



OPCW

**Advisory Board on Education and
Outreach**

Nineteenth Session
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**REPORT OF THE NINETEENTH SESSION OF THE ADVISORY BOARD ON
EDUCATION AND OUTREACH**

- 1. AGENDA ITEM ONE – Opening of the session and welcome address by the Deputy Director-General**
 - 1.1 The Chairperson of the Advisory Board on Education and Outreach (ABEO), Prof. Magda Bauta Solés, opened the Nineteenth Session of the Board on 24 June 2025 at 13:00. She welcomed all Board members and observers to this session, which was held online, and thanked the Deputy Director-General of the OPCW for delivering the opening remarks on behalf of the OPCW Director-General.
 - 1.2 The Deputy Director-General welcomed the ABEO members and observers to the Nineteenth Session of the Board. She highlighted the importance of the role of the Board and its valuable contributions to increasing the impact of the education and outreach activities of the OPCW. The Deputy Director-General also expressed appreciation for the Board's advice on the diploma course of the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM), and for its exchanges with Professor Benjamín Ruiz Loyola, Academic Coordinator of the diploma course.
 - 1.3 The Deputy Director-General updated the Board on the OPCW's recent activities and developments, including the Organisation's continuous engagement with the new Syrian authorities. In addition, the Deputy Director-General highlighted the challenges and opportunities that emerging technologies such as Artificial Intelligence (AI) pose for the work of the OPCW and the implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention (the Convention), noting the Board's current work on the ethical aspects of AI. In addition, the Deputy Director-General reiterated the importance of promoting the peaceful uses of chemistry through education and the need to raise awareness of the Convention in all regions.
 - 1.4 The Deputy Director-General thanked the Board for its contributions to the development of the Blue Book for the OPCW Centre for Chemistry and Technology (ChemTech Centre), noting that the Centre will host an international meeting of experts to develop a Global Academic Network to mark the Tenth Anniversary of The Hague Ethical Guidelines. In closing, the Deputy Director-General underlined the Board's vital role in upholding the norm against the use of chemical weapons by advancing education and outreach efforts among key stakeholders across the globe.



2. AGENDA ITEM TWO – Adoption of the agenda and appointment of a drafting committee

2.1 The ABEO adopted the following agenda for its Nineteenth Session:

1. Opening of the session and welcome address by the Deputy Director-General
2. Adoption of the agenda and appointment of a drafting committee
3. Fostering interest in chemical disarmament issues – Key messages and strategies
4. Chemical demilitarisation – Achievements and challenges: the knowledge management initiative and related verification work, Mr Anton Utkin, Senior Chemical Demilitarisation Officer, Verification Division
5. Academic advice of the Board on the UNAM diploma course on chemical disarmament and peaceful uses of chemistry
6. Exchange of views with Prof. Benjamín Ruiz Loyola, Academic Coordinator of the UNAM diploma course
7. Identification of topics to be discussed at the Twentieth Session of the ABEO and dates for the next session of the Board
8. Appointment of ABEO Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson for 2026
9. Statements by the newly appointed ABEO Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson for 2026
10. Board priorities and division of responsibilities
11. Presentation of a discussion paper: Ethics in AI development in the field of chemistry and its impact on the implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention
12. Current youth outreach efforts of the OPCW, Ms Elisabeth Waechter, OPCW Spokesperson and Head of Public Affairs Branch
13. Exchange of views on youth-related initiatives and the way forward, Ms Simran Kataria, Policy Officer, Office of Strategy and Policy
14. Update on the Blue Book for the ChemTech Centre, Prof. JaneFrances Ihedioha and Dr Nezha Barakate
15. Updates on the meetings of experts to establish a Global Academic Network to support the implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention, Ms Simran Kataria, Policy Officer, Office of Strategy and Policy
16. Intersessional activities of Board members
17. Any other business
18. Closure of the meeting

2.2 The Board appointed Prof. Magda Bauta Solés, Prof. Kellie Tuck, and Dr Richard Guthrie as drafting committee members.

3. AGENDA ITEM THREE – Fostering interest in chemical disarmament issues – Key messages and strategies

- 3.1 The ABEO Chairperson opened the Board’s discussion on key messages and strategies to foster interest in chemical disarmament issues, with a particular focus on enhancing awareness and understanding of the Convention among young professionals and private sector stakeholders in the chemical industry, and how to best promote The Hague Ethical Guidelines among them.
- 3.2 The ABEO Chairperson recalled that engagement with young professionals is a priority, and that the Board had previously provided recommendations on how to engage young people. Engagement of younger audiences could be more effective if future employers valued knowledge of topics related to the Convention, and if consideration could be given to the establishment of a certificate to be awarded following participation in a course, workshop, or training activity.
- 3.3 The Board highlighted the role of National Authorities in connecting with the chemical industry, academia, and other stakeholders, and recalled the willingness of Board members to contribute meaningfully to the needs of the National Authorities with tailor-made webinars upon request. The Board noted the challenges faced in fostering interest in the Convention among young professionals from the chemical industry, as very often they may believe these topics are related exclusively to chemical weapons if they are not aware of how the Convention’s mandate affects their work. Board members highlighted the importance of establishing clear communication and partnership with the private sector to boost awareness, build capacities, and promote voluntary codes of conduct and/or ethical guidelines.
- 3.4 For this reason, the Board considered the added value of providing National Authorities with education and guidance materials to enable them to connect with different key stakeholders, including young people and chemical industry experts, to promote the Convention and the work of the OPCW.

4. AGENDA ITEM FOUR – Chemical demilitarisation work – Achievements and challenges: the knowledge management initiative and related verification work, Mr Anton Utkin, Senior Chemical Demilitarisation Officer, Verification Division

- 4.1 Mr Utkin provided the Board with an overview of chemical demilitarisation work and its current status, highlighting the relevance of the achievement marked by the completion of the destruction of all declared stockpiles in July 2023, as verified by the OPCW. He referred to the enduring mission of the OPCW and the continuous work to verify the destruction of old chemical weapons and abandoned chemical weapons. Mr Utkin emphasised the importance of ensuring the Organisation’s preparedness in the event that a possessor State were to join the Convention, and the growing complexity of the international security context in which the OPCW needs to operate in order to prevent the re-emergence of chemical weapons.
- 4.2 Mr Utkin talked about the importance of preserving the institutional knowledge, skills, and expertise in the Organisation, where the tenure policy presents a challenge in terms of retaining first-hand experience for the next generation and continuously ensuring that this knowledge is retained and transferred. He mentioned that based on the States Parties request that the OPCW serve as a global repository of chemical demilitarisation

knowledge at the Third Review Conference in 2013,¹ the Chemical Demilitarisation Branch launched the knowledge management initiative, with a coordinating role in all chemical weapon-related areas. He added that the Chemical Demilitarisation Branch developed a knowledge management strategy with a cross-divisional approach to identify critical knowledge and develop a programme of knowledge capture—including an exit interview programme—and explore new capabilities in this area. As a result of this work, the Chemical Demilitarisation Branch created a knowledge database and support platform that encompasses all verification activities. The progress made was compiled into comprehensive brochures addressing the lessons learned over the course of 25 years. Furthermore, several events aimed at capturing and retaining knowledge were held in 2024 and 2025, such as the first knowledge management event held in September 2024 following the destruction of all declared chemical weapons, the field training exercise held in October 2024 on retaining first-hand experience, and the workshop that will be held in September 2025 focused on the destruction of chemical weapons, coordinated by the Verification and Inspectorate Divisions. Conclusions and recommendations from the workshops will be compiled in a comprehensive report capturing lessons learned and best practices for the OPCW's ongoing mission.

- 4.3 The Board thanked Mr Utkin for his presentation and praised the work done by the Verification Division and its coordinating role in the preservation of chemical demilitarisation knowledge. The Board also commended the Inspectorate's contribution and the importance of the efforts of the Technical Secretariat (the Secretariat) to ensure readiness for future verification challenges, and to preserve this unique knowledge for the next generation. The Board asked Mr Utkin about the possibility of sharing summaries or part of this knowledge with the general public online to raise awareness of the importance of non-proliferation and disarmament among next-generation students and foster their engagement.

5. AGENDA ITEM FIVE – Academic advice of the Board on the UNAM diploma course on chemical disarmament and peaceful uses of chemistry

- 5.1 Prof. Magda Bauta Solés thanked Board members for their academic advice regarding the educational resources shared by Prof. Benjamin Ruiz Loyola, Academic Coordinator of the UNAM diploma. The Board commented that the resources cover all relevant subject matters outlined in the course syllabus, for which the Board also provided its academic advice.
- 5.2 The Board commented that case studies are an outstanding educational tool for students to learn more about chemical disarmament and the importance of the OPCW mission. Board members discussed the need to align the content of case studies with the resources available on the OPCW website and the online modules available in the OPCW Learning Management System. It is the Board's view that consideration should be given to aligning content with the desired learning outcome for lessons that include content on nuclear topics.

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

- 5.3 The Board acknowledged the important role of this diploma course initiative in paving the way for more universities to develop and integrate the topic of chemical disarmament and the work of the Organisation in materials for young people. The Board agreed that the UNAM diploma course offers very comprehensive knowledge and an overview of relevant issues pertaining to chemical disarmament and the work of the OPCW.

6. AGENDA ITEM SIX – Exchange of views with Prof. Benjamín Ruiz Loyola, Academic Coordinator of the UNAM diploma course

- 6.1 The Board thanked Prof. Benjamín Ruiz Loyola for developing the UNAM diploma course and acknowledged and reaffirmed its commitment to provide support and guidance. The added value of the diploma course was noted; it will enable young people to better understand the context of chemical disarmament, as well as broader disarmament matters such as arms control and non-proliferation. In her capacity as project team leader of the UNAM diploma course within the Secretariat, Director of Internal Oversight Ms Coria expressed her gratitude to Prof. Ruiz Loyola for his efforts to develop the syllabus and educational resources of the UNAM diploma course and noted the importance of the course in encouraging more universities, including in other regions, to adopt curricula focused on topics related to the Convention.

- 6.2 Prof. Ruiz Loyola expressed his sincere gratitude to the Board members for providing their academic advice on the diploma course and confirmed his interest in receiving feedback on the final revision of the educational resources.

7. AGENDA ITEM SEVEN – Identification of topics to be discussed at the Twentieth Session of the ABEO and dates for the next session of the Board

- 7.1 The ABEO Chairperson highlighted the importance of awareness of the current situation in non-proliferation and disarmament, as it has an impact on educational activities and outreach efforts. The Board discussed what strategies are needed to strengthen outreach activities and demonstrate the value of non-proliferation, disarmament architecture, and the relevance of the Convention. The Board added that conferences—such as the IUPAC Conferences on Chemistry Education that are held every two years and the IUPAC World Chemistry Congresses—could serve to bolster outreach efforts.

- 7.2 The inventory of international organisations compiled by the Board in coordination with the External Relations Division is a key tool when it comes to enhancing outreach efforts. Moreover, the Board commented that the Secretariat's interaction with non-governmental organisations would help enhance these efforts, particularly if focused on the academic community. The role of National Authorities in connecting with different audiences, such as academia, the chemical industry, and parliamentarians, and the possibility of Board members participating in regional meetings of National Authorities was emphasised by Board members, if considered appropriate by the Secretariat and/or National Authorities. The Board could support National Authorities at their request and equip them with the necessary materials to conduct outreach activities at the national level. The importance of enhancing educational and training programmes in Russian-speaking countries was also noted, and the Board agreed to consider this subject matter at its next ABEO session.

- 7.3 The Board recalled that during the previous session, it had agreed to include AI as a standing agenda item, since it presents significant ethical challenges and has a critical impact on education and outreach activities related to the Convention.
- 7.4 The Board decided to address these subject matters at its next session, and to include follow-up discussions on the various areas of work implemented by the Board, with a special focus on the Blue Book: an inventory of academic institutions and diploma courses on the Convention in all regions.
- 7.5 Regarding the tentative dates for the next session of the ABEO, the Secretary to the Board commented that one possibility would be to have the next ABEO session provisionally scheduled for the month of April. A survey would be sent with several options to allow Board members to indicate their preferences.

8. AGENDA ITEM EIGHT – Appointment of the ABEO Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson for 2026

The Board appointed Prof. Supawan Tantayanon and Dr Ladislava Navrátilová as the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson, respectively, for 2026.

9. AGENDA ITEM NINE – Statements by the newly appointed ABEO Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson for 2026

- 9.1 Prof. Supawan Tantayanon expressed her gratitude to the Board members for their support and emphasised her full commitment to coordinating the Board's work in 2026. Prof. Tantayanon highlighted the relevance of making continued progress in education and outreach activities for the benefit of the OPCW.
- 9.2 Dr Ladislava Navrátilová thanked the Board members for their confidence and pledged to support the appointed Chairperson in coordinating the Board's work.

10. AGENDA ITEM TEN – Board priorities and division of responsibilities

The Board agreed to continue working on the priorities under the ABEO Strategic Plan for the intersessional period. Board members highlighted the need to follow up on the conclusions and outcomes of the international meeting of experts to establish a Global Academic Network, to be held at the ChemTech Centre in November. The need to focus on advancing education efforts for professionals and first responders in cooperation with the International Cooperation and Assistance Division was also emphasised.

11. AGENDA ITEM ELEVEN – Presentation of a discussion paper: Ethics in AI development in the field of chemistry and its impact on the implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention

- 11.1 The ABEO Chairperson and Prof. Vicente Garrido Rebolledo presented the main aspects of the discussion paper they had prepared on AI governance and ethics within the context of the Convention. The discussion paper focuses on the global level and considers the work done in the legal scope by other international organisations in AI, instead of comparing national regulations. It was underscored that in light of the importance of the regulations developed by some States Parties, it would be valuable to consider those at a second stage. The international AI governance framework

developed by international organisations was highlighted, and the Board considered the relevance of a number of existing frameworks: the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization's Recommendation on the Ethics of AI; the Ethical AI Principles developed in 2022; the United Nations System White Paper on AI Governance (2023); and legally binding instruments such as the European Union AI Act (a risk-based regulation with binding obligations for high-risk systems developed in 2024), and the Council of Europe Framework Convention on Artificial Intelligence and human rights, democracy and rule of law (2024).

- 11.2 Prof. Garrido Rebolledo explained that the three AI governance frameworks of the United Nations could be considered for the future development of AI ethics recommendations for the OPCW. United Nations General Assembly resolution 78/311 (2024) was highlighted, since it also addresses international cooperation on capacity building in relation to AI, signalling support from United Nations Member States in recognising the importance of AI governance.
- 11.3 It was noted that the issues to be addressed in collaboration with the Scientific Advisory Board (SAB) include the dual-use risks of AI in chemical research, the need for ethical oversight and transparency, and the integration of AI ethics into OPCW education and outreach strategies.
- 11.4 The ABEO Chairperson further provided several suggestions for consideration by the Board members: promoting awareness of AI's ethical implications in chemistry, encouraging an interdisciplinary dialogue on AI governance, supporting international cooperation on the responsible use of AI under the Convention, regular cooperation between the SAB and the ABEO on this matter given the multidisciplinary implications of AI, reviewing and updating The Hague Ethical Guidelines with an explicit reference to AI and its implications on chemical research and development, and integrating AI ethics into the Secretariat's training and outreach activities. Furthermore, the importance of referring to the Guidelines in the Secretariat's capacity-building programmes was highlighted, including the programmes designed for National Authorities and other key stakeholders.
- 11.5 The Board supported the suggestion to review and update The Hague Ethical Guidelines. The Hague Ethical Guidelines were established 10 years ago; thus, reviewing and updating the ethical considerations and implications, especially considering the fast-paced development of science and technology, is necessary. It was stressed that the importance of this subject matter extends beyond the OPCW and the Convention and impacts the entirety of the non-proliferation and disarmament architecture as a whole. The Board added that several topics must be addressed, including the importance and strength of non-binding agreements, an explanation of ethical oversight, and a stronger argument explaining why ethics matter, and why this topic should be addressed within the context of the implementation of the Convention.
- 11.6 Given the relevance of the implications of AI for the Convention, the Board agreed to further consider the discussion paper prepared by Prof. Magda Bauta Solés and Prof. Vicente Garrido Rebolledo, and to send their feedback to the Secretary to the ABEO, with a view to endorsing the final version for subsequent submission to the Director-General.

12. AGENDA ITEM TWELVE – Current youth outreach efforts of the OPCW, Ms Elisabeth Waechter, OPCW Spokesperson and Head of Public Affairs Branch

- 12.1 Ms Elisabeth Waechter delivered a presentation on several activities for youth carried out in collaboration with external stakeholders—including those implemented by the Public Affairs Branch throughout the year and other Secretariat activities—and provided an overview of youth outreach efforts across the United Nations system and at other international organisations. Regarding OPCW youth initiatives and collaboration with external stakeholders, Ms Waechter informed the Board of the successful 101st session of the European Youth Parliament in April 2025, where a group of young leaders learned about the OPCW’s mission and engaged in debates on topics relevant to the Convention. She further referred to the Public Affairs Branch’s online and in-person outreach activities, highlighting that the OPCW receives an average of 80 to 85 public visits every year, including from many academic institutions. Regarding other activities of relevance, she informed the Board of a workshop with the youth branch of the German Chemist’s Association to mark the Tenth Anniversary of The Hague Ethical Guidelines, planned for late August 2025. She also highlighted that the World Federation of United Nations Associations (WFUNA) Model United Nations for university students, which will be held in New York in February 2026, will include a Convention-related debate. Preparations are ongoing in collaboration with WFUNA to develop a relevant study guide for participants.
- 12.2 Ms Waechter also touched upon other initiatives targeting youth that were implemented by various constituents of the Secretariat—such as the Associate Programme and the International Cooperation and Assistance Division’s education and training programme for youth on peaceful uses of chemistry—and the educational resources provided through the OPCW Learning Management System. OPCW internships and various recruitment initiatives aimed at young professionals, such as careers fairs, also provide youth outreach opportunities.
- 12.3 Regarding the broader context of youth outreach and engagement, Ms Waechter highlighted the United Nation’s Youth2030 strategy,² the Youth Peace and Security Agenda,³ as well as the wide range of initiatives of the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs.⁴
- 12.4 Ms Waechter highlighted the fact that the OPCW currently lacks a clear youth mandate or strategy. The Convention mentions outreach, but does not specifically refer to youth as a target audience. The decision adopted at the Third Review Conference on the participation of non-governmental organisations also does not specifically mention youth. In contrast, the Medium-Term Plan of the OPCW 2024–2028 (EC-104/S/1 C-28/S/1, dated 14 August 2023) references youth as a stakeholder group. Some States Parties have referred to the importance of youth outreach in statements at the sessions of the Executive Council (the Council) and the Conference of the States Parties (the Conference), but a desktop study of such statements and relevant mandates and activities may be an important first step in developing a more holistic approach.

² <https://www.un.org/youthaffairs/en>.

³ <https://www.un.org/en/peace-and-security/youth-peace-and-security-guide>.

⁴ <https://disarmament.unoda.org/en>.

- 12.5 In the subsequent discussion with the Board, the importance of reaching out to youth and fostering youth engagement was again underlined. Ms Waechter reiterated that the Organisation implements various activities to engage youth, but that there is no strategy in place, nor a clear mandate on youth engagement. She encouraged the Board to consider ways to enhance the activities of the Secretariat to engage youth, including a more holistic approach or strategy.
- 12.6 The Board highlighted the importance of these activities having a sustainable impact after their delivery. Ms Waechter commented that the establishment of an alumni network for former interns might be a good idea.
- 12.7 Regarding more sustained strategic engagement, a number of youth organisations and platforms in the nuclear field were mentioned, for example International Student/Young Pugwash, the CTBTO⁵ Youth Group, and the youth activities of the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons. There are also broader initiatives (such as the Chemicals and Waste Youth Platform, which is part of the Major Groups and Stakeholders of the United Nations Environment Programme) that may be of relevance to the OPCW. Within this context, OPCW collaboration with such initiatives and other intergovernmental organisations is key, as these other organisations already work with an established network of young people. The Board also underscored the importance of assessing lessons learned by other intergovernmental organisations regarding youth-targeted educational activities.
- 12.8 The Board valued positively the inclusion of a topic related to the Convention within the Model United Nations exercise in New York in February 2026—this had been an ABEO recommendation. Furthermore, King Juan Carlos University had offered to host a similar Model Convention, thereby implementing a strategy to reach out to students. Ms Waechter recalled that indeed, there are Model United Nations exercises all over the world; she stressed the benefit of working together with WFUNA to ensure that Model United Nations activities reflect the reality of the work of international conferences and institutions. Developing a full Model Conference of the States Parties is worth considering, but it should be kept in mind that such activities come with significant requirements for staff time and financial support to ensure accuracy, participation, and regional balance. The Public Affairs Branch is currently collaborating with WFUNA on developing materials and a study guide for the February session, and these resources can be used for other Model United Nations by other organisations or universities.
- 12.9 The Board thanked Ms Waechter for her presentation and agreed to remain in contact to discuss future activities and provide support.

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CBTBO = The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization.

13. AGENDA ITEM THIRTEEN – Exchange of views on youth-related initiatives and the way forward, Ms Simran Kataria, Policy Officer, Office of Strategy and Policy

- 13.1 Ms Simran Kataria delivered a presentation ahead of the Board's discussion of youth-related initiatives and the best strategies to foster youth engagement. She highlighted the importance of youth strategies in intergovernmental organisations in streamlining the activities targeting youth and ensuring sustainability. For this reason, it would be pertinent for the Board to reflect on its contribution to this subject matter by leading efforts to map current youth initiatives across international organisations. She encouraged the Board members to guide the OPCW in these efforts.
- 13.2 In the discussion that followed, the Board emphasised the importance of advancing youth engagement through synergies with other international organisations in this field, and to continue to reflect on key strategies to reach out to youth more effectively.

14. AGENDA ITEM FOURTEEN – Update on the Blue Book for the ChemTech Centre, Prof. Janefrances Ihedioha and Dr Nezha Barakate

- 14.1 Prof. Janefrances Ihedioha updated the Board on the work on the Blue Book and emphasised that its development is aimed at promoting the ChemTech Centre. She informed the Board that the initial stage has been completed, and the next step would involve populating the Blue Book to be a working document for the Secretariat. The Blue Book is divided into three main components, each with its own category and selection criteria.
- 14.2 Prof. Ihedioha explained that the first component is a section of experts and includes professors, inspectors, professionals from the chemical industry, politicians, and diplomats. The experts might promote the ChemTech Centre through, for example, political and diplomatic advocacy, financial support and partnerships, regional promotion, science diplomacy, and strategic communication.
- 14.3 Dr Nezha Barakate informed the Board members that the second component is a compilation of institutions: governments, academic institutions, foundations, international organisations, non-governmental organisations, think tanks, and designated laboratories. The objective of the institution section is to promote the Centre through curricula and research development, institutional partnerships, networking, knowledge dissemination, support for regional capacity building, and cooperation on research and development projects.
- 14.4 Dr Barakate also explained that the third component comprises Ambassadors of Good Will, which includes Nobel laureates, and esteemed academics and researchers. These Ambassadors of Good Will can raise awareness of the ChemTech Centre through academic engagement and integration, conferences, seminars, and public talks, collaborations and partnerships, industry and community outreach, policy advocacy, branding, and visibility.
- 14.5 It was noted that some of the expert names mentioned in the Blue Book are examples.
- 14.6 The Board discussed the need to endorse the update of the Blue Book and to further advance work to populate the Blue Book, as it is a living document. Both the SAB and the ABEO would be consulted to suggest names of experts that would be considered by the Secretariat.

- 15. AGENDA ITEM FIFTEEN – Update on the meeting of experts to establish a Global Academic Network to support the implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention, Ms Simran Kataria, Policy Officer, Office of Strategy and Policy**
- 15.1 Ms Simran Kataria updated the Board on the upcoming meeting of experts, to be held at the ChemTech Centre, to establish a Global Academic Network. She highlighted that this international meeting will coincide with the milestone of the tenth anniversary of the adoption of The Hague Ethical Guidelines in 2015, and emphasised the importance of the recommendation by the ABEO to develop a sustainable academic network to bolster outreach efforts in all regions.
- 15.2 The main objective of the meeting of experts is to establish the foundations of a Global Academic Network to promote academic support for the implementation of the Convention and to help build a community of “Convention knowledge champions” within academia who will implement educational activities in support of the work of the OPCW. The meeting of experts is expected to take place at the ChemTech Centre in early November 2025.
- 15.3 Ms Kataria recalled that the upcoming meeting of experts is a knowledge management initiative and is organised jointly by the Office of Strategy and Policy and the Knowledge Management Section. In this regard, she valued the academic advice of the ABEO and welcomed the contribution of both the SAB and ABEO. She also emphasised that part of the successful outcome of this initiative depends on assembling a diverse and highly qualified group of participants from all regions, with due consideration for gender balance. Participants in this first international meeting will include approximately 20 to 25 experts, researchers, and academics, among other prominent figures.
- 15.4 In the subsequent discussion with the Board, the importance of clear outcomes was emphasised, in addition to the need to secure funding and to have clear objectives for the next two to three years. The ABEO Secretary commented that a voluntary contribution from France had been received by the Secretariat to facilitate the implementation of this first meeting of experts, and that one of the outcomes would be the development of the network’s terms of reference to ensure that it will not duplicate the ABEO’s functions.
- 15.5 The Board inquired about the sustainability of the academic network in the future—a key aspect of ensuring the network’s success. In addition, the importance of focusing on academia and researchers when it comes to selecting participants was emphasised by the Board. The Board expressed its willingness to contribute to this international meeting with academic advice, among other things.
- 15.6 The Board thanked Ms Simran Kataria for her update and agreed to remain in contact with the Secretariat on this matter with a view to contributing to and supporting this important initiative.

16. AGENDA ITEM SIXTEEN – Intersessional activities of Board members

- 16.1 Prof. Ying Zhou delivered a lecture entitled “The Hague Ethical Guidelines and updates on the ABEO’s activities and the OPCW’s education resources” at the National Training Course on Capacity Enhancement for the Implementation of the Convention, organised by the Chinese National Committee of Experts on the Implementation of the Convention, to nearly 500 participants from provincial Convention Implementation Offices and declared enterprises across the country, in Nanning, Guangxi, China (from 9 to 11 April 2025).
- 16.2 Dr Ladislava Navrátilová remained actively involved in OPCW Assistance and Protection Branch activities. As leading trainer from the Population Protection Institute of the Czech Republic, she contributed to the following training courses: the OPCW refresher course for East African Community Instructors (held online on 15 and 16 April 2025), and the OPCW hands-on integrated advanced course and exercise (Czech Republic, from 17 to 22 May 2025). Additionally, Dr Navrátilová delivered a lecture on global education under the OPCW to students at Czech universities (Czech Republic, 24 May 2025).
- 16.3 Dr Sylvain Paile-Calvo was involved in a 15-hour course on arms control for the first-year Master’s level at the Catholic Institute of High Studies (France). This course addressed chemical weapons, the Convention, arms control, disarmament, non-proliferation, dual-use chemicals, equipment and technology, and chemical Schedules 1 and 2. Dr Paile-Calvo was also involved in the European Union Partner-to-Partner Export Control Programme for dual-use goods as Technical Director–Team Leader. This programme focused on dual-use chemicals, goods, and technologies (including emerging technologies), the Convention, awareness-raising, and training, as well as outreach to industry, research, and academia, and e-learning.
- 16.4 Prof. Christopher Daase carried out two activities related to the work of the OPCW since the last ABEO meeting. He initiated the establishment of a Centre for Natural and Technical Sciences in the Field of Arms Control (CNTR),⁶ which also deals with chemical weapons control. This was achieved in cooperation with Prof. Peter Schreiner, organic chemist at Justus Liebig University in Giessen. Prof. Daase also co-edited the first annual CNTR Monitor on dual-use technologies. Additionally, he also wrote and recorded the introductory module on the basics of arms control for the e-learning course of the European Union Consortium on Non-Proliferation and Disarmament,⁷ which also includes a unit on chemical weapons. Furthermore, he co-organised and chaired a tech trend lab, the first panel of which addressed biological and chemical weapons control.
- 16.5 Dr Shahriar Khateri was invited as keynote speaker at an international conference in Halabja⁸ organised by Halabja University in March 2025, marking the thirty-seventh anniversary of the gas attack in 1988. At the conference, Dr Khateri spoke about the OPCW and its efforts to achieve a world free of chemical weapons, prevent the re-emergence of chemical weapons, and support chemical weapons victims. He was also invited by the Secretariat’s Assistance and Protection Branch to serve as an

⁶ <https://www.cntrarmscontrol.org>.

⁷ <https://www.nonproliferation-elearning.eu>.

⁸ <https://cahconference.uoh.edu.iq/indexEn.html>.

instructor at the regional training course on hospital preparedness for chemical emergencies held in Nairobi, Kenya, in May 2025.⁹ In this capacity, he was in charge of training participants on how to provide medical care for chemical casualties at hospitals, and took this opportunity to talk about the ABEO as well. Furthermore, on 26 May, he organised the third edition of a workshop on familiarisation with the OPCW at the Tehran Peace Museum.¹⁰ This workshop was delivered to a youth-based audience and featured presentations on the structure and activities of the OPCW, the Convention, and professional opportunities, in addition to online presentations by Ms Elisabeth Waechter, Head of the Public Affairs Branch, and Public Affairs Branch colleagues in charge of engagement with civil society. The event was well received by the audience—primarily university students from various backgrounds.

- 16.6 Dr Nezha Barakate participated in a training course on investigative interview skills for experts nominated to the roster of the United Nations Secretary-General's Mechanism. This course was organised by the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs, and held from 26 to 30 May 2025 in Brindisi, Italy. The training was delivered in cooperation with the Institute for International Criminal Investigations.
- 16.7 Prof. Janefrances Ihedioha participated as a member of the local organising committee and Chairperson of a plenary session at the 4th International Conference on Water in Africa, organised with the theme of "Water and the SDGs in Africa: Prioritising clean water and sanitation, zero hunger, and climate action triad" in commemoration of World Water Day (22 March 2025). The conference was held at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, from 18 to 22 March 2025. Prof. Ihedioha also attended the 4th biennial Conference and Scientific Meeting of the Organisation for Women in Science for the Developing World at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, with the theme "Advanced technologies for addressing economic and environmental challenges in Nigeria". The conference was held at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, from 25 to 28 March 2025. She participated as Chairperson of the Technical Committee of the local organising committee and collaborated on several presentations on pesticide residues. Additionally, she attended the African Humanities Research and Development Conference (AHRDC 2025), which was organised under the theme "Waste and the environment" from 7 to 9 April 2025 at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka. She chaired a technical panel on waste and policy, and also presented a paper entitled "Chemical waste: Navigating the risks, protecting the environment, and ensuring safety". With regard to the work of the Board, Prof. Ihedioha coordinated the ABEO group assigned to work on the update of the Blue Book.
- 16.8 During the intersessional period, Prof. Vicente Garrido Rebolledo served as a guest speaker for numerous courses and seminars addressing nuclear, biological, and chemical threats, as well as the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. These programmes were delivered in two formats: one aimed at senior officials, diplomats, parliamentarians, and academics; and another designed for young people under 29. The programmes were held at several prestigious institutions, including the Higher Schools of the Armed Forces of the Spanish Ministry of Defence, the Master Degree in International Relations at the Basque Country University, the Master Degree in International Relations at the Diplomatic School of Spain, and the Permanent Seminar

⁹ <https://x.com/chemistkenya/status/1921911796711002486?s=48>.

¹⁰ <https://www.tehranpeacemuseum.org/index.php/en/>.

on Security and Defence organised by the Chairperson of Defence Studies at the Rey Juan Carlos University of Madrid, Spain.

- 16.9 Prof. Supawan Tantayanon conducted three workshops on small-scale chemistry, focusing on chemical safety and green chemistry for high school teachers in Malaysia, the Philippines, and Thailand. Additionally, she initiated discussions with the Ministry of Industry and the Federation of Thai Industries to explore collaborative activities on chemical safety and security for the coming year.
- 16.10 Dr Richard Guthrie participated in the curation and development of the Sussex Harvard Information Bank on Chemical and Biological Warfare,¹¹ which aims to modernise and enrich the collection of public policy resources on chemical and biological weapons.

17. AGENDA ITEM SEVENTEEN – Any other business

- 17.1 The Board members were briefed on the work of the SAB by Prof. Supawan Tantayanon and Dr Ladislava Navrátilová, who attended the Thirty-Ninth Session of the SAB as ABEO observers from 1 to 4 April 2025.
- 17.2 The Secretary to the Board confirmed that the update on the Blue Book, the discussion paper on ethics and AI, and the revised UNAM educational resources would be circulated to facilitate review by Board members. The Secretary informed the Board that the ABEO Chairperson would deliver a statement on ABEO activities on behalf of the Board at the Thirtieth Session of the Conference, as has been standard practice over the last few years.
- 17.3 The Board mentioned that consideration should be given to the fact that the Annual Meeting of National Authorities takes place the week prior to the Conference, in the event that the International Cooperation and Assistance Division (ICA) requests the participation of a Board member in this edition of the Annual Meeting of National Authorities.

18. AGENDA ITEM EIGHTEEN – Closure of the Meeting

The ABEO Vice-Chairperson closed the Board's Nineteenth Session on 26 June at 15:25.

Annex : List of Participants at the Nineteenth Session of the Advisory Board on Education and Outreach

¹¹ <https://shib-temp.cbw-events.org.uk/>.

Annex**LIST OF PARTICIPANTS AT THE NINETEENTH SESSION
OF THE ADVISORY BOARD ON EDUCATION AND OUTREACH**

Dr Edith Valles
Prof. Kellie Tuck
Dr Andrea Leisewitz
Prof. Ying Zhou
Prof. Magda Bauta Solés
Dr Ladislava Navrátilová
Dr Sylvain Paile-Calvo
Prof. Christopher Daase
Dr Nezha Barakate
Prof. Janefrances Ihedioha
Mr Naveed Alam
Prof. Vicente Garrido Rebolledo
Prof. Supawan Tantayanon
Dr Richard Guthrie
Prof. Marietjie Potgieter (observer: International Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry)
Prof. Benjamín Ruiz Loyola (observer: Academic Coordinator of the National Autonomous University of Mexico diploma course)
Dr Elisa Souza Orth (observer: Scientific Advisory Board)
Ms Silvina Coria, Director of Internal Oversight (in her capacity as Project Team Leader of the National Autonomous University of Mexico diploma course)
Mr Anton Utkin, Senior Chemical Demilitarisation Officer, Verification Division
Ms Elisabeth Waechter, OPCW Spokesperson and Head of the Public Affairs Branch
Ms Luisa Sánchez-Bravo, Secretary to the Advisory Board on Education and Outreach, Office of Strategy and Policy
Ms Simran Kataria, Policy Officer, Office of Strategy and Policy
Ms Ernesa Ademagić, Project Assistant, Office of Strategy and Policy
Ms Alda Anindea, Intern, Office of Strategy and Policy
Ms Angie Kwon, Intern, Office of Strategy and Policy

Regrets:
Dr Shahriar Khateri
Mr William Garcia (observer: European Chemical Industry Council)

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