especially encouraged to nominate participants. Given the objectives of the course and its technical nature, applicants should have a solid technical background in chemistry and the management of hazardous chemical substances. Applicants are expected to be familiar with the principles of first response, including sampling and chemical emergency management.
5. Participants must also be qualified and experienced in using and wearing a self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA). Previous practical experience in military or civil protection or police is desirable. Individual protective suits will be worn for several hours each day, and participants must therefore be physically fit and able to wear such equipment for extended periods.
6. All participants must have a solid command of English, both oral and written, as all activities during the course will be conducted in English and no interpretation services of any kind will be available.



7. Applications will be carefully screened on the basis of the criteria specified in paragraphs 4 to 6 above. Only the most suitable applicants will be selected. The Secretariat strongly encourages States Parties and National Authorities to seek, support, and endorse applications from qualified female candidates.
8. The Secretariat expects to be able to sponsor a limited number of participants from States Parties. For sponsored participants, it will cover the costs of accommodation and meals. Further details regarding accommodation, the course venue, and transport will be issued to all confirmed participants at a later date.
9. Interested States Parties are invited to submit nominations as soon as possible and no later than 28 May 2024, making sure to provide all necessary contact details and valid passport details of the nominees. Endorsement by the candidates' respective National Authority is a prerequisite for consideration in the selection process. The endorsement process must be completed online before the above-mentioned deadline of 28 May 2024 in Eventus, the OPCW event management system (<https://eventus.opcw.org/>).
10. Participants are requested to obtain all necessary visas (including transit visas) before travelling to the Czech Republic.
11. The provisional programme for this training course is included as the Annex to this Note, and further details will be issued at a later date. Any questions may be addressed to the focal point for this training within the OPCW's Assistance and Protection Branch of the International Cooperation and Assistance Division: Mr Anton Martyniuk (Tel: +31 62 465 3470; Email: anton.martyniuk@opcw.org).

Annex: Provisional Programme

Annex

**INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE AND PROTECTION SAMPLING COURSE
FOR OPCW MEMBER STATES
LÁZNĚ BOHDANEČ, THE CZECH REPUBLIC
14 – 19 SEPTEMBER 2024**

PROVISIONAL PROGRAMME

Time	Activity
<i>Friday, 13 September 2024</i>	
	Arrival of participants in Prague, transfer to Lázně Bohdaneč
<i>Saturday, 14 September 2024</i>	
09:00 – 09:30	Official opening, keynote speech, introduction of participants
09:30 – 09:45	Official photo
09:45 – 10:00	Administrative information
10:00 – 10:30	Presentation: Population Protection Institute (introduction of the facility)
10:30 – 11:00	<i>Coffee/tea break</i>
11:00 – 12:00	Presentation: OPCW, Article X of the Chemical Weapons Convention
12:00 – 13:30	<i>Lunch</i>
13:30 – 14:15	Presentation: Chemical agents (properties, toxicity, classification)
14:15 – 15:15	Presentation, demonstration: Personal protection
15:15 – 15:45	<i>Coffee/tea break</i>
15:45 – 17:00	Presentation: Hot-zone management with an emphasis on collection of samples
18:00 – 21:30	<i>Welcome dinner hosted by the OPCW</i>
<i>Sunday, 15 September 2024</i>	
08:00 – 08:45	Presentation: Reconnaissance rules
08:45 – 09:45	Presentation: Overview of sampling (general rules, hazards, equipment, procedures, chain of custody)
09:45 – 10:15	<i>Coffee/tea break</i>
10:15 – 11:00	Presentation: Detection (rules, methods, equipment)
11:00 – 12:00	Presentation: Decontamination (personnel, samples)
12:00 – 13:30	<i>Lunch</i>
13:30 – 14:00	Equipment handover
14:00 – 14:45	Practical session: Personal protective equipment (donning, doffing)
14:45 – 15:15	<i>Coffee/tea break</i>
15:15 – 17:00	On-site demonstration and practical session: Protection, detection, decontamination (three teams, exchanging workplaces)
<i>Monday, 16 September 2024</i>	
08:00 – 08:45	Presentation: Environmental and emergency sampling
08:45 – 09:30	Presentation: Sampling methodology for chemical analysis purposes
09:30 – 10:00	Presentation, demonstration: Sample kit
10:00 – 10:30	<i>Coffee/tea break</i>
10:30 – 11:00	Presentation: Sampling: practice and mission preparedness
11:00 – 12:00	Presentation: Accredited laboratory analysis of received samples: methods and general rules
12:00 – 13:30	<i>Lunch</i>

13:30 – 14:30	Presentation, demonstration: Sample documentary, sample protocol
14:30 – 15:00	<i>Coffee/tea break</i>
15:00 – 17:00	On-site demonstration, practical session: Collection of solid (soil), liquid, and air samples (three teams, exchanging workplaces)
<i>Tuesday, 17 September 2024</i>	
08:00 – 08:30	Refresher session: Hot-zone management activities
08:30 – 09:30	Practical session: Sampling during an emergency, communication rules
09:30 – 10:30	Presentation: Dealing with chemical agents—medical point of view
10:30 – 11:00	<i>Coffee/tea break</i>
11:00 – 12:00	Case study: Incident response aimed at collection of samples
12:00 – 13:30	<i>Lunch</i>
13:30 – 16:00	Guided field training exercise: Leakage of a toxic substance 1 (partial protection)
16:00 – 16:30	<i>Coffee/tea break</i>
16:30 – 17:00	Evaluation of and debriefing on guided field training exercise
<i>Wednesday, 18 September 2024</i>	
08:00 – 08:30	Preparation for field training exercise
08:30 – 10:30	Field training exercise: Leakage of a toxic substance 2 (full protection)
10:30 – 11:30	<i>Coffee/tea break</i>
11:30 – 12:30	Field training exercise: Evaluation and debriefing
12:30 – 14:00	<i>Lunch</i>
14:00 – 15:30	Demonstration: Hazardous materials reconnaissance vehicles
15:30 – 16:00	<i>Coffee/tea break</i>
16:00 – 17:00	Course evaluation (completion of OPCW evaluation forms, feedback from participants, discussion of results)
<i>Thursday, 19 September 2024</i>	
08:00 – 09:00	Equipment maintenance, return of equipment
09:00 – 10:30	Excursion: Chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear (CBRN) facility
10:30 – 12:00	Transfer to Prague
12:00 – 16:00	<i>Sightseeing in Prague</i>
16:00 – 17:00	Prague hotel: check-in
17:00 – 18:00	Official closing ceremony
18:00 – 20:00	<i>Official dinner</i>
<i>Friday, 20 September 2024</i>	
	Departure of participants