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25 March 2026
ENGLISH only

NOTE BY THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL

**TRAINING OPPORTUNITY: ASSER INSTITUTE PROGRAMME ON
DISARMAMENT AND NON-PROLIFERATION
OF WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION
THE HAGUE, THE NETHERLANDS
26 – 30 OCTOBER 2026**

1. On behalf of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), the Director-General wishes to inform States Parties that registration is now open for the annual Training Programme on Disarmament and Non-Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction, to be held from 26 to 30 October 2026 in The Hague, the Netherlands. This training programme is organised by the Asser Institute for International Law in collaboration with the OPCW.
2. The training programme is designed for early- to mid-career professionals and provides a comprehensive overview of the various international regimes applicable to weapons of mass destruction (WMD), striking a balance between the legal, scientific, diplomatic, and geopolitical issues relating to the broad spectrum of WMD in a contemporary world. The training programme will provide clear insights into the functioning of the four international WMD treaty organisations and illustrate the main challenges each of them currently faces.
3. Permanent Representations and their National Authorities are encouraged to promote the training programme among potentially interested groups. The programme is designed to benefit individuals working for government entities such as national export control bodies, National Authorities for the implementation of the Chemical and Biological Weapons Conventions, and national nuclear energy agencies. Professionals working for non-governmental organisations such as think tanks addressing concerns related to WMD and research centres in related disciplines are especially encouraged to register, as are newly arrived diplomats in The Hague.
4. States Parties are encouraged to consider sponsoring the participation of outstanding national applicants who have demonstrated an interest in disarmament and non-proliferation, and who can be expected to make a significant professional contribution in these areas.



5. There may be a limited number of scholarships for applicants who are nationals of and/or working in countries with low- and lower-middle-income economies (according to the classification of the World Bank).¹ For updates and details on how to apply for a scholarship, see the Asser Institute website or contact the Institute directly via email (educationtraining@asser.nl).
6. The specific objectives of the training programme are to provide participants with:
 - (a) hands-on knowledge of the diplomatic, legal, and technical aspects of disarmament and non-proliferation related to nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons;
 - (b) insight into the work of seasoned WMD professionals; and
 - (c) unique networking opportunities with speakers and participants from diverse backgrounds.
7. The training programme's interdisciplinary content is delivered by specialised academics from institutes in the Netherlands and abroad, together with experienced practitioners and officials from the Biological Weapons Convention Implementation Support Unit, the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization, the International Atomic Energy Agency, and the OPCW. The programme has been well received in the past thanks to its comprehensive scope and blend of academic and practical knowledge, which will feature again in 2026.
8. The provisional programme is attached as the Annex to this Note.
9. The Asser Institute is a not-for-profit, inter-university institute that focuses on the broad field of international law. It is based in The Hague and is partly supported with funding from the Government of the Netherlands. The OPCW collaborates with the Institute in designing the programme agenda, providing senior staff as speakers, mobilising the participation and support of other WMD-related international organisations, and promoting the participation of OPCW stakeholders.
10. Interested applicants can register for the training programme, and apply for a scholarship as appropriate, via the Asser Institute website (<https://www.asser.nl>).
11. Additional information about the training programme may be obtained from the Asser Institute via email (educationtraining@asser.nl).

Annex: Provisional Programme

¹ <https://datahelpdesk.worldbank.org/knowledgebase/articles/906519>.

Annex

**ASSER INSTITUTE PROGRAMME ON DISARMAMENT AND
NON-PROLIFERATION OF WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION
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PROVISIONAL PROGRAMME**Monday, 26 October 2026****International arms control law and nuclear weapons**

09:30 – 10:00	<i>Registration</i>
10:00 – 10:45	Opening and round of introductions
10:45 – 11:00	<i>Coffee/tea break</i>
11:00 – 12:30	International arms control law
12:30 – 13:30	<i>Lunch</i>
13:30 – 15:00	The nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament treaties
15:00 – 15:30	<i>Coffee/tea break</i>
15:30 – 17:00	The future of nuclear arms control and strategic stability
18:30	<i>Opening dinner</i>

Tuesday, 27 October 2026**Nuclear weapons and field visit**

09:00 – 10:30	Nuclear safeguards
10:30 – 10:45	<i>Coffee/tea break</i>
10:45 – 12:15	Weapons of mass destruction and emerging technologies
12:15 – 13:15	<i>Lunch and transfer to the Delft University of Technology (TU-Delft) Nuclear Research Reactor</i>
13:15 – 17:00	Field visit: TU-Delft Nuclear Research Reactor
17:00 – 18:00	<i>Transfer from the TU-Delft Nuclear Research Reactor to the Asser Institute</i>

Wednesday, 28 October 2026**Biological weapons**

09:00 – 10:00	Export control regimes
10:00 – 10:10	<i>Coffee/tea break</i>
10:10 – 11:30	Simulation exercise on export controls
11:30 – 11:45	<i>Coffee/tea break</i>
11:45 – 13:15	Banning the tests: The international legal regime for nuclear testing
13:15 – 14:00	<i>Lunch</i>
14:00 – 15:30	The Biological Weapons Convention
15:30 – 16:00	<i>Coffee/tea break</i>
16:00 – 17:30	Unsubstantiated use of chemical and biological weapons

Thursday, 29 October 2026**Chemical weapons and field visit**

09:00 – 09:30	<i>Transfer to the OPCW Main Building</i>
09:30 – 10:00	Welcome activity at the OPCW Main Building
10:00 – 11:00	The OPCW and the Chemical Weapons Convention
11:00 – 11:15	<i>Coffee/tea break</i>
11:15 – 12:00	The end of destruction of all declared chemical weapons stockpiles
12:00 – 12:45	National implementation of the Convention: Challenges and opportunities
12:45 – 13:30	<i>Lunch</i>
13:30 – 14:15	Chemical terrorism: Threat and response
14:15 – 15:00	Scientific and technological developments: Biological and chemical disarmament in a technologically evolving world
15:00 – 15:30	<i>Transfer to the OPCW Centre for Chemistry and Technology (ChemTech Centre)</i>
15:30 – 16:30	Guided tour of the ChemTech Centre
16:30 – 17:00	<i>Transfer from the ChemTech Centre to the Asser Institute</i>

Friday, 30 October 2026**Current challenges**

09:30 – 11:00	Non-proliferation case study: The Democratic People's Republic of Korea nuclear issue
11:00 – 11:30	<i>Coffee/tea break</i>
11:30 – 13:00	Middle East case study
13:00 – 14:00	Programme evaluation/lunch
14:00 – 15:00	Panel discussion: "Fake news" and fact-finding – Disinformation about WMD
15:00 – 16:30	<i>Closing reception</i>