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NOTE BY THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL**THE PROGRAMME TO STRENGTHEN COOPERATION WITH AFRICA
ON THE CHEMICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION****INTRODUCTION**

1. The Programme to Strengthen Cooperation with Africa on the Chemical Weapons Convention (the Africa Programme) was instituted by the Director-General in 2007 (EC-50/DG.17, dated 26 September 2007) to give strategic direction to the engagement of the Technical Secretariat (the Secretariat) with African States Parties as regards implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention (the Convention).
2. The Africa Programme was initially intended to last three years, from 1 January 2008 to 31 December 2010. Since then, the Programme has been extended five times, each for a three-year period: from 2011 to 2013 (EC-64/DG.5, dated 6 April 2011); from 2014 to 2016 (EC-75/DG.5, dated 17 February 2014); from 2017 to 2019 (EC-84/DG.18, dated 17 February 2017); from 2020 to 2022 (EC-93/DG.9, dated 18 February 2020); and from 2023 to 2025 (EC-102/DG.11, dated 16 February 2023).
3. Since the establishment of the Africa Programme, the Director-General has regularly apprised the Conference of the States Parties (the Conference) at all of its annual sessions of the progress of Programme implementation and of the results achieved.
4. This Note reports on the progress achieved in the implementation of the Africa Programme since the latest report (EC-106/DG.9 C-29/DG.5, dated 17 June 2024) to cover the period from 1 June 2024 to 31 May 2025, and provides an overview of the key developments, activities, and results achieved within the Programme's framework.
5. During the period under review, the Secretariat continued to actively implement the sixth phase of the Programme (2023–2025), addressing the seven objectives assigned to it. In this context, 58 capacity-building activities organised by the Secretariat benefited some 850 African participants, representing 46 African Member States.¹ These included 26 events organised specifically for the Africa region. In addition, the Secretariat provided sponsorship to African scientists to conduct research projects and fellowships, and to take part in or organise scientific conferences on topics related to chemistry for peaceful purposes. The details of the specific capacity-building activities are available in the Annex to this Note.

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Algeria, Angola, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cabo Verde, Cameroon, Chad, the Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Eswatini, Ethiopia, the Gambia, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Libya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritania, Mauritius, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, the Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Africa, the Sudan, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, the United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.



6. In line with the assigned objectives, the focus of capacity-building activities ranged from enhancing national implementation of the Convention to improving controls over cross-border transfers of scheduled chemicals, developing assistance and protection capabilities against chemical emergencies, advancing chemical safety and security management, upgrading laboratory competencies across the continent, and fostering programme visibility, stakeholder engagement, and partnerships. Two brand-new capacity-building initiatives designed specifically for the Africa region were launched during the period under review: a training cycle on investigation of chemical emergencies for law enforcement agencies, and a training course on the maintenance of laboratory equipment.
7. Programme activities were embedded in advance in the annual work plan of the International Cooperation and Assistance Division (ICA). The capacities offered by the OPCW Centre for Chemistry and Technology (ChemTech Centre) continued to be leveraged in the implementation of activities under the Programme as part of ICA offerings.
8. The reporting period was also marked by special efforts undertaken by the Secretariat to advance the adoption of comprehensive national legislation for the implementation of the Convention in the Africa region. Within this context, a landmark OPCW conference on advancing the implementation of the Convention in Africa was organised on 28 and 29 April 2025 in Windhoek, Namibia, by the Secretariat in collaboration with the Government of Namibia. At the event, OPCW Deputy Director-General Ambassador Odette Melono reiterated the unwavering engagement and continued readiness of the Secretariat to further assist African OPCW Member States in strengthening the national implementation of the Convention, noting that only 48% of African Member States have enacted relevant national legislation, and that there are still 27 African Member States with only partial legislation or no legislation reported for the implementation of their obligations under the Convention. A similar message was conveyed by the Deputy Director-General to the African Member States participating in the Twenty-Sixth Annual Meeting of National Authorities, held in The Hague, the Netherlands, in November 2024. These calls were received positively, and the Secretariat's continued support was acknowledged with high appreciation by participating African Member States.
9. A notable milestone for Africa in 2024 was the acquisition in April by the National Institute of Criminalistics and Criminology of the Gendarmerie Nationale (NICC/GN) of Algeria of the OPCW designation status for the analysis of authentic environmental samples. Thanks to this designation, which is in line with a key objective of the sixth phase of the Africa Programme, an African laboratory achieved OPCW designation for the first time since 2006, and OPCW designated laboratories became present in all OPCW regional groups. The designation certification ceremony was held on 16 July 2024 at the OPCW Main Building. The NICC/GN has also been playing a vital role in promoting capacity building by supporting key OPCW capacity-building initiatives under the Programme, such as sampling courses and the pan-African multicomponent chemical emergency response capacity-building exercise (CHEMEX Africa), held in Algeria. In November 2024, in recognition of its significant contribution to OPCW priority areas, the Institute was awarded the 2024 OPCW–The Hague Award, together with the Indian Chemical Council.

10. Another key development during the reporting period was the co-organisation with and the hosting by Morocco of the first-ever Global Conference on the Role of Artificial Intelligence in Advancing the Implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention, in Rabat, in October 2024. This world-class Global Conference was highly successful and allowed for a better understanding of the benefits and risks of artificial intelligence (AI), how they may affect the implementation of the Convention, and how the OPCW should respond to them. The Global Conference gathered 190 participants from 46 OPCW Member States, including approximately 50 African participants. An important contribution by African experts and participants was registered at this major event.
11. The activities conducted within the framework of the Africa Programme continued to be funded through the OPCW regular budget, with additional voluntary contributions sought and utilised to further expand the Programme's depth, reach, and impact, including through special projects. Within this context, Canada, the Czech Republic, France, Germany, Switzerland, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United States of America, and the European Union have been providing financial and in-kind support for the Africa Programme over the past years. In-kind support was also provided by OPCW Member States co-organising activities under the Programme.
12. In this connection, the Secretariat made significant progress in the delivery of the only remaining project of the first batch of seven special projects for extrabudgetary funding under the Africa Programme on strengthening mitigation and preparedness to respond to chemical incidents and attacks in French-speaking West Africa, and addressing threats arising from non-State actors. In view of this progress, in mid-2024 the Secretariat developed and announced a new set of 10 extrabudgetary project proposals.
13. Further, the Secretariat continued to support the work of the Africa Programme Steering Committee. As planned, the Committee met twice, once in June and again in November 2024, under the Chairperson H.E. Ambassador Madeleine Liguemoh Ondoua of Cameroon, and reviewed in detail the developments within the Programme.
14. The Secretariat also sustained its cooperation with a variety of stakeholders to organise activities under the sixth phase of the Africa Programme and explore new synergies and initiatives. The list of partners includes international, regional, and national organisations. The Secretariat kept the African Union Commission updated on key developments in the Programme and held productive consultations on 9 December 2024 and 19 May 2025 with representatives of the department of Political Affairs, Peace and Security of the African Union. At the invitation of the Secretariat, the African Union Commission participated remotely in the OPCW conference on advancing the implementation of the Convention in Africa, held in Windhoek, Namibia, in April 2025, and delivered a presentation focusing on the regional security policy framework and the African Union's support for the implementation of global and continental weapons of mass destruction (WMD) instruments, including the Convention. The Secretariat continues to maintain contacts with the department of Political Affairs, Peace and Security to collaboratively explore other ideas for joint cooperation.

15. As part of its continued efforts to sustain the visibility of the Africa Programme and attract more support for its activities, in early January 2025 the Secretariat issued the fourth edition of the OPCW Africa Bulletin, which was very well received. The Secretariat also continued to maintain the OPCW Africa Network, which currently includes over 1,250 members among African chemistry professionals and other stakeholders of the Convention.
16. As 2025 is the final year of the sixth phase of the Africa Programme, in March 2025 the Secretariat launched a broad and inclusive consultative process with African OPCW Member States with a view to jointly designing the seventh phase (2026–2028). To that end, the Secretariat circulated a needs assessment survey among African Member States. The survey aimed to update the list of needs among African Member States, priorities in relation to the Convention, and identify areas for further development in the Programme. The Secretariat plans to present the results of the survey at the Twenty-Third Regional Meeting of African National Authorities—scheduled to take place in Tunis, Tunisia, from 17 to 19 June 2025—where participants will discuss and validate the survey results and define the objectives of the seventh phase. Consultations will continue thereafter on planning the seventh phase, with a view to validating a final concept with African Member States at the Annual Global Meeting of National Authorities in November 2025. In line with established practice, the resultant concept of the seventh phase will be submitted to the Executive Council (the Council) at its 111th Session in March 2026 through a Note by the Director-General. The Africa Programme Steering Committee will be briefed and kept abreast of the developments throughout this process.
17. The next section of this Note describes in more detail the progress achieved under each objective of the Africa Programme.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AFRICA PROGRAMME DURING THE REPORTING PERIOD (1 JUNE 2024–31 May 2025)

Objective 1: Advance National Implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention in Africa

18. Within the framework of advancing the implementation of the Convention, the Secretariat continued to endeavour to further facilitate the enactment of national legislation for the implementation of the Convention in Africa and develop the capacity of African States Parties to implement the Convention fully and effectively. In this regard, special efforts were dedicated to promoting direct support for African States Parties, as well as the exchange of information among them, including through forums for sharing experience and exchanging best practices and lessons learned, as well as for forging solid mentorships and partnerships.
19. Notably, in April 2025 and in collaboration with the Government of Namibia, the Secretariat organised a landmark conference on advancing the implementation of the Convention in Africa in Windhoek, Namibia. This conference allowed the Secretariat to work with representatives of 23 African Member States of the OPCW to help address the range of challenges that remain for the enactment of comprehensive national legislation for the implementation of the Convention. The Deputy Director-General

opened the event and reiterated the Secretariat's unwavering engagement and continued readiness to further assist OPCW Member States in Africa to strengthen their national implementation of the Convention, noting that only 48% of African Member States have enacted relevant national legislation and that there are still 27 African Member States with only partial legislation or no legislation reported for the implementation of their obligations under the Convention. The Secretariat's continued support was acknowledged with high appreciation by participating African Member States.

20. Other key forums organised by the Secretariat during the period under review allowed for extensive knowledge sharing and collaboration for the benefit of OPCW Member States in Africa in relation to bolstering national implementation of the Convention. These forums included the Twenty-Second Regional Meeting of African National Authorities (Yaoundé, Cameroon, June 2024), the Eleventh Annual Meeting of Representatives of the Chemical Industry and National Authorities of States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention (Doha, Qatar, October 2024), and the Twenty-Sixth Annual Meeting of National Authorities (The Hague, the Netherlands, November 2024).
21. At the same time, the Secretariat continued to provide legislative support to individual OPCW Member States and, in this connection, reviewed draft legislation for the national implementation of the Convention submitted by Sao Tome and Principe in August 2024, Seychelles in November 2024, and Namibia in April 2025, and provided comments and recommendations to these three Member States. The Secretariat also conducted two National Legislative Review Forums with the National Authorities of Sao Tome and Principe in September 2024, and Namibia in April 2025. This process made it possible to review the scope of their respective national legislative frameworks on the Convention, and for the Secretariat to provide dedicated advice on various legislative and regulatory aspects related to implementation.
22. Further, during the reporting period the Secretariat has been facilitating the development of National Implementation Frameworks with the following African Member States of the OPCW: Kenya, Mauritania, Togo, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. The purpose of the National Implementation Framework is to provide Member States with a comprehensive, step-by-step guide to effective national implementation of the Convention.
23. Under the Mentorship/Partnership Programme, a programme established between India (mentor) and Kenya (mentee) was successfully conducted during the reporting period. Representatives of the National Authority of India visited Kenya from 3 to 7 June 2024, and representatives of the National Authority of Kenya made a return visit to India from 23 to 27 September 2024. Separately, a new Mentorship/Partnership Programme has been in development between the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and Ghana. The Secretariat also continued to promote the mentorship/partnership offers made by Algeria and Morocco.
24. The Secretariat also continued its efforts to strengthening the technical capacities of OPCW Member States in Africa to effectively implement the Convention. Within this context, the Secretariat provided assistance to representatives of four African Member States through a training course it organised online in April 2025 on fulfilling declarations and inspection obligations under Article VI of the Convention.

Objective 2: Strengthen controls over cross-border transfers of toxic chemicals to prevent access to such chemicals, including by non-State actors, for purposes prohibited under the Chemical Weapons Convention

25. During the reporting period, the Secretariat's capacity-building support under this objective focused on three aspects: enhancing the capacity of African customs administrations to enforce the transfer regime of scheduled chemicals under the Convention; promoting enhanced regional cooperation among African customs administrations and between customs administrations and National Authorities; and building the capacities of laboratories supporting customs services to detect, identify, and analyse chemicals related to the Convention.
26. Within this framework in May 2025, the Secretariat organised an analytical chemistry course in Athens, Greece, for laboratories supporting customs services in the Africa region. It also secured the participation of analytical chemists representing African laboratories in a similar course organised for a global audience in November 2024 at the ChemTech Centre.
27. Within this same context, the Secretariat delivered a workshop for the Africa region at the ChemTech Centre in May 2025 on preventing the illicit transfer of scheduled chemicals. In December 2024, the Secretariat, together with the World Customs Organization (WCO) and the National Authority of Angola, also organised a workshop in Luanda, Angola, for customs training institutions in Portuguese-speaking OPCW Member States that was mostly attended by Portuguese-speaking Member States in Africa. The event strengthened the capacities of participating Member States to enforce the transfers regime under the Convention.

Objective 3: Enhance protection and response capabilities against chemical incidents and attacks

28. Under this objective, the Secretariat continued to support African States Parties in developing and sustaining their state of preparedness and response capacities against incidents and attacks involving chemical warfare agents or toxic industrial chemicals. The Secretariat also continued to facilitate the development of a pool of qualified African instructors who are able to independently deliver training. In addition, the Secretariat organised specialised capacity-building activities focusing on the specific needs of African States Parties, including the preparedness of national hospitals to receive and treat casualties of chemical emergencies, the collection of samples in highly contaminated environments, and the investigation of chemical incidents and attacks. The activities that took place under this objective are detailed in the following paragraphs.
29. The Secretariat continued to train African first responders within the assistance and protection training cycles for French-speaking and English-speaking African Member States of the OPCW. As part of the cycles, the Secretariat completed the delivery of the 2023 training cycle for English-speaking African Member States (for which the closing webinar was organised in July 2024), and the 2023–2024 assistance and protection training cycle for French-speaking African Member States (an integrated training course and exercise conducted in Rabat, Morocco, in September 2024). The Secretariat also initiated the 2024–2025 assistance and protection training cycle for English-speaking African Member States (an online foundation course conducted from December 2024 to January 2025).

30. The Secretariat delivered two training courses on the preparedness of national hospitals to receive and treat casualties of chemical emergencies for African Member States of the OPCW—one in Morocco in June 2024, and another in Kenya in May 2025—and secured the participation of representatives of African Member States in an international training course on the medical aspects of assistance and protection, held in Xi'an, China, in October 2024.
31. The Secretariat also established and has been delivering the first-ever training cycle on the investigation of emergencies involving toxic chemicals for law enforcement agencies in French-speaking African Member States of the OPCW. Funded through a voluntary contribution from France, and conducted in partnership with the International Academy for the Fight Against Terrorism (Jacqueville, Côte d'Ivoire), the training covered incident site management, forensic evidence collection, sampling preservation, and chain of custody procedures. The cycle was initiated through an online foundation course (October 2024), followed by a basic training course (Jacqueville, Côte d'Ivoire, November 2024), an online intermediate course (from February to March 2025), and an integrated advanced course and exercise (Jacqueville, Côte d'Ivoire, April 2025). The cycle will close with a follow-up webinar planned for the third quarter of 2025.
32. With regard to sampling and analysis in highly contaminated environments, the Secretariat organised a training course for the Africa region on this topic in Algiers, Algeria, in February 2025, in collaboration with the NICC/GN, the OPCW designated laboratory in Africa. In addition, the Secretariat secured the participation of African participants in an international training course on sampling in highly contaminated environments held in Lázně Bohdaneč, the Czech Republic, in September 2024.
33. The Secretariat continued to deliver the OPCW project to strengthen chemical emergency response, planning, and management for OPCW Member States in the East African Community (EAC). The project, which launched activities in 2016 at the Uganda Rapid Deployment Capability Centre, with financial and technical support from the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the Czech Republic's Population Protection Institute of the Fire Rescue Service, helped build a core team of instructors in the EAC subregion in the field of first response to chemical emergencies. The seventh edition of operational training was organised at the Uganda Rapid Deployment Capability Centre in Jinja, Uganda, in December 2024. It was followed by an online refresher course for instructors in April 2025 hosted from the ChemTech Centre in collaboration with the Population Protection Institute.
34. Further, the Secretariat secured the participation of African first responders in several training activities as part of assistance and protection training cycles for global audiences, namely: the 2024–2025 international assistance and protection training cycle (an online foundation course in July 2024, followed by a basic course conducted in Ahrweiler, Germany, in October 2024, and an online intermediate course in April 2025); and the 2024–2025 assistance and protection training cycle for women first responders (a basic course held in Spiez, Switzerland, in July 2024, an online course conducted from January to February 2025, and an integrated advanced course and exercise organised in Spiez, Switzerland, in March 2025).

Objective 4: Advance chemical safety and security culture, standards, and practices in Africa

35. The efforts deployed by the Secretariat under this objective during the reporting period focused on further developing the awareness, knowledge, and capabilities of African States Parties in the areas of chemical safety and security management. Key events organised included a regional seminar on the Convention and chemical safety and security management for African States Parties, conducted online from the ChemTech Centre in April 2025. The seminar gathered 19 participants from 12 African States Parties and considered and discussed specific chemical safety and security management issues related to chemical processes and emerging technologies that could have a direct bearing on the effective implementation of the Convention. The seminar also facilitated the sharing of information and the exchange of experiences on the practical aspects of chemical safety and security management.
36. Additionally, the Secretariat continued to facilitate the contribution of African experts to international indicative guidelines on chemical safety and security. In this context, the Indicative Guidelines for Safe and Secure Transport of Hazardous Chemicals by Road, which were developed at two OPCW workshops and launched in October 2024 during a hybrid event attended by 56 participants, including from 10 African Member States of the OPCW. Furthermore, the Secretariat also organised a workshop on developing indicative guidelines on Know Your Customer, in Nairobi, Kenya, in February 2025, which brought together technical experts from the chemical industry, government institutions, and industry associations, and facilitated the development of sections of these guidelines and customer due diligence. This workshop gathered 15 experts from 10 Member States, including from three African Member States: Kenya, Nigeria, and South Africa.
37. Separately, African participants continued to benefit from other capacity-building courses on chemical safety and security offered to global audiences. These included the twenty-fifth edition of the Associate Programme (held in the Netherlands and elsewhere, from 29 July to 26 September 2024), the 2024 edition of the Wuppertal course on explosion protection and error management in the chemical process industries (online, from 30 August to 7 October 2024), an e-learning safety programme in English (online, from 28 April to 27 June 2025), and two workshops on general safety and security in laboratories, held in Milan, Italy, in October 2024 and May 2025.

Objective 5: Strengthen the capabilities of chemical laboratories in Africa

38. Under this objective, the Secretariat continued to provide and facilitate technical assistance and capacity-building support with a view to improving the technical competence of laboratories in African States Parties involved in chemical analysis, particularly in relation to the implementation of the Convention and the identification of related scheduled chemicals. In addition, the Secretariat continued to assist identified chemical laboratories in Africa to build the capacities required to pass the Official OPCW Proficiency Tests and subsequently join the Organisation's network of designated laboratories; these efforts were particularly encouraged by the certification in April 2024 of Algeria's NICC/GN as an OPCW designated laboratory for the analysis of authentic environmental samples. The Secretariat has also been

endeavouring to contribute to improving the laboratory infrastructure in Africa through the delivery of a new training course on the maintenance of laboratory equipment, and by continuing to facilitate the transfer of equipment from donor laboratories.

39. Within the context of capacity-building support in the analysis and identification of chemical related to the Convention, the Secretariat conducted an analytical skills development course specifically for African Member States of the OPCW, jointly with Protechnik Laboratories (Pretoria, South Africa, June 2024). It also delivered the first edition of a new training course for African States Parties on the maintenance of laboratory equipment in partnership with the Wrocław University of Science and Technology (Wrocław, Poland, December 2024). The Secretariat also secured the participation of African chemists in analytical chemistry courses organised for global audiences, including a basic analytical chemistry course for women (ChemTech Centre, July 2024); an analytical skills development course for OPCW Member States (Hyderabad, India, September 2024); two parallel courses on the enhancement of laboratory skills (Finnish Institute for Verification of the Chemical Weapons Convention (VERIFIN), Helsinki, Finland, September 2024); and two basic analytical chemistry courses held online from the ChemTech Centre: one took place from September to October 2024, and the other was held in February 2025.
40. In terms of proficiency test training, 29 chemists from nine OPCW Member States in Africa benefited from a global training course on proficiency testing that was organised online from the ChemTech Centre in June 2024. The Secretariat also provided technical advice at the request of two Moroccan laboratories—the National Laboratory of Scientific and Technical Police, and the Institute Criminalistique de la Gendarmerie Royale—regarding the requirements for and path towards laboratory designation. In this regard, the Secretariat conducted a technical visit to the National Laboratory of Scientific and Technical Police in November 2024, and provided guidance to representatives of both of the laboratories at a meeting held in The Hague in February 2025.
41. Further, the sixth phase of the project to assess and enhance the capacities of laboratories in States Parties in the African Group and the Latin American and Caribbean Group (GRULAC) seeking to achieve OPCW designation took place during the period under review and was completed in March 2025. This project was funded by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and aimed to support, inter alia, the Government Chemists Department (GCD) in Kenya and the National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC) in Nigeria in their efforts to gain the skills and capacities needed to pass the Official OPCW Proficiency Tests. Key activities conducted under this project included an analytical skills development course organised for representatives of the GCD and NAFDAC at VERIFIN in Helsinki, Finland, in February 2025, as well as proficiency test training conducted at the ChemTech Centre in March 2025. A workshop was held on 31 March 2025 to mark the completion of the sixth phase of this project, and it was noted that the assisted laboratories, including the GCD and NAFDAC, have been making steady progress towards acquiring the knowledge and skills necessary to pass the proficiency tests and achieve OPCW designation.

42. Under the Laboratory Twinning and Assistance Programme, the following twinning and assistance projects to upgrade the capacities of African laboratories have been ongoing during the reporting period:
- (a) the NICC/GN in Algeria (the assisted laboratory) and the Bundeswehr Research Institute for Protective Technologies and NBC² Protection in Germany (the assisting laboratory);
 - (b) Protechnik Laboratories in South Africa (the assisted laboratory) and the Netherlands Organisation for Applied Scientific Research (TNO) (the assisting laboratory); and
 - (c) the National Laboratory of Scientific and Technical Police in Morocco (the assisted laboratory) and Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory in the United States of America (the assisting laboratory).
43. In August 2024 under the Equipment Exchange Programme, the Secretariat facilitated training for 10 experts from Mwenge University, the United Republic of Tanzania, on laboratory equipment that the University had received as donation. The training was provided by the German donor institution AGROLAB Agrar GmbH at the Mwenge University laboratory, and was a follow-up activity in support of the transfer of laboratory devices and spare parts made earlier in 2024 from Germany to the United Republic of Tanzania.

Objective 6: Promote knowledge of peaceful chemistry and its exchange in Africa

44. Under this objective, the Secretariat continued its efforts aimed at developing scientific and technological knowledge and skills in areas of peaceful chemistry in Africa. The Secretariat's activities in this area included the organisation of events aimed at promoting the exchange of knowledge and good practices, in addition to the sponsorship of research, fellowships, and conferences in the field of chemistry for peaceful purposes.
45. The Secretariat secured the participation of some 50 African participants in the Global Conference on the Role of Artificial Intelligence in Advancing the Implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention, held in Rabat, Morocco, in October 2024. The discussions held during the Global Conference promoted a better understanding of the benefits and risks of AI on the implementation of the Convention, and how the OPCW should respond to them. African participants made important contributions to these discussions.
46. The annual OPCW Women in Chemistry Symposium was organised by the Secretariat in a hybrid mode from the ChemTech Centre in March 2025, and brought together scientists, policymakers, and educators from around the world, including 42 African women chemists. Inaugurated by the OPCW Deputy Director-General, Ambassador Odette Melono, the Symposium provided an effective platform for sharing experiences, building networks, and learning from inspiring women leaders in science and chemistry. Participants discussed challenges and opportunities for women in chemistry. For the first time, the Symposium also featured emerging technologies such as AI as an important topic of discussion in relation to gender equity in chemistry.

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NBC: nuclear, biological, and chemical.

47. During the reporting period, the Secretariat endeavoured to identify universities in Africa that would be interested in collaborating with the OPCW to develop an online diploma course on the Convention for African mid-career professionals and undergraduate students, in line with the pilot online course being set up by the National Autonomous University of Mexico for the Latin America and the Caribbean region.
48. Under the Conference Support Programme, the Secretariat sponsored the participation of a total of 97 African scientists in three international conferences in chemistry held in Italy (June 2024), online from Mauritius (August 2024), and Senegal (November 2024). In addition, the Secretariat provided sponsorship to cover costs related to publications of the 10th Annual Symposium of American Chemistry Society Nigeria Chemical International Sciences Chapter on “Advancing Sustainability through AI-Driven Chemistry” (Abuja, Nigeria, May 2025).
49. Under the Fellowship Programme, two fellowships sponsored by the Secretariat and benefiting African scientists were completed: a fellow from Cameroon hosted in France (from 26 February to 25 August 2024), and a fellow from Cameroon hosted in Italy (from 3 April to 30 September 2024).
50. Under the Programme for Support of Research Projects, the Secretariat continued to extend its support to small-scale research projects in OPCW Member States to promote the development of scientific and technical knowledge in chemistry for peaceful purposes relevant to the Convention. During the reporting period, the Secretariat sponsored five research projects from Algeria (2), Kenya, Nigeria, and South Africa.

Objective 7: Foster programme visibility, stakeholder engagement, and partnerships

51. During the reporting period, the Secretariat maintained a dynamic dialogue and collaborative ties with various stakeholders in the Africa Programme, including governments, donors, and partners, as part of keeping them updated on developments in Programme implementation, ensuring continued coordination and joint organisation of activities, and maintaining and further developing their involvement in the effective implementation of Programme objectives and activities.
52. In addition to regularly reporting to the policy-making organs, the Secretariat discussed developments in the Africa Programme with African States Parties on the occasions of the briefing to the non-Hague-based delegations on 13 November 2024, and the Twenty-Sixth Annual Meeting of National Authorities held from 20 to 22 November 2024.
53. The Secretariat also continued to support the work of the Steering Committee of the Africa Programme, which monitors, advises, and supports Programme implementation. Chaired by H.E. Ambassador Madeleine Liguemoh Ondoua of Cameroon, the Committee, including African Member States of the OPCW and donors to the Programme, met twice during the reporting period (21 June 2024 and 18 November 2024) and reviewed progress in Programme implementation. Committee members nominated by the African Group of States Parties to the Convention for 2025 are: Algeria, Angola, Cameroon, Ghana, Morocco, Nigeria, Rwanda, South Africa, the Sudan, and Tunisia. Cameroon has been re-elected as Chairperson of the Committee. The next meeting of the Committee is scheduled for June 2025.

54. The Secretariat continued to deliver extrabudgetary projects under the Africa Programme, which bring together the Secretariat, African Member States of the OPCW (host and beneficiaries), donors, and partners. The delivery of the only remaining project of the first batch of special projects is planned to be completed in the third quarter of 2025. In view of the progress achieved, the Secretariat developed a new set of 10 extrabudgetary projects under the Programme. They address three specific areas of need for African Member States, namely:
- (a) strengthening control over transfers of toxic chemicals on the continent;
 - (b) boosting response capacities against chemical incidents and attacks, including those perpetrated by non-State actors; and
 - (c) developing the capacities of African laboratories, including for the analysis of biotoxins.
55. As part of the resource mobilisation efforts for these new projects, on 5 July 2024 the Secretariat organised an information session for all OPCW Member States to announce these projects and call for voluntary contributions. The Secretariat then continued to endeavour to secure necessary funding and support for these projects, and was able to initiate the implementation phase for the projects that received funding.
56. In terms of partnerships under the Africa Programme, valuable support has been provided by several OPCW Member States co-organising and hosting events under the Programme. In addition, the Secretariat continued to maintain collaborations with a range of relevant regional and international organisations as part of coordination, knowledge sharing, and the joint conduct of activities and cross-participation in events. The list includes the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA), the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI), the WCO, the African Union Commission, and the European Union CBRN³ Centres of Excellence Initiative.
57. Secretariat staff participated in person in the 18th Regional Round-table Meeting for Eastern and Central Africa under the European Union CBRN Centres of Excellence Initiative, held in Lusaka, Zambia, from 13 to 15 August 2024. Secretariat staff also gave virtual presentations at the following events:
- (a) a workshop on the risks related to CBRN materials in Malawi organised by UNODA in June 2024;
 - (b) a training course for the African region points of contact of the United Nations Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004), organised by UNODA in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, on synergies between the Convention and United Nations Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) in November 2024; and
 - (c) a round-table event on responsible chemical management and preventing the proliferation of chemical weapons in Botswana on OPCW capacity-building support for implementation of the Convention, organised by the Stimson Center in December 2024.

³ CBRN: chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear.

58. As part of the Secretariat's sustained efforts to reactivate cooperation with the African Union Commission, and as a follow-up to the visit undertaken in April 2013 by H.E. Ambassador Bankole Adeoye, Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security of the African Union, to OPCW Headquarters and his meeting with the Director-General of the OPCW Technical Secretariat, coordination meetings were held on 9 December 2024 and 19 May 2025 between the Secretariat and the department of Political Affairs, Peace and Security of the African Union with a view to streamlining cooperation between the African Union Commission and the OPCW. The African Union Commission took part remotely in the OPCW conference on advancing the national implementation of the Convention, which was organised in Windhoek, Namibia, on 28 and 29 April 2025, and delivered a presentation focusing on the African Union's support for the implementation of global and continental WMD instruments, including the Convention, at the policy and strategic levels. Communication between the Secretariat and the department of Political Affairs, Peace and Security of the African Union has continued since as part of the joint efforts to implement other ideas for collaboration.
59. Furthermore, as part of its continued efforts to sustain and leverage the engagement of various programme stakeholders by publicising progress, achievements, and collaborations under the Africa Programme, in early January 2025 the Secretariat issued the fourth edition of the OPCW Africa Bulletin, which was very well received. The Secretariat also continued to maintain the OPCW Africa Network, which currently boasts over 1,250 members among African chemistry professionals and other Convention stakeholders, and maintained contacts with fresh alumni of capacity-building activities organised under the Programme to encourage them to keep their respective National Authorities informed about their participation and the expertise they acquired, and to disseminate the knowledge they gained at the national level.

Annex (English only): Overview of Key Activities Conducted within the Framework of the Sixth Phase of the Africa Programme, 1 June 2024 – 31 May 2025

Annex

**OVERVIEW OF KEY ACTIVITIES CONDUCTED WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK
OF THE SIXTH PHASE OF THE AFRICA PROGRAMME
1 JUNE 2024 – 31 MAY 2025**

**OBJECTIVE 1: ADVANCE NATIONAL IMPLEMENTATION OF THE
CHEMICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION IN AFRICA**

**Twenty-Second Regional Meeting of National Authorities of States Parties in
Africa, Yaoundé, Cameroon, 11 – 13 June 2024**

1. Organised by the Secretariat with the support of the Government of Cameroon, participants at the meeting discussed needs, priorities, actions taken, and best practices in relation to the implementation of the Convention in Africa at the national and regional levels. Those in attendance received a detailed briefing on the sixth phase of the Africa Programme, with an emphasis on good practices and lessons learned. The briefing was followed by a lively debate on ongoing challenges in implementation, including the state of national implementing legislation and the capacity-development needs of fragile and conflict-affected States. Ideas generated focused on leveraging the Mentorship/Partnership Programme to deliver country-specific capacity development and strengthen coordination with other stakeholders, as well as on States Parties' efforts to operationalise the National Implementation Framework. A total of 46 participants from the following 39 OPCW Member States attended: Algeria, Angola, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cabo Verde, the Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Ethiopia, the Gambia, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Libya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritania, Mauritius, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, the Niger, Nigeria, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, South Africa, the Sudan, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, the United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

**National Legislative Review Forum with Sao Tome and Principe, online,
6 September 2024**

2. The Secretariat provided legislative assistance to representatives of Sao Tome and Principe during a National Legislative Review Forum held online on 6 September 2024. Participants were provided with relevant preparatory materials prior to a live session with the Secretariat. The Secretariat elaborated on its feedback on Sao Tome and Principe's draft implementing legislation on the Convention and provided specific advice on drafting options and potential next steps. Five representatives from Sao Tome and Principe's National Authority attended the Forum. The resulting national legislation draft has been under review.

**Eleventh Annual Meeting of Representatives of the Chemical Industry and
National Authorities of States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention,
Doha, Qatar, 15 – 17 October 2024**

3. Funded by Qatar, this meeting provided a forum for participating personnel from National Authorities and the chemical industry to share and receive pertinent updates and enhance their understanding of, among other things, developments related to Article VI

verification, policy, and strategy, the activities of the International Council of Chemical Associations (ICCA), and the International Chemical Trade Association (ICTA). It fostered dialogue on a range of topics on improving chemical industry declarations, enhancing vigilance of emerging technologies (including AI), and linking chemical security legislation to the Responsible Care/Responsible Distribution initiative of ICCA and ICTA. Fifty-three participants attended the meeting, including eight participants from four African Member States: Algeria, Angola, Mauritius, and South Africa.

Twenty-Sixth Annual Meeting of National Authorities, The Hague, the Netherlands, 20 – 22 November 2024

4. Serving as a dynamic platform for communication and collaboration, the Twenty-Sixth Annual Meeting of National Authorities facilitated dialogue between National Authorities and the Secretariat. It also encouraged the exchange of ideas at both bilateral and multilateral levels, the strengthening of regional networks, and the alignment of planning for capacity-building initiatives with the needs of States Parties.
5. Throughout the meeting, participants engaged in focused discussions on advancing comprehensive national legislation for the implementation of the Convention, enhancing customs capacities, improving chemical security, addressing discrepancies in the import and export of scheduled chemicals, emerging chemical threats, and mitigating risks posed by non-State actors. The event also underscored the importance of aligning these efforts with relevant international treaty regimes and the Sustainable Development Goals, ensuring a coordinated response to evolving global challenges. Partner organisations, including the Inter-Parliamentary Union, the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL), UNODA, and the WCO, actively contributed to the discussions.
6. The meeting included sessions for all regional groups. Attended by the Deputy Director-General, the Africa breakdown session underscored the need and the urgency to advance the adoption of national legislation for the implementation of the Convention in Africa. Among those in attendance at the 2024 meeting were 36 participants from 36 African Member States: Algeria, Angola, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cabo Verde, Cameroon, the Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Lesotho, Libya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritania, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, the Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, South Africa, the Sudan, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, the United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

Training course on fulfilling declaration and inspection obligations under Article VI of the Chemical Weapons Convention, online, 14 – 29 April 2025

7. This course provided participants with an opportunity to refresh and enhance their knowledge and skills relating to Article VI obligations. The course also provided information on recent developments around Article VI, and offered participants an opportunity to share experiences, ask questions, and clarify and discuss related issues. Four participants from as many African States Parties—Burundi, the Gambia, Kenya, and Morocco—benefited from this course.

Conference on advancing Convention implementing legislation in Africa, Windhoek, Namibia, 28 and 29 April 2025

8. Organised in collaboration with the Government of Namibia, this two-day conference was attended by the OPCW Deputy Director-General, Ambassador Odette Melono, and brought together delegates from African States Parties that have yet to fully incorporate the Convention's requirements into their domestic legal systems. It featured an innovative and unique approach, including fostering the capacities of representatives in areas of advocacy for passing legislation and the dynamics of parliamentary proceedings.
9. Speaking at the opening of the conference, the Deputy Director-General urged African States Parties to strengthen implementation of the Convention, noting that only 48% of African States Parties have enacted relevant national legislation, and that there are still 27 African States Parties with only partial legislation or no legislation reported for the implementation of their obligations under the Convention. The Deputy Director-General also noted the importance of Customs and border forces in preventing the illicit transfer and use of chemicals. Within this context, she highlighted the increasing size and complexity of the chemical industry, supply chains, and imports and exports of chemicals in Africa, hence the imperative for relevant authorities to be fully in control of chemical materials coming in and out of their countries, including through transit.
10. The event featured thematic discussions, case studies, and breakout sessions designed to help participants share experiences, identify challenges, and review best practices. Topics include strategies for stakeholder mobilisation, advocacy and communication, and the intersection of Convention implementation with broader chemical security and United Nations Security Council obligations. The conference programme also featured numerous opportunities for delegates to share the latest news on the status of their national legislation—information that is crucial to tailoring OPCW assistance and maximising its effectiveness.
11. Alongside government delegations from African States Parties still striving towards full implementation of the Convention, the conference included representatives from States Parties with successful legislation in place for the implementation of the Convention, as well as experts from international and regional bodies such as the African Union, the 1540 Committee, and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, under the leadership of the OPCW.
12. The event gathered 53 representatives of 23 African OPCW Member States: Angola, Chad, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Eswatini, the Gambia, Ghana, Guinea Bissau, Kenya, Malawi, Mauritania, Mozambique, Namibia, the Niger, Nigeria, Sao Tome and Principe, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Togo, Uganda, the United Republic of Tanzania, and Zimbabwe.

National Legislative Review Forum with Namibia, Windhoek, Namibia, 30 April 2025

13. The Secretariat held a National Legislative Review Forum with Namibia in Windhoek, Namibia, on 30 April 2025. Ahead of the Forum, Namibia's delegates were provided with the Secretariat's comments on the draft legislation submitted by Namibia to the Secretariat for review. The Secretariat and Namibia's delegates then jointly reviewed and discussed the Secretariat's comments and potential gaps and inconsistencies in the draft law. The Forum is expected to lead to further refinement and development of Namibia's draft law, in order to progress it towards enactment. Twelve representatives from the Ministry of Industries, Mines and Energy (Namibia's National Authority to the OPCW) and other relevant ministries attended the Forum.

OBJECTIVE 2: STRENGTHEN CONTROLS OVER CROSS-BORDER TRANSFERS OF TOXIC CHEMICALS TO PREVENT ACCESS TO SUCH CHEMICALS, INCLUDING BY NON-STATE ACTORS, FOR PURPOSES PROHIBITED UNDER THE CHEMICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION

Course for analytical chemists from laboratories supporting customs services, OPCW Centre for Chemistry and Technology, the Netherlands, 19 – 22 November 2024

14. This course was co-funded by a voluntary contribution of Germany for the participation of African chemists, and also received in-kind assistance from China in the form of human resources for training. The training assisted qualified analytical chemists from laboratories that support, or plan to support, customs services or offices in acquiring further experience and practical knowledge of the analysis of chemicals related to the Convention. In addition, the course facilitated the adoption of good laboratory practices for the implementation of the Convention. The event was attended by 13 participants, including from four African Member States: Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Nigeria, and Uganda.

Workshop for customs training institutions and departments on implementing the Chemical Weapons Convention, for Portuguese-speaking OPCW Member States, Luanda, Angola, 3 – 5 December 2024

15. Conducted in partnership with the WCO, and with expert contributions from Brazil, Portugal, and Zimbabwe, this workshop emphasised the critical role of customs officers in regulating the import and export of scheduled chemicals. In addition to highlighting operational procedures, the workshop introduced innovative training methodologies employed by customs academy instructors, and aimed to enhance the capacity of customs officers to identify and implement Convention-related provisions effectively in their day-to-day operations. The event also contributed to reinforcing cooperation among participating Portuguese-speaking customs training institutions to support effective sharing of knowledge and resources.
16. Looking ahead, the workshop discussed national strategies to incorporate Convention-related content into national customs training curricula, and how to replicate training-of-trainer capacity-building programmes at the national level. The workshop benefited 39 participants from nine Member States including 21 participants from six African Member States: Angola, Cabo Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, Sao Tome and Principe, and Zimbabwe.

Course for analytical chemists from laboratories supporting customs services in the Africa region, Athens, Greece, 12 – 16 May 2025

17. Funded through a voluntary contribution from Germany, this course assisted qualified analytical chemists from laboratories supporting customs services in acquiring further experience in and practical knowledge of the analysis of chemicals related to the Convention. It also facilitated the sharing of good laboratory practices for the implementation of the Convention.
18. The training course included a variety of lectures and laboratory work. The lectures covered general aspects of the OPCW, the Convention, and its Verification Annex. It also covered the chemical structure and properties of scheduled chemicals, the methods of separation and structure elucidation, and the detection and analysis of scheduled chemicals at various concentration levels. The role of customs service laboratories in promoting chemical safety was also discussed. The course benefited 12 participants from 12 African Member States: Botswana, Burundi, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Kenya, Libya, Mauritania, Tunisia, Uganda, the United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

Workshop on preventing the illicit transfer of scheduled chemicals for African States Parties, OPCW Centre for Chemistry and Technology, 13 – 15 May 2025

19. The workshop was organised by the Secretariat at the ChemTech Centre and received a significant voluntary contribution from France. It targeted customs and law enforcement officials, as well as customs focal persons at National Authorities.
20. The workshop imparted knowledge and skills on the tools, practices, and resources that are necessary to prevent and mitigate the illegal transfer of chemicals. The workshop comprised topical presentations and statements by experts, tabletop exercises, and demonstrations of relevant laboratory activities and equipment. It contributed to raising awareness of the importance of the Convention's scheduled chemicals transfer regime for the prevention of the illicit transfer of chemicals and enhancing cross-border cooperation and coordination on Convention-related matters among national stakeholders. The workshop also enhanced participants' capacities to employ tools and equipment for preventing and detecting illicit chemical transfers.
21. The workshop benefited 28 participants from 10 African OPCW Member States: Botswana, Cameroon, Ghana, Libya, Malawi, Rwanda, the Sudan, Uganda, the United Republic of Tanzania, and Zimbabwe.

OBJECTIVE 3: ENHANCE PROTECTION AND RESPONSE CAPABILITIES AGAINST CHEMICAL INCIDENTS AND ATTACKS

Hospital preparedness course for African States Parties, Kenitra, Morocco, 24 – 27 June 2024

22. Jointly organised by the OPCW and the Moroccan Ministry of Foreign Affairs, African Cooperation and Moroccan Expatriates, and the Royal Moroccan Armed Forces, and with funding from Andorra, Austria, and France, the training course centred on

enhancing the capabilities of participating medical facilities to respond to incidents involving toxic chemicals or chemical warfare agents. In particular, the course delved into the principles of hospital care for patients injured by toxic chemicals, as well as practical knowledge regarding facilities for managing casualties of chemical exposure. The course also featured a field exercise during which the participants tested their practical skills.

23. In addition to local Moroccan participants, 19 participants from the following 12 African OPCW Member States attended the course: Botswana, Burundi, Côte d'Ivoire, Djibouti, Madagascar, Mauritania, Namibia, Nigeria, South Africa, the Sudan, Uganda, and the United Republic of Tanzania.

The 2024–2025 international training cycle on assistance and protection for women first responders: basic course, Spiez, Switzerland, 1 – 5 July 2024

24. The course was jointly organised with Switzerland's Federal Department of Defence, Civil Protection and Sport, and coordinated by Switzerland's NBC EOD⁴ Centre of Competence of the Armed Forces. It was funded by Germany and received an in-kind contribution from Switzerland. The course was the second component of the first-of-its-kind 2024–2025 international training cycle exclusively for women first responders. This course followed the online foundation course that was held from 25 March to 19 April 2024, which included a live session held from the ChemTech Centre and featured presentations by women experts who discussed gender-based challenges faced by women first responders and ways to overcome them. This session also served as a forum for participants to share the career-related concerns and day-to-day challenges they face in male-dominated environments. A total of 25 participants from 19 OPCW Member States attended the in-person course, including from five African Member States: Algeria, Kenya, Morocco, Nigeria, and Seychelles.

Online foundation course: 2024 international training cycle on assistance and protection for OPCW Member States, online, 15 – 31 July 2024

25. Delivered by the Secretariat, this course was the first component of the 2024 international training cycle on assistance and protection for OPCW Member States. It provided participants with basic theoretical knowledge on the Convention, the OPCW, Article X of the Convention, chemical warfare agents, toxic industrial chemicals, personal protective equipment (PPE), decontamination, and detection, identification, and monitoring. The course was attended by 19 participants from 14 Member States, including the following four African Member States: Algeria, Côte d'Ivoire, Nigeria, and Uganda.

The 2023–2024 training cycle for English-speaking States Parties in the Africa region: follow-up webinar, online, 24 July 2024

26. On 24 July 2024, a follow-up online seminar was held as the final part of the 2023–2024 regional training cycle for English-speaking African Member States. The 20 participants from the previous components of the cycle participated in the webinar, and represented seven Member States: Namibia, Uganda, Nigeria, Kenya, Malawi, Rwanda, and Zambia.

4

NBC EOD = nuclear, biological, chemical, explosive ordnance disposal, and mine action.

The 2024 regional training cycle on assistance and protection for Asian OPCW Member States: integrated advanced course and exercise, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 19 – 23 August 2024

27. The Secretariat, in collaboration with the National Authority and the Fire and Rescue Department of Malaysia, conducted the fourth component of the regional cycle on assistance and protection for Asian Member States in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The training benefited 19 international and local participants from 13 Member States. One international instructor from Namibia attended the course as a resource person under the OPCW's Instructor Development and Exchange Programme.

International assistance and protection sampling course for OPCW Member States, Lázně Bohdaneč, the Czech Republic, 14 – 19 September 2024

28. Co-organised by the Secretariat and the Population Protection Institute of the Czech Republic, this course provided participants with hands-on experience with key procedures for sampling and analysis in contaminated environments. Participants learned about the properties and effects of various chemical warfare agents, as well as sampling and analysis in contaminated environments, reconnaissance, detection, decontamination, hot zone management, chain-of-custody procedures, and safe practices. They were exposed to simulated scenarios where they had to collect samples from a variety of surfaces in a field environment.
29. The training course was delivered by instructors from both the Population Protection Institute of the Fire Rescue Service of the Czech Republic and the Federal Academy for Civil Protection and Civil Defence of Germany. It was attended in person by 18 experts from 18 Member States including five African Member States: Algeria, Kenya, Lesotho, Morocco, and Uganda.

The 2023–2024 assistance and protection training cycle for French-speaking African Member States: integrated advanced course and exercise, Rabat, Morocco, 16 – 20 September 2024

30. This course was jointly organised by the Secretariat, the Moroccan Ministry of Foreign Affairs, African Cooperation and Moroccan Expatriates, and the Moroccan Ministry of Interior, as part of the 2023–2024 assistance and protection training cycle designed for French-speaking African Member States of the OPCW. It was co-funded by a voluntary contribution from France. This course was the third component of the regional training cycle on assistance and protection for French-speaking African Member States, following both a basic course held in Rabat from 27 February to 3 March 2023, and the online course on the Emergency Response Guidebook (ERG), the Computer-Aided Management of Emergency Operations (CAMEO) Chemicals database, and the Incident Command System (ICS). This course included intensive theoretical components covering key aspects of response to chemical emergencies, including incident command, decontamination, and the provision of assistance to victims. The course concluded with a field exercise at the National Electrolysis and Petrochemical Company (SNEP) in Mohammedia, Morocco, where participants were able to combine and utilise all the skills gained during the week to respond to chemical

emergencies. The training course was attended in person by 24 international and local experts from seven Member States: Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Madagascar, Mauritania, Morocco, and Togo.

The 2024–2025 international training cycle for OPCW Member States: basic course, Ahrweiler, Germany, 7 – 11 October 2024

31. This course was organised jointly with the German Federal Office of Civil Protection and Disaster Assistance, coordinated by the German Federal Academy of Civil Protection and Civil Defence, and funded by a voluntary contribution from Germany. The training course consisted of a combination of theory-based lectures, as well as demonstrations of detection, identification, and monitoring processes, demonstrations of equipment, and practical training sessions. Participants acquired basic knowledge of chemical warfare agents and toxic industrial chemicals and their actions, PPE and its limitations, the use of detection, identification, and monitoring, and decontamination equipment, and related procedures. A total of 19 participants from 13 Member States attended the course, including from four African Member States: Algeria, Côte d'Ivoire, Nigeria, and Uganda.

International training course on the medical aspects of assistance and protection against chemical weapons, Xi'an, China, 14 – 18 October 2024

32. Organised by the Secretariat in collaboration with the National Authority of China for the implementation of the Convention, and with the support of the Chinese Air Force Medical University, this five-day course contributed to strengthening medical preparedness and response capabilities at hospitals, especially in terms of the medical management of individuals affected in the aftermath of an attack involving chemical warfare agents or toxic industrial chemicals. It also promoted the exchange of experience, therapeutic approaches, and treatment protocols, as well as strategies for addressing gaps in medical capabilities.
33. Participants in this training course included medical and health professionals working at hospitals that attend to victims of chemical emergencies, or medical facilities designated for this purpose, in their respective countries. Thirty participants from 19 OPCW Member States, including four African Member States: Liberia, Morocco, Nigeria, and Zambia.

The 2024–2025 training cycle on investigation of chemical incidents for law enforcement agencies from African French-speaking Member States of the OPCW: foundation course, online, 16 – 31 October 2024

34. Conducted online, this foundation course was the initial component of the brand-new training cycle focusing on developing the investigative competencies of law enforcement agencies in the Africa region. The course was launched on the OPCW e-learning platform and covered basic theoretical knowledge for all participants about the Convention, the OPCW, Article X of the Convention, chemical warfare agents, toxic industrial chemicals, PPE, decontamination, and equipment used in detection, identification, and monitoring. The course benefited 18 participants from eight African Member States: Algeria, Burundi, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Mauritania, Morocco, Senegal, and Togo.

Training cycle on the investigation of chemical incidents for law enforcement agencies from African French-speaking Member States of the OPCW: basic course, Jacqueville, Côte d'Ivoire, 4 – 8 November 2024

35. Funded through a voluntary contribution from France and conducted jointly with the International Academy for the Fight against Terrorism in Côte d'Ivoire and the National Authority of Côte d'Ivoire, this basic course provided essential training on handling incidents involving chemical warfare agents for law enforcement officers in first responder and crime scene investigation roles. The course built upon the online training delivered by the Secretariat from 16 to 31 October 2024.
36. During the course, participants gained a solid foundation of the fundamentals of chemical warfare agents and their effects, PPE and its limitations, detection and decontamination equipment and procedures, and basic sampling procedures. Emphasis was placed on how to assess incident scenes effectively, and how to conduct comprehensive risk assessments. The hands-on approach provided participants with the skills and confidence to deal effectively with potential chemical emergencies. The course benefited 18 participants from eight African Member States: Algeria, Burundi, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Mauritania, Morocco, Senegal, and Togo.

The seventh operational training course on chemical emergency response, planning, and management for East African Community Partner States, Jinja, Uganda, 2 – 11 December 2024

37. Held at the Uganda Rapid Deployment Capability Centre in Jinja, Uganda, this training course was organised by the Secretariat and the National Authority of Uganda, with financial support from the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. Technical assistance was provided by the Fire Rescue Service of the Czech Republic. In the seventh edition of this course, the training imparted critical knowledge and provided hands-on experience in how to safely conduct critical emergency operations and support functions following an act of chemical terrorism or other toxic chemical releases. The participants gained practical experience in five key areas: presentations, demonstrations, tabletop exercises, on-site training, and a field exercise. They performed various command roles to learn strategies that they can implement in their respective countries as future instructors. The course benefited 35 participants from seven African OPCW Member States: Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Kenya, Rwanda, Somalia, Uganda, and the United Republic of Tanzania.

The 2024–2025 assistance and protection regional training cycle for English-speaking Member States of the OPCW in Africa: foundation course, online, 20 December 2024 – 8 January 2025

38. Delivered by the Secretariat, this course was the first component of the 2024–2025 training cycle on assistance and protection for English-speaking Member States in Africa. It provided participants with basic theoretical knowledge of the Convention, the OPCW, Article X of the Convention, chemical warfare agents, toxic industrial chemicals, PPE, decontamination, and detection, identification, and monitoring. The

course benefited 30 participants from 16 Member States: Botswana, the Gambia, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Malawi, Namibia, Nigeria, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Uganda, the United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

The 2024–2025 international training cycle for women first responders: course on the Emergency Response Guidebook, Computer-Aided Management of Emergency Operations, and the Incident Command System, online, 20 January – 7 February 2025

39. As the third component of the 2024–2025 international training cycle on assistance and protection for women first responders, this online course was organised by the Secretariat from 20 January to 7 February 2025. The course was launched on the OPCW e-learning platform, and the content was structured in four chapters covering the physico-chemical properties of substances, the ERG, the CAMEO Chemicals database, and the ICS. During the course, the Secretariat hosted a live session on 4 February 2025 consisting of questions and answers on the course content, presentations by instructors, and the sharing of logistical information for the subsequent face-to-face integrated advanced course and exercise. Of the 25 participants attending the online course, nine participants hailed from five African OPCW Member States: Algeria, Kenya, Morocco, Nigeria, and Seychelles.

The 2024–2025 training cycle on the investigation of chemical incidents for law enforcement agencies from African French-speaking Member States of the OPCW: course on the Emergency Response Guidebook, the CAMEO Chemicals database, and the Incident Command System, online, 10 February – 7 March 2025

40. The online course focused on the ERG, the CAMEO Chemicals database, and the ICS, and covered essential technical aspects that equipped participants to respond effectively to emergencies. The course provided them with the necessary skills and knowledge to successfully prepare the advanced course of the cycle. The course benefited 14 participants from seven African OPCW Member States: Algeria, Burundi, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Morocco, Senegal, and Togo.

Training course on conducting sampling and analysis in a highly contaminated environment for African States Parties, Algiers, Algeria, 23–26 February 2025

41. The course was jointly organised by the Government of Algeria and the Secretariat and funded through a voluntary contribution from Germany. The course provided expert knowledge and skills to specialists from African Member States who would be responsible for conducting sampling and analysis tasks in a highly contaminated environment resulting from a chemical attack or a chemical incident. The course benefited 25 participants from 21 Member States: Algeria, Angola, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Côte d'Ivoire, the Gambia, Ghana, Kenya, Libya, Malawi, Namibia, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, the Sudan, Togo, Uganda, the United Republic of Tanzania, and Zambia.

The 2024–2025 international training cycle for women first responders: advanced course and exercise, Spiez, Switzerland, 10 – 14 March 2025

42. The integrated advanced course and exercise was the fourth component of the 2024–2025 international cycle for women first responders and was held from 10 to 14 March 2025 in Spiez, Switzerland. The event was organised jointly with Switzerland's Federal Department of Defence, Civil Protection and Sport, and coordinated by Switzerland's EOD Command of the NBC EOD Centre of Competence. It was funded by a voluntary contribution from Germany. The advanced course and exercise deepened the knowledge acquired by the participants in the three previous components of the cycle, and equipped them with practical skills to deal with accidents involving chemical warfare agents and toxic industrial chemicals. The hands-on training explored various complex scenarios in combination with a final exercise. General principles of detection, decontamination, and incident management were applied during the practical sessions, and the final exercise focused on sampling in a toxic environment. Of the 25 participants attending the integrated course and exercise, nine participants hailed from five African Member States of the OPCW: Algeria, Kenya, Morocco, Nigeria, and Seychelles.

The 2024–2025 international assistance and protection international training cycle: course on the Emergency Response Guidebook, the CAMEO Chemicals database, and the Incident Command System, online, 1 – 17 April 2025

43. This course corresponds to the third segment of the international assistance and protection training cycle, and served as the basis for the subsequent segment (advanced combined face-to-face course and exercise). The course focused on the physico-chemical properties of chemical warfare agents, in addition to the ERG, the CAMEO Chemicals database, and the ICS. The training benefited, inter alia, five participants from four African Member States of the OPCW: Algeria, Côte d'Ivoire, Nigeria, and Uganda.

The 2024–2025 training cycle on the investigation of chemical incidents for law enforcement agencies from African French-speaking Member States of the OPCW: advanced course, Jacqueville, Côte d'Ivoire, 4 – 11 April 2025

44. Funded through a voluntary contribution from France, this advanced course was the fourth component of the 2024–2025 training cycle on the investigation of chemical incidents for law enforcement agencies from French-speaking OPCW Member States. The training was organised jointly with the International Academy for the Fight Against Terrorism, with support from the National Authority of Côte d'Ivoire. The course provided participants with advanced knowledge and skills on how to investigate a chemical incident, with a focus on scene documentation and sampling activities. Fourteen participants from the following seven Member States attended the advanced course: Algeria, Burundi, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Morocco, Senegal, and Togo.

Refresher course for instructors from OPCW Member States in the East African Community, online from the OPCW ChemTech Centre, 15 and 16 April 2025

45. The course was organised by the Secretariat in collaboration with the Population Protection Institute of the Fire Rescue Service of the Czech Republic, and was the fifth edition offered to EAC instructors. The course was effective in terms of assessing and

further strengthening the teaching skills and theoretical knowledge of EAC instructors on specific topics related to responding to a chemical emergency. Areas of focus included properties and symptoms of chemical warfare agents, PPE, reconnaissance, sampling, decontamination, the ICS, and hot zone management.

46. This training course was coordinated from the ChemTech Centre. The advanced audiovisual technology available at the ChemTech Centre facilitated real-time discussions and presentations, making the learning experience more engaging between the participants and the Czech experts. The course was attended by 17 participants, including six women from six OPCW Member States in the EAC: Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Kenya, Rwanda, Uganda, and the United Republic of Tanzania.

Medical and hospital preparedness course for African States Parties, Nairobi, Kenya, 12 – 16 May 2025

47. Organised in collaboration with the Government of Kenya, this course was designed to strengthen capacity building in the hospitals and medical institutions of States Parties that may be called to respond in the aftermath of an attack involving chemical warfare agents or toxic industrial chemicals. It also promoted the exchange of experiences, and effective strategies and practices to reduce gaps at medical institutions and enhance their operational resilience when faced with such events.
48. The course covered the following topics: general concepts of chemical warfare agents and toxic industrial chemicals; risk assessment for medical facilities; lessons learned in chemical emergencies; hospital preparedness; specific issues in hospital response; development of strategies and management in hospital models; preparation of programmes for health personnel; reception of victims and intra-hospital evaluation; the processing of biological samples; and demonstrations of national capacities in preparedness and response to chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, and explosive (CBRNE) threats and incidents. The course benefited 24 participants from 20 African States Parties: Algeria, Angola, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Côte d'Ivoire, Djibouti, Kenya, Libya, Malawi, Mauritania, Mauritius, Morocco, Namibia, Nigeria, Rwanda, South Africa, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. In addition, the course also gathered seven observers from Kenya and 12 instructors from Algeria, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Iran (the Islamic Republic of), Kenya, Nigeria, and South Africa.

The 2024–2025 assistance and protection international training cycle: integrated advanced course and exercise, Lázně Bohdaneč, the Czech Republic, 17 – 22 May 2025

49. Organised by the Secretariat in cooperation with the Population Protection Institute of the Czech Republic, this course served as the fourth component of the 2024–2025 international training cycle on assistance and protection for OPCW Member States, and consisted of theoretical lectures on advanced elements of preparedness for and response to chemical emergencies, featuring a significant number of practical activities. Of the 17 participants, five hailed from four African OPCW Member States: Algeria, Côte d'Ivoire, Nigeria, and Uganda.

OBJECTIVE 4: ADVANCE CHEMICAL SAFETY AND SECURITY CULTURE, STANDARDS, AND PRACTICES IN AFRICA

The twenty-fifth edition of the Associate Programme, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and elsewhere, 29 July – 26 September 2024

50. The twenty-fifth edition of the Associate Programme hosted a total of 29 participants from 29 States Parties. For the industry segment, participants were paired up and deployed to 16 identified chemical industry sites hosted by 11 States Parties: Brazil, China, Germany, India, Italy, Malaysia, Poland, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. South Africa hosted an industry attachment at the Sasol Secunda Operations facility. The Programme boosted the knowledge, technical skills, and experience of participants in chemistry and chemical and process engineering, with a focus on chemical safety and security management. Additionally, the training has increased participants' knowledge of the Convention and of the mission and role of the OPCW. Eleven participants took part in the Programme, hailing from the following 11 African Member States: Botswana, Burundi, Côte d'Ivoire, Kenya, Morocco, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, the Sudan, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

The Wuppertal course on explosion protection and safety management in the chemical process industries, online from the University of Wuppertal, Germany, 30 August – 7 October 2024

51. The course was jointly organised by the Secretariat and the University of Wuppertal, with support from the Government of Germany. It employed the "train-the-trainer" approach and was offered to participants with backgrounds in chemistry, chemical engineering; participants in the chemical industry who work at chemical or manufacturing industrial facilities; or participants who, because of their involvement in the implementation of the Convention, are called upon to interact with the chemical industry at various levels, such as in relation to formulating, analysing, or implementing chemical safety policies in their home countries. The course included a briefing on the Convention, particularly the provisions related to its implementation in terms of the chemical industry. Subsequently, the focus shifted to relevant legislation, risks (both operational and environmental), fire, explosive, and toxic hazards, and hazard assessment. Further discussions took place on process control engineering, handling protection devices, and safety management. Finally, the course addressed emergency planning, risk and disaster communication, and risks associated with human factors. The programme of activities included practical exercises carried out in a laboratory, and at the University of Wuppertal mini-plant, which was specially built for the course. In attendance were 24 participants from 21 OPCW Member States, including eight African Member States: Botswana, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Kenya, Namibia, Nigeria, Togo, and Uganda.

Workshop on the general aspects of chemical safety and security in laboratories, Milan, Italy, 7 – 11 October 2024

52. This workshop was organised by the Secretariat in partnership with the Giulio Natta Institute of Chemical Sciences and Technologies of the Italian National Research Council and the Italian Federation of the Chemical Industry. It promoted safety and security management in chemical laboratories and in small chemical production plants. It also supported the sustainable and ethical use of chemistry in academia, research institutions, and governmental agencies. During the workshop, participants examined case studies and exchanged expertise on the risks related to hazardous chemicals, including the most recent advances in the use of PPE, risk mitigation strategies, and the management of laboratory-scale accidents. A tabletop exercise was conducted for participants to practise and demonstrate their emergency response and risk assessment skills in a scenario involving toxic chemicals. The workshop benefited 20 participants from as many OPCW Member States, including 12 participants from 11 African Member States: Botswana, Burundi, Kenya, Morocco, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, Tunisia, Uganda, the United Republic of Tanzania, and Zimbabwe.

Launch event: Indicative Guidelines for Safe and Secure Transport of Hazardous Chemicals by Road, hybrid format, 16 October 2024

53. The Secretariat organised a launch event for the Indicative Guidelines for Safe and Secure Transport of Hazardous Chemicals by Road, which was held in a hybrid format to accommodate participants and guest speakers, both online and in person. The Indicative Guidelines have been developed as a result of two OPCW workshops on the Chemical Safety and Security Tools Development Programme by participating experts in the fields of chemical safety and security management. The Indicative Guidelines aim to provide accessible tools and guidance for the safe and secure transport of hazardous chemicals for States Parties with limited resources, or small and medium-sized enterprises. The Indicative Guidelines showcase best practices in safe and secure transport across the globe. The event was attended by 56 participants including from 10 African OPCW Member States: Angola, Burundi, the Gambia, Ghana, Kenya, Mauritania, Rwanda, South Africa, the Sudan, and the United Republic of Tanzania.

Workshop on developing indicative guidelines on Know Your Customer, Nairobi, Kenya, 18 – 21 February 2025

54. This workshop was held within the third phase of the Chemical Safety and Security Tools Development Programme, which aims to support States Parties' capacities in chemical safety and security management through the development of useful tools and guidance. In this workshop, technical experts from the chemical industry, government institutions, and industry associations jointly developed sections of the indicative guidelines on Know Your Customer and customer due diligence, based on the draft version that was put together as a result of the previous workshop held in Sri Lanka in 2024. The workshop gathered 15 experts from 10 OPCW Member States, including from three African Member States: Kenya, Nigeria, and South Africa.

Regional seminar on the Chemical Weapons Convention and chemical safety and security management for African Member States of the OPCW, online from the ChemTech Centre, 18 March 2025

55. Conducted online from the ChemTech Centre, this seminar provided an opportunity for participating Member States to consider and discuss specific chemical safety and security management issues related to chemical processes and emerging technologies that might have a direct bearing on the effective implementation of the Convention. The event facilitated the sharing of information and the exchange of experiences in the practical aspects of chemical safety and security management. Through interactions and discussions, the seminar generated recommendations on the structure of future standardised seminars in order to promote these practices at small and medium-sized enterprises in Africa. The event gathered 19 participants representing 12 African Member States: Botswana, Burundi, the Gambia, Ghana, Mauritius, Morocco, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, the Sudan, Uganda, and Zimbabwe.

E-learning safety training programme in English, online, 28 April – 27 June 2025

56. This training programme was designed to provide an update on the current standards, policies, and best practices in occupational safety and chemical hazards. It also addressed the handling, storage, and transport of chemicals and chemical waste management. The course included e-learning multimedia content and text material in addition to interactive sessions covering relevant topics such as safety, chemicals, environment, emergencies, security and management, and culture. The training programme benefited, inter alia, seven participants from as many African Member States: Algeria, Malawi, Mauritius, Morocco, Sierra Leone, Uganda, and the United Republic of Tanzania.

Workshop on the general aspects of chemical safety and security in laboratories, Milan, Italy, 20 – 23 May 2025

57. This workshop provided an update on the current standards, policies, know-how, and best practices in chemical safety and security, at both research laboratories and small industrial production sites. Participants were introduced to the general framework in which the OPCW and other organisations work to promote chemical safety and security management. They also learned in greater detail about major relevant international policies, legal frameworks, awareness-raising initiatives, and tools, including the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals and the ERG, among others. The workshop featured a series of lectures dedicated to topics such as hazardous chemicals and related risk assessments, PPE, prevention and mitigation strategies, emergency management, environmental impacts, forensic sampling, as well as case analysis of incidents at chemical laboratories and work sites. Special attention was also paid to the themes of sustainability, green chemistry, ethics, and sound alternatives to highly hazardous chemicals. The workshop benefited, inter alia, 11 participants from nine African Member States of the OPCW: Botswana, Burundi, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Nigeria, Uganda, the United Republic of Tanzania, and Zimbabwe.

OBJECTIVE 5: STRENGTHEN THE CAPABILITIES OF CHEMICAL LABORATORIES IN AFRICA**Proficiency testing course, online from the OPCW ChemTech Centre, 3 – 14 June 2024**

58. This course began with one week of self-study with online training materials. It was followed by live interactive sessions online. The training course covered relevant areas such as the structure and properties of scheduled chemicals, the OPCW Central Analytical Database, the Automated Mass Spectral Deconvolution and Identification System, and the National Institute of Standards and Technology database, in addition to proficiency testing types, strategies, and reporting. The event was attended by 48 participants from 19 OPCW Member States, including 29 participants from nine African Member States: Algeria, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Kenya, Malawi, Morocco, Nigeria, Uganda, and the United Republic of Tanzania.

Analytical skills development course for African Member States of the OPCW, Protechnik Laboratories, Pretoria, South Africa, 3 – 14 June 2024

59. This course was co-organised with and hosted by Protechnik Laboratories in South Africa. It contributed to improving the analytical skills of laboratories in African Member States, using gas chromatography and mass spectrometry methodologies. The course benefited a total of 20 participants from the following 13 African OPCW Member States: Algeria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Côte d'Ivoire, Kenya, Malawi, Mauritania, Morocco, Namibia, Nigeria, South Africa, Uganda, and Zimbabwe.

Basic analytical chemistry course for women chemists, OPCW ChemTech Centre, 9 – 11 July 2024

60. Delivered at the OPCW Laboratory at the ChemTech Centre, this three-day training provided women chemists with foundational knowledge and practical skills and techniques for the analysis of scheduled chemicals subject to verification under the Convention. It also provided an opportunity for professional networking and discussions about how to increase the number of women working in the chemical sciences. The training course was attended by 10 women chemists representing 10 OPCW Member States, including three participants from the following African Member States: Morocco, Uganda, and Zimbabwe.

Analytical skills development course, Indian Institute of Chemical Technology, Hyderabad, India, 2 – 13 September 2024

61. This course was organised by the Secretariat and the Indian Institute of Chemical Technology at the Institute's premises in Hyderabad, India. The two-week training provided participating chemistry professionals with theoretical knowledge and practical skills on the techniques used to analyse chemicals subject to the Convention. In particular, the participants received insights into techniques, such as gas chromatography and gas chromatography-mass spectrometry. The course hosted 20 participants from as many OPCW Member States, including 15 participants from 15 African Member States: Algeria, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Mauritania, Mauritius, Morocco, the Sudan, Togo, Uganda, and Zimbabwe.

Two parallel courses on the enhancement of laboratory skills, VERIFIN, Helsinki, Finland, 16 – 27 September 2024

62. From 16 to 27 September, the Secretariat, in collaboration with VERIFIN, organised two specialised training courses in Helsinki, Finland: one on quantitative mass spectrometry, and one on laboratory quality management. The courses provided an overview of ISO/IEC⁵ 17025 and the use of mass spectrometry to analyse chemical warfare agents. The courses, which covered both theory and practical activities in the laboratory, benefited 10 participants, including four participants from four African Member States of the OPCW: Algeria, Botswana, Burkina Faso, and Burundi.

Basic analytical chemistry course, online from the OPCW Laboratory, 23 September – 4 October 2024

63. The Secretariat organised an online basic analytical chemistry course that assisted qualified analytical chemists from OPCW Member States with economies that are developing or in transition in acquiring further knowledge and experience, specifically in the analysis of chemicals related to the Convention. This course also facilitated the adoption of good laboratory practices and quality standards among Member States. The course was attended by 30 participants, including from five African Member States: the Gambia, Kenya, Nigeria, the Sudan, and Uganda.

Technical visit to the National Laboratory of Scientific and Technical Police of Morocco, 10 and 11 November 2024

64. The visit represented the first activity under the twinning project between Morocco's National Laboratory of Scientific and Technical Police (the assisted laboratory) and Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, the United States of America (the assisting laboratory) within the OPCW Laboratory Twinning and Assistance Programme. The aim of the visit was to verify the information previously provided by the assisted laboratory and engage with laboratory management to confirm the scope, objectives, and assistance plan of the project, and to identify the specific gaps and needs of the assisted laboratory.

Laboratory equipment maintenance course for OPCW Member States in the Africa region, Wrocław, Poland, 9 – 13 December 2024

65. The laboratory equipment maintenance course is a brand-new training initiative devised by the Secretariat under the Africa Programme to respond to a need expressed by African Member States. Co-organised with the Wrocław University of Science and Technology, and with support from the National Authority of Poland and funding from Germany and the European Union, the pilot edition assisted qualified personnel in acquiring the experience and practical knowledge needed to develop the skills to perform basic preventive and curative maintenance of laboratory equipment, and to facilitate the adoption of good practices in preventive equipment maintenance at analytical chemistry laboratories. The course was attended by seven participants from seven African Member States: Algeria, Botswana, Ghana, Libya, Malawi, Namibia, and the United Republic of Tanzania.

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ISO/IEC = International Organization for Standardization/International Electrotechnical Commission.

Analytical skills development course for Africa, Helsinki, Finland, 10 – 14 February 2025

66. This course was organised by the Secretariat under the project to assess and enhance the capacities of laboratories in States Parties in the African Group and GRULAC seeking to achieve OPCW designation. The training course, which took place in Helsinki, Finland, in cooperation with VERIFIN, further enhanced the experience and practical knowledge of participating laboratories in the analysis of chemicals related to the Convention, with a view to assisting these laboratories in achieving OPCW designation. Four participants from Kenya (2) and Nigeria (2) benefited from this course.

Basic analytical chemistry course, online from OPCW ChemTech Centre, 10 – 21 February 2025

67. The course was conducted by the Secretariat online from the OPCW ChemTech Centre. It assisted qualified analytical chemists from Member States with economies that are developing or in transition in acquiring further knowledge and experience, specifically in the analysis of chemicals related to the Convention. The course provided a platform for sharing good laboratory practices and quality standards. From Africa, nine participants representing five Member States benefited from this training: Botswana, Lesotho, Morocco, Nigeria, and Uganda.

Meeting with representatives of Moroccan laboratories to discuss the path towards laboratory designation, 12 February 2025

68. Within the framework of supporting African laboratories interested in acquiring OPCW designation, Secretariat staff from the OPCW Laboratory and the International Cooperation and Assistance Division met with representatives of two laboratories from Morocco that aspire to achieve OPCW designation, namely, the National Laboratory for Scientific and Technical Police, and the Institute Criminalistique de la Gendarmerie Royale. The meeting provided the Moroccan participants with guidance on the requirements for, and the path towards, laboratory designation.

Proficiency test training for laboratories aspiring to achieve OPCW designation, OPCW ChemTech Centre, 24 – 28 March 2025

69. Held at the ChemTech Centre, this training was designed for laboratories aspiring to achieve OPCW designation, and was organised within the framework of the sixth phase of the project to assess and enhance the capacities of laboratories in States Parties in the African Group and GRULAC seeking to achieve OPCW designation, which was funded by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. The training was attended by, inter alia, four participants representing GCD in Kenya and NAFDAC in Nigeria.

Closing workshop of the sixth phase of the project to assess and enhance the capacities of laboratories in States Parties in the African Group and the Latin American and Caribbean Group seeking to achieve OPCW designation, online, 31 March 2025

70. This workshop marked the closing of the sixth phase of the project providing technical assistance and capacity-building support for OPCW proficiency testing to four analytical laboratories from Brazil, Chile, Kenya and Nigeria. This project was funded by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. The project comprised the provision of tailored-made support, including on-site training, mentorship visits, bilateral proficiency testing, and continuous online support. The assisted laboratories have been making steady progress towards acquiring the knowledge and skills necessary to pass the Official OPCW Proficiency Tests and achieve OPCW designation. The workshop was attended by, inter alia, four participants representing GCD in Kenya (2) and NAFDAC in Nigeria (2).

OBJECTIVE 6: PROMOTE KNOWLEDGE OF PEACEFUL CHEMISTRY AND ITS EXCHANGE IN AFRICA

Forum on peaceful uses of chemistry: Global Conference on the Role of Artificial Intelligence in Advancing the Implementation of Chemical Weapons Convention, Rabat, Morocco, 22 – 24 October 2024

71. The Global Conference was organised by the Secretariat jointly with the Government of Morocco, and with voluntary contributions from several OPCW Member States, including China, France, Germany, Qatar, the Republic of Korea, and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.⁶
72. The Global Conference explored the transformative role of AI within the framework of the Convention. Leading AI specialists, scientists, industry experts, and policymakers discussed and shared knowledge about AI's impact on chemistry and its industrial applications, while exploring both potential opportunities and risks the technology may pose to humanity—including from the perspectives of chemical safety and security, counterterrorism, and disarmament. The event fostered a deeper understanding of AI's implications for international security and informed policy frameworks aligned with peaceful and ethical AI application in chemical sciences. It was attended by 190 participants, including delegates from 46 States Parties from all regional groups, including some 50 participants from seven African Member States, in addition to representatives from international organisations (the European Union, INTERPOL, UNICRI, and UNODA), policymakers, scientific experts, and industry leaders. An important contribution by African experts and participants was registered at this key event.

⁶

Global Conference donors of contributions equal to or above EUR 2,500 are publicly acknowledged in Global Conference documents.

Symposium on Women in Chemistry, OPCW ChemTech Centre, online and in person, 26 and 27 March 2025

73. The annual OPCW Women in Chemistry Symposium brought together scientists, policymakers, and educators from around the world to chart a course for a more inclusive future in chemistry. Inaugurated by the OPCW Deputy Director-General, Ambassador Odette Melono, the 2025 edition provided an effective platform for sharing experiences, building networks, and learning from inspiring women leaders in science and chemistry. Over the course of the two-day event, nearly 100 participants—joining both online and in person from around the world—discussed challenges and opportunities for women in chemistry, and celebrated the remarkable achievements and leadership of women scientists in this field. In addition to presentations by the OPCW and other international organisations, as well as interactive panel discussions, participants also engaged in in-depth discussions with scientists at the OPCW ChemTech Centre and had a first-hand look at how science underpins the Organisation’s work. For the first time, the Symposium also featured emerging technologies, such as AI, as an important topic of discussion in relation to gender equity in chemistry. Among others, four participants from as many African OPCW Member States—Algeria, Kenya, Morocco, and Tunisia—attended the event in person, and 38 African participants attended online.

Conference Support Programme

74. During the reporting period, the Secretariat sponsored the following conferences:
- (a) “Powder Diffraction: Advancing Real Materials in the Information Era”, Erice, Italy, from 1 to 7 June 2024. The Secretariat sponsored the participation of one participant from Ghana at this conference;
 - (b) “Virtual Conference on Chemistry and Its Applications” (VCCA 2024), online from the University of Mauritius, from 12 to 16 August 2024. The Secretariat sponsored the participation of 87 African participants at this conference;
 - (c) “6th Annual Days of Chemistry of Senegal and 9th Federation of African Societies of Chemistry (FASC) Congress” (FASC/JACS⁷ 2024), Dakar, Senegal, from 19 to 21 November 2024. The Secretariat sponsored nine participants from seven African OPCW Member States: Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Mauritius, Morocco, Nigeria, Tunisia (3), and the United Republic of Tanzania. In addition, the costs of the conference’s publications were partially sponsored by the Secretariat.
 - (d) The 10th Annual Symposium of American Chemistry Society Nigeria Chemical International Sciences Chapter on “Advancing Sustainability through AI-Driven Chemistry” (Abuja, Nigeria, from 4 to 7 May 2025). The Secretariat provided sponsorship to cover costs related to the symposium’s publications.

Fellowship Programme

75. During the reporting period, under the Fellowship Programme, two fellowships benefiting African scientists were completed: a fellow from Cameroon was hosted in France (from 26 February to 25 August 2024), and a fellow from Cameroon was hosted in Italy (from 3 April to 30 September 2024).

Programme for Support of Research Projects

76. Under the Programme for Support of Research Projects, the Secretariat continued to extend its support to small-scale research projects in OPCW Member States in order to promote the development of scientific and technical knowledge in chemistry for peaceful purposes relevant to the Convention. During the reporting period, the Secretariat sponsored five research projects based in Algeria (2), Kenya, Nigeria, and South Africa.

OBJECTIVE 7: FOSTER PROGRAMME VISIBILITY, STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT, AND PARTNERSHIPS

Ninth Meeting of the Steering Committee of the Africa Programme, OPCW Headquarters and online, 21 June 2024

77. This meeting was chaired by H.E. Ambassador Madeleine Liguemoh Ondoua, Permanent Representative of Cameroon to the OPCW and Chairperson of the Steering Committee. In attendance were 50 Committee members, observers, and Secretariat staff members led by the Director-General and the Deputy Director-General. Belgium's Permanent Representative to the OPCW attended the meeting as an invited guest.
78. The Committee reviewed the progress made in the implementation of the sixth phase of the Africa Programme since its previous meeting on 20 November 2023. The Committee expressed gratitude to Programme donors and partners for their support to the Programme and welcomed the new batch of extrabudgetary special projects.
79. In this regard, the delegations of Algeria, Canada, France, Morocco, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United States of America, and H.E. Ambassador Mika-Markus Leinonen on behalf of the European Union, took the floor. The progress in the implementation of extrabudgetary projects under the Africa Programme and the efficient use of donor funds within this context was also commended. Algeria and the NICC/GN were profusely congratulated for having earned OPCW designation. In general, the delegations that took the floor pledged their continued support for the Programme.

Participation in the 18th Regional Round-table Meeting for Eastern and Central Africa under the European Union CBRN Centres of Excellence Initiative, Lusaka, Zambia, 13 – 15 August 2024

80. Organised by the Government of Zambia, the European Union CBRN Centres of Excellence, and UNICRI, this event brought together 52 participants representing National Focal Points from Eastern and Central Africa, alongside regional and

international organisations, and raised awareness about CBRN threats and emerging risks, international legal instruments and conventions, as well as ongoing regional projects.

81. At the invitation of the organisers, the Secretariat participated as a facilitator in a thematic session entitled “CBRN Detection, Identification, and Control at Border Crossings – SECURITY” on the third day of the event. This session focused on deepening participants’ understanding of the critical articles within the Convention and the role of the OPCW in providing assistance and protection to OPCW Member States facing toxic chemical threats. This session also addressed the various instruments and resources used by the OPCW to improve the preparedness for, detection of, response to, and mitigation of risks related to toxic chemicals in Africa. On the margins of this meeting, the Secretariat’s representative also engaged with representatives of other participating organisations as part of exploring further synergies and opportunities for collaboration.

Contribution to a training course for the African region points of contact of the United Nations Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004), Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 5 – 7 November 2024

82. Secretariat staff gave a presentation on the national implementation of the Convention and synergies between the Convention and United Nations Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) at a training course for the African region points of contact of the 1540 Committee, organised by UNODA in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, from 5 to 7 November 2024. The course was co-hosted by Mozambique, the 1540 Committee, and UNODA.

Briefing to Permanent Representations based outside The Hague, Brussels, Belgium, 13 November 2024

83. Organised by the Secretariat, the 2024 edition of the annual briefing to Permanent Representations based outside The Hague brought together 46 delegates, including 19 Ambassadors representing 30 countries—29 OPCW Member States and South Sudan, a State not Party to the Convention. This marked the highest number of participants in recent years.
84. The meeting received briefings from the Director-General, Ambassador Fernando Arias, about the Organisation’s priorities, and from the Chairperson of the Council, H.E. Ambassador Andrés Terán Parral, Permanent Representative of Ecuador to the OPCW, on the Council’s activities. Among other issues, participants were also briefed on key developments in the Africa Programme in 2024 as part of keeping the delegations informed and sustaining their engagement in Programme implementation.

Tenth Meeting of the Steering Committee of the Africa Programme, OPCW Headquarters and online, 18 November 2024

85. The meeting was chaired by H.E. Ambassador Madeleine Liguemoh Ondoua, Permanent Representative of Cameroon to the OPCW and Chairperson of the Committee. In attendance were some 45 Committee members, observers, and Secretariat staff members led by the Director-General and the Deputy Director-General. The Acting

Director of the International Cooperation and Assistance Division, Mr Li Zhao, participated in the meeting, along with the Programme Coordinator and Division staff in charge of the implementation of Africa Programme activities.

86. Based on the briefings delivered by the Secretariat, the Committee reviewed the activities carried out as part of implementing the sixth phase of the Africa Programme since its previous meeting on 21 June 2024. The briefing also highlighted key Programme achievements in 2024. The Committee commended the progress achieved and the support of Programme donors and partners.
87. In this regard, the delegations of Algeria, Burundi, Canada, the Czech Republic, Morocco, South Africa, Switzerland, Tunisia, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and the United Republic of Tanzania took the floor. The progress in the implementation of extrabudgetary projects under the Africa Programme and the efficient use of donor funds in this context were also praised. In general, delegations that took the floor pledged their continued support for the Africa Programme.

Coordination meetings with the African Union Commission, online, 9 December 2024 and 19 May 2025

88. As part of the Secretariat's sustained efforts to revitalise cooperation with the African Union Commission, and as a follow-up to the visit made to OPCW Headquarters in April 2023 by H.E. Ambassador Bankole Adeoye, Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security of the African Union, and his meeting with the OPCW Director-General, coordination meetings were held between the Secretariat and the department of Political Affairs, Peace and Security of the African Union with a view to streamlining cooperation between the African Union Commission and the OPCW. The following ideas were retained for joint collaboration:
- (a) participation of the African Union Commission in the OPCW conference on advancing the national implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention in Africa (April 2025): At the invitation of the Secretariat, the department of Political Affairs, Peace and Security of the African Union participated remotely in the conference and delivered a presentation focusing on the regional security policy framework and on the African Union's support for the implementation of global and continental WMD instruments, including the Convention;
 - (b) organisation of a briefing by the Secretariat to the department of Political Affairs, Peace and Security of the African Union; and
 - (c) possible means of support from the OPCW for an African Union Disarmament Fellowship Programme, once established.
89. The Secretariat continues to maintain contacts with the department of Political Affairs, Peace and Security of the African Union within the framework of advancing joint cooperation.

Contribution to a round-table event on responsible chemical management under the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and preventing the proliferation of chemical weapons in Botswana, online, 12 December 2024

90. The Secretariat staff participated in an online round-table event on responsible chemical management and preventing the proliferation of chemical weapons in Botswana, organised by the Stimson Center, which also addressed OPCW capacity-building support for the implementation of the Convention. The round table examined synergies between obligations under United Nations Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) and Sustainable Development Goals, with special reference to Botswana's chemical sector development and security needs. The virtual round table brought together national and international stakeholder representatives.

OPCW Africa Network

91. During the reporting period, the Secretariat fostered and moderated interactions on the OPCW Africa Network platform, which counts some 1,250 members among chemists and other Convention stakeholders in Africa. The Network continues to serve as an effective platform for the exchange of knowledge and the sharing of opportunities related to the OPCW and chemistry for peaceful purposes.

OPCW Africa Bulletin

92. The fourth edition of the OPCW Africa Bulletin was published by the Secretariat in January 2024. The Bulletin highlighted the progress achieved in the implementation of the Africa Programme in 2024, and, at the Secretariat's initiative and request, included articles received from the National Authorities of Algeria, Burundi, Morocco, Togo, Uganda, and Zambia. The Bulletin also featured updates received from alumni of capacity-building activities from Namibia and the United Republic of Tanzania. The feedback received on the Bulletin was very positive.

Maintaining the engagement of Africa Programme alumni

93. During the reporting period, the Secretariat continued to maintain communication with new alumni of capacity-building activities carried out under the Africa Programme, and to encourage them to update their National Authorities on their participation and to disseminate the knowledge gained in OPCW events.

Special projects for extrabudgetary funding under the Africa Programme

94. The activities conducted within the framework of the Africa Programme continued to be funded through the OPCW regular budget, with additional voluntary contributions utilised to further achieve the objectives of the Programme. In this regard, the Secretariat made significant progress in the delivery of the only remaining project of the first batch of seven special projects for extrabudgetary funding under the Programme.

95. In anticipation of the completion of the first batch of these special projects, the Secretariat has also developed a new set of extrabudgetary project proposals in 2024. Ten special projects, with a total estimated budget of nearly EUR 2.5 million, were designed. They address the three overarching areas of needs defined by African OPCW Member States for the Africa Programme:
- (a) strengthening control over the transfer of toxic chemicals on the continent;
 - (b) boosting response capacities against chemical incidents and attacks, including by non-State actors; and
 - (c) developing the capacities of African laboratories, including for the analysis of biotoxins.
96. As part of the resource mobilisation efforts for these special projects, on 5 July 2024 the Secretariat organised an information session for all OPCW Member States to announce these projects and call for voluntary contributions. During the reporting period, the Secretariat endeavoured to secure the necessary funding and support for these projects and initiated the implementation phase of the projects that received funding.

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