



NOTE BY THE TECHNICAL SECRETARIAT

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS FOR THE TWENTY-SIXTH ANNUAL MEETING OF NATIONAL AUTHORITIES, THE HAGUE, THE NETHERLANDS 20 – 22 NOVEMBER 2024

1. The Technical Secretariat of the OPCW (the Secretariat) wishes to invite National Authorities to submit nominations for the Twenty-Sixth Annual Meeting of National Authorities, which will be held at the OPCW Main Building in The Hague, the Netherlands, from 20 to 22 November 2024.
2. The annual meeting of National Authorities serves as an interactive communication and cooperation platform among National Authorities, and between them and the OPCW. Furthermore, it is intended to promote regional networks in support of the implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention (the Convention) and to enhance regional aspects of international cooperation and assistance activities.
3. The objectives of the annual meeting are to:
 - (a) provide a forum for National Authorities to highlight and work through relevant issues in order to enhance their capacity to comply with their obligations under the Convention;
 - (b) provide an occasion for the Secretariat and States Parties to interact and discuss ways to effectively provide capacity-development support by assessing needs, sharing good practices, and improving national programmatic design activities; and
 - (c) promote cooperation between and among National Authorities in order to further the implementation of the Convention at the national and regional levels.
4. The meeting is expected to facilitate the achievement of the following outcomes:
 - (a) a renewed commitment to strengthen cooperation and increase interaction between and among the Secretariat and States Parties and all other stakeholders, thereby producing increased and improved engagements at different levels, including bilateral technical assistance arrangements; and
 - (b) the generation of recommendations from participants relating to fulfilling national obligations under the Convention and strengthening relations between the Secretariat and States Parties.
5. During the meeting, information on progress and developments in capacity-building support offered by the Secretariat will be shared with National Authorities, specifically in relation to Articles VI, VII, X, and XI of the Convention. In addition, there will be updates on science- and policy-related issues.

6. This annual meeting aims to facilitate in-depth discussions on developing advocacy tools and enhancing engagement among National Authorities and other relevant stakeholders. The focus will be on effectively implementing the Convention, in addition to synergies with other international treaty regimes, sustainable development goals, and emerging security challenges—particularly those posed by non-State actors involved in the illicit transfer of scheduled chemicals.
7. National Authorities will also have an opportunity to meet with their respective regional groups, share their progress in implementing the Convention, discuss needs for capacity development and technical support, and identify approaches that address current or future challenges.
8. Bilateral consultations can be held at the dates and times indicated in the provisional programme. National Authorities interested in such consultations should inform the Secretariat in advance, specifying who they wish to meet and the issues they wish to discuss.
9. During the plenary sessions of the meeting, interpretation services will be provided in all the official languages of the OPCW. French and Spanish interpretation services will be available during discussions between the Africa and the Latin America and the Caribbean regional groups. No interpretation services will be available for bilateral meetings.
10. The provisional programme for the meeting is attached as the Annex to this Note.
11. National Authorities are invited to nominate representatives who are directly involved in the implementation of the Convention, particularly in their day-to-day activities. The Secretariat expects to be able to sponsor a limited number of representatives of National Authorities, with **only one sponsorship slot per requesting National Authority**. National Authorities are strongly encouraged to seek, support, and endorse applications from qualified female candidates.
12. Participants are requested to obtain any necessary visas (including transit visas) before travelling to the Netherlands. Participants requiring an entry visa for the Netherlands are advised to contact the nearest diplomatic mission of the Netherlands as soon as possible. Participants needing further assistance may contact the Visa Section of the Secretariat (visa@opcw.org).
13. National Authorities are invited to submit their applications online through Eventus, the OPCW event management system (<https://eventus.opcw.org/>), no later than **Monday, 16 September 2024**. These applications must be reviewed and endorsed electronically through Eventus by the respective National Authorities, to be followed by final review and approval by the Secretariat.
14. Additional information about the meeting may be obtained from the Implementation Support Branch of the International Cooperation and Assistance Division. The contact persons are Mr Rene Betancourt (rene.betancourt@opcw.org), Ms Olukemi Adenuga (olukemi.adenuga@opcw.org), Mr Victor Barros Correia (victor.barros-correia@opcw.org), and Mr Alberto Fernandez (alberto.fernandez@opcw.org).

Annex: Provisional Programme

Annex

PROVISIONAL PROGRAMME

	Agenda Item
<i>Wednesday, 20 November 2024</i>	
Morning	<p>Registration of participants</p> <p><u>Opening session:</u> Opening address by H.E. Ambassador Fernando Arias, Director-General of the Secretariat</p> <p><u>Group photo</u></p> <p><u>Presentations by the Secretariat:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Updates on the capacity-development activities of the International Cooperation and Assistance Division – Highlights of science- and policy-related developments – Updates on verification and related projects – Updates on inspections and related issues
Afternoon	<p>Bilateral meetings with relevant Secretariat staff/other States Parties (to be requested in advance)</p> <p><u>Regional group meetings:</u> Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, and Western Europe and Others</p> <p>Reception hosted by the Director-General (TBC)</p>
<i>Thursday, 21 November 2024</i>	
Morning	<p>Regional group meetings – feedback from rapporteurs</p> <p>Thematic session 1: Customs authorities as a key national stakeholder in implementation of the Convention</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Introduction to session 1 – Implementing the Convention transfers regime for scheduled chemicals – The important role of customs laboratories in implementing the Convention – Presentations by States Parties: Coordination between National Authorities and customs administrations in relation to implementation of the Convention: Challenges and best practices
Afternoon	<p>Thematic session 2: The importance of the Convention in addressing relevant security threats, including those arising from non-State actors</p> <p>National Convention implementing legislation: an effective tool in mitigating risks associated with the acquisition or use of chemical weapons by non-State actors</p>

	Agenda Item
<i>Friday, 22 November 2024</i>	
Morning	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– The National Implementation Framework (NIF) for the Convention one year on: Preliminary assessment of results– Implementation of United Nations Security Council resolution 1540 (2004)– National action plans: Lessons learned and potential synergies National presentations
Afternoon	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– National capacity development through the Mentorship/Partnership Programme for National Authorities: Experience gained and lessons learned– Open plenary: Reflections, actions, and the way forward– Closing session by the Deputy Director-General– Bilateral meetings with relevant Secretariat staff/other States Parties (to be requested and arranged in advance)

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