OPCW **Conference of the States Parties**

First Session C-I/DEC.60
Agenda item 51 22 May 1997
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DECISION

PROFICIENCY TESTING LEADING TO CERTIFICATION OF DESIGNATED LABORATORIES

The Conference

Recalling that the Commission, in its PC-IX/11, paragraph 7.3, adopted the document "Proficiency Testing Leading to Certification of Designated Laboratories",

Bearing in mind that the Commission recommended in paragraph 54.9 of its Final Report that the Conference adopt the above mentioned document "Proficiency Testing Leading to Certification of Designated Laboratories",

Hereby:

1. **Adopts** the "Proficiency Testing Leading to Certification of Designated Laboratories", annexed hereto.

Annex

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Annex

PROFICIENCY TESTING LEADING TO CERTIFICATION OF "DESIGNATED LABORATORIES"

1. Tests will be open to all laboratories in Member States seeking to become a designated laboratory. The criteria for laboratories to be designated by the Organisation adopted by the Commission at its Sixth Session (PC-VI/22, paragraph 6.4) stipulate that such laboratories should:

   (a) have established an internationally recognised quality assurance system;

   (b) have obtained accreditation by an internationally recognised accreditation body for tasks for which they are seeking designation; and

   (c) regularly participate and perform successfully in inter-laboratory proficiency tests.

2. Laboratories may opt to participate either on a self-assessment basis or be actively seeking designation. Prior to each test participating laboratories will be asked on which basis they wish to participate.

3. In accordance with the Commission's 1995 Budget (Annex to PC-VIII/A/WP.7) the cost of participation, to include sample analysis, as well as, where applicable, the costs of sample preparation and evaluation of test results, will be borne by the participating laboratory or its Member State. The Secretariat may be able to offer some financial assistance in this regard in 1995, but it will be extremely limited. Test samples preparation and evaluation of test results will be the responsibility of the Secretariat, but may either be contracted out or provided by a Member State on a cost-free basis. If the sample preparation and the evaluation of test results are contracted out or are provided by a Member State, the relationship between the participating laboratories and the laboratories preparing samples and carrying out the evaluation of results should be open and transparent.

4. Proficiency testing evaluation will be carried out on the basis of the criteria to be developed and agreed to by the Expert Group on Inspection Procedures. These criteria will be reviewed based on the results of the first proficiency test. It will be the objective of the Secretariat, as is mentioned in the Commission's 1995 Budget (paragraph 3.4.7 of the Annex to PC-VIII/A/WP.7), to carry out proficiency testing on a quarterly basis during 1995. However, the number of proficiency tests may subsequently decrease, depending on the above-mentioned criteria.
5. The first of these tests will be a "Trial Proficiency Test" to:

   (a) evaluate the process;

(b) provide a means for familiarising new participants with the Commission's requirements;

(c) begin the process of establishing minimum performance criteria for "designated laboratories"; and

(d) give participants an opportunity for self-evaluation.

6. A possible model for proficiency testing, including the trial proficiency test, is:

(a) the Secretariat announces the test schedule for the following quarter;

(b) the Secretariat has samples prepared:

(c) coded samples are distributed to participating laboratories by registered carrier with evidence of receipt;

(d) there will be two options for the analysis period:

(i) for laboratories seeking designation, 2 weeks are allowed for analysis and final reporting of the results, beginning from the date of the receipt of samples; or

(ii) for laboratories participating on a self-assessment basis, 4 weeks for analysis and initial report plus an additional 2 weeks for the final reporting of results, beginning from the agreed date for the commencement of analysis;

(e) sample analysis by technique selected by the participant or from the Recommended Operating Procedures for Sampling and Analysis in the Verification of Chemical Disarmament (1994 Edition of the "Finnish Blue Books") may be used at participants' discretion;

(f) the results are reported to the Secretariat, and

(g) the results are analysed by the Secretariat. For laboratories seeking designation the results will be circulated to all Member States. Laboratories opting to participate on a self-assessment basis will be provided with their results in confidence.

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