

**ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN****PROTECTION AND ASSISTANCE (ARTICLE X)**

1. As a consequence of the terrible use of chemical weapons by the former Iraqi regime against the Islamic Republic of Iran, the need to establish a mechanism to protect States Parties against such weapons was prevailing during negotiations of the Chemical Weapons Convention in the Conference on Disarmament. It soon turned out to be an underlying motivation that encouraged States Parties to join the Convention.
2. Article X has a dynamic nature that enables the Organisation to adjust itself to new challenges in case of use, or threat of use, of chemical weapons against States Parties. We acknowledge and support the activities conducted by the Technical Secretariat within the context of Article X of the Convention. Nonetheless, the solid basis for delivery of assistance to the States Parties is still missing and the state of readiness for the fulfilment of the mandate of the Secretariat, as required by Article X, has yet to be achieved—although the Secretariat’s approach to establish regional assistance and protection centres is on the right track in this regard.
3. The Islamic Republic of Iran believes that well organised efforts with sufficient resources for implementation of the provisions of Article X and achievement of a reliable status of readiness of the Organisation for responding to requests for assistance, especially with regard to the needs of victims of chemical weapons, are essential for realisation of the objects and purposes of the Convention. Full implementation of this article can only be achieved through maintaining the highest possible standards of coordination and readiness for delivery of assistance by the Organisation as well as States Parties.
4. Paragraph 11 of Article X emphasises the provision of assistance to the victims of chemical weapons in order to meet their initial needs after the use of chemical weapons. Fortunately after five years of deliberations and consultations on this issue, the Sixteenth Session of the Conference of the States Parties adopted a decision on the establishment of the “International Support Network for Victims of Chemical Weapons and its voluntary trust fund”. While the Islamic Republic of Iran welcomes this decision we request that practical steps be taken by the Secretariat to activate and operate the Network. In this regard the Islamic Republic of Iran contributed EUR 15,000 to the voluntary trust fund at the first stage, and encourages the other States Parties to contribute to it for enhancing the humanitarian aims of the Network.



5. Furthermore, in accordance with Paragraph 11 of Article X of the Convention, which stipulates that Director-General shall take emergency measures of assistance using the resources that the Conference has placed at his disposal, the Third Review Conference should adopt a mandate for the Organisation to propose contingency funds within the annual budget of the Organisation to support such emergency measures of assistance.
6. The latest report presented by the Director-General of the OPCW on the implementation of Article X (EC-67/DG.6, dated 20 January 2012/Annex.4) indicates that only two agreements have been concluded under Paragraph 7 of Article X (Islamic Republic of Iran and Peru). The developed States Parties to the Convention are expected to expand and diversify their offers of assistance and strengthen their commitments in this regard, in particular by concluding agreements with the Organisation.
7. An assessment of the needs of the States Parties and a clear definition for the ideal state of readiness for delivery of assistance, with established indicators for monitoring the situation, is an essential prerequisite for the full implementation of Article X of the Convention. While the Islamic Republic of Iran reaffirms the importance of Article X of the Convention, and of the activities of the OPCW to maintain and develop a state of readiness to provide timely, adequate, and effective assistance to the States Parties in the event of use or threat of use of chemical weapons, it encourages the Technical Secretariat to build on the existing undertakings. Meanwhile, the Review Conference should review the current situation and emphasise recommendations on appropriate ways and means to ensure full implementation of this very important provision of the Convention.
8. We encourage all States Parties to fully implement their obligations under Article X which stresses the need for all States Parties, and in particular those in a position to do so, to contribute to the Voluntary Fund for Assistance on a regular basis, to ensure the ability of the Technical Secretariat to respond positively to the increasing demand of States Parties for assistance, particularly to the victims of chemical weapons.