



NOTE BY THE TECHNICAL SECRETARIAT

**CALL FOR NOMINATIONS FOR A TRAINING COURSE FOR OPCW MEMBER STATES ON SAMPLING IN A HIGHLY CONTAMINATED ENVIRONMENT
CZĘSTOCHOWA, POLAND
18 – 22 MAY 2026**

1. The Technical Secretariat of the OPCW (the Secretariat) wishes to invite States Parties to nominate participants for an international training course on sampling in a highly contaminated environment, which will take place from 18 to 22 May 2026 in Częstochowa, Poland.
2. Jointly organised by the Government of Poland and the Secretariat, the course will provide expert knowledge and skills for up to 20 individuals responsible for conducting sampling of chemical warfare agents and toxic industrial chemicals in highly contaminated environments as the result of a chemical attack or an incident involving toxic chemicals.
3. OPCW Member States that do not yet have sampling capabilities are especially encouraged to nominate participants. Given the objectives of the course and its technical nature, applicants should have a solid technical background in chemistry and the management of hazardous chemical substances. Applicants are expected to be familiar with the principles of first response, including sampling and chemical emergency management. Ideally, participants should have completed the full training cycle for first responders held by the OPCW in any previous year.
4. Participants must also be qualified and experienced in using and wearing a self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA). Personal protective equipment (PPE) will be worn for several hours each day, and participants must therefore be physically fit and able to wear such equipment for extended periods and in varying weather conditions. Previous practical experience in military, first response, or civil protection is desirable.
5. All participants must have a solid command of English, both oral and written, as all activities during the course will be conducted in English and no interpretation services of any kind will be available.
6. Applications will be carefully screened on the basis of the criteria specified in paragraphs 3 to 5 above, and in line with the objectives of the course and the applicants' stated area of expertise. The Secretariat strongly encourages States Parties and National Authorities to seek, support, and endorse applications from qualified women candidates.



7. The Secretariat expects to be able to sponsor a limited number of participants from States Parties. For sponsored participants, it will cover the costs of travel, accommodation, airport transfers, meals, and medical insurance, and will provide a limited subsistence allowance to cover sundry expenses.
8. When making travel arrangements for sponsored participants, the Secretariat will seek the most economical options. In order for the Secretariat to keep costs as low as reasonably practicable, participants are expected to arrive no earlier than Sunday, 17 May 2026 and to depart no later than Saturday, 23 May 2026. The Secretariat will not cover expenses unrelated to the course or resulting from unauthorised changes to travel arrangements. Once the Secretariat has purchased their tickets, sponsored participants will be responsible for making sure they participate in the course. In the event of any unforeseen circumstances, participants should immediately contact the focal points responsible for the course (see paragraph 13 below for contact details).
9. Participants are requested to obtain all necessary visas, including transit visas, before travelling to Poland.
10. Further details regarding logistics and other course-related information will be communicated to all confirmed participants at a later date.
11. Interested applicants are invited to register their nominations online **no later than 20 March 2026**. The registration link is accessible via the OPCW event management system (<https://eventus.opcw.org>). Please note that all questions marked with an asterisk (*) in the online registration system must be answered in order for the nomination to be received, and for the candidate to be considered for this event. Endorsement by the candidates' respective National Authority is a prerequisite for consideration in the selection process, and must also be completed **no later than 20 March 2026**.
12. Only selected participants with an OPCW acceptance letter will be able to participate in this course. Candidates who have been selected to participate will be contacted no later than two weeks after the submission deadline.
13. The provisional programme for this training course is included as the Annex to this Note, and further details will be issued directly to the selected participants at a later date. Any questions may be addressed to the focal points for this training within the OPCW Assistance and Protection Branch of the International Cooperation and Assistance Division: Ms Toko Okazaki (Email: toko.okazaki@opcw.org) and Ms Fildza Setiabudi (Email: fildza.setiabudi@opcw.org).

Annex: Provisional Programme

Annex

**TRAINING COURSE FOR OPCW MEMBER STATES ON SAMPLING
IN A HIGHLY CONTAMINATED ENVIRONMENT
CZĘSTOCHOWA, POLAND
18 – 22 MAY 2026**

PROVISIONAL PROGRAMME

Time	Activity
Sunday, 17 May 2026	
	Arrival in Częstochowa, Poland (pickup at Katowice International Airport)
Monday, 18 May 2026	
Environmental Sampling – Theory	
08:00	Participants meet in front of the hotel reception
08:10 – 08:30	Welcome remarks
08:30 – 08:45	Photograph
08:45 – 09:20	Presentation: Overview of the OPCW and Article X of the Chemical Weapons Convention
09:20 – 10:00	Presentation: Overview of chemical warfare agents and toxic industrial chemicals
10:00 – 10:15	<i>Coffee / tea break</i>
10:15 – 11:00	Presentation: Overview of sampling – general rules, hazards, equipment, procedures, chain of custody (quality system documents, requirements, and procedures)
11:05 – 12:25	Presentation: Analysis procedures
12:30 – 13:30	<i>Lunch</i>
13:30 – 13:50	Presentation: Occupational health
13:55 – 14:40	Presentation: Environmental sampling, theory, practice, and mission preparedness
14:45 – 15:30	Presentation: Collection of liquid, air, and soil samples
15:30 – 15:45	<i>Coffee / tea break</i>
15:45 – 16:45	Presentation: Explosives as a sample (threats, sensitivity, toxicity).
16:50 – 17:50	Presentation: Taking samples in emergency situations (principles of preparing and introducing samples with analytical devices used directly in the field)
Tuesday, 19 May 2026	
Personal Protective Equipment	
08:30 – 09:30	Presentation: PPE overview
09:30 – 10:30	Refresher session: PPE
10:30 – 11:00	<i>Coffee / tea break</i>
11:00 – 12:30	Practical session: Operation of SCBAs and level A suits (respiratory protection, capabilities and limitations, inspection, donning and doffing, seal checking, normal use, emergency procedures)
12:30 – 13:30	<i>Lunch</i>

Time	Activity
13:30 – 15:30	Practical session: Group 1: Practical show-treats from chemical substances during sampling; group 2: Substance analysis (methods and handling)
16:00	Sightseeing of the Jasna Gora Monastery
18:30	Icebreaker dinner
Wednesday, 20 May 2026	
Decontamination	
08:30 – 10:30	Presentation: Decontamination overview
10:30 – 11:00	<i>Coffee / tea break</i>
11:00 – 12:30	Presentation: Sample, human, and hybrid decontamination
12:30 – 13:30	<i>Lunch</i>
13:30 – 15:00	Sample collection practice (in PPE)
15:00 – 15:30	<i>Coffee / tea break</i>
15:30 – 17:00	Sample collection practice (in PPE & SCBA, face piece off)
17:00 – 17:30	Summary of the day
Thursday, 21 May 2026	
Reconnaissance and Sampling	
08:00 – 09:00	Presentation: Reconnaissance procedures
09:05 – 09:50	Presentation: Chemical reconnaissance
10:05 – 12:30	Presentation and practice (individual): Identification of hazards and sampling of chemicals with PPE
12:30 – 13:30	<i>Lunch</i>
13:30 – 17:00	Presentation and practice (team): Identification of hazards and sampling of chemicals with PPE
Friday, 22 May 2026	
Mission Day (Reconnaissance, Sampling, Sample Decontamination)	
08:00 – 13:00	Practice and evaluation: Team fire scenario (small real fire exercise to evaluate team coordination, safety approach, and sample collection)
13:00 – 14:00	<i>Lunch</i>
14:00 – 15:00	Feedback from participants
15:00 – 15:15	<i>Coffee / tea break</i>
15:15 – 15:45	Discussion of results (OPCW–Central School of the State Fire Service)
15:45 – 16:00	Course evaluation (trainees return evaluation forms to OPCW officials)
16:00 – 16:20	Presentation of certificates
16:20 – 16:45	Closing remarks (OPCW–Central School of the State Fire Service)
Saturday, 23 May 2026	
	Departure