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NOTE BY THE TECHNICAL SECRETARIAT

TABLE-TOP EXERCISE ON THE PREPAREDNESS OF STATES PARTIES TO PREVENT TERRORIST ATTACKS INVOLVING CHEMICALS POLAND, 13 AND 14 SEPTEMBER 2010

1. On behalf of the Government of Poland and the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), the Technical Secretariat (hereinafter “the Secretariat”) wishes to inform States Parties on the preparations for the upcoming table-top exercise on the preparedness of States Parties to prevent terrorist attacks involving chemicals, which will take place on 13 and 14 September 2010, in Warsaw, Poland.
2. The project is funded by the European Union (EU) Council Decision 2009 on support for OPCW activities in the framework of the implementation of the EU Strategy against Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction (2009/569/CFSP, dated 27 July 2009).

Background

3. The international community faces the increased danger of the possible use of chemical, biological, radiological, or nuclear (CBRN) weapons or materials by terrorists. The proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and their means of delivery is also a growing threat to international peace and security.
4. Experience has shown that no country or industry is immune to terrorism, and that no country or industry can effectively deal with terrorism alone. Therefore, cooperation between all the related stakeholders, including governments, industries, scientific institutions, and international partners, with an increased role played by the industries providing protective solutions and know-how, is an important element in the efforts to address this global threat.
5. The Second Special Session of the Conference of the States Parties to Review the Operation of the Chemical Weapons Convention (hereinafter “the Second Review Conference”) “noted with concern that, along with the continued threat of the possible use of chemical weapons by States under any circumstances, the international community also faces the increased danger of the use of chemical weapons by terrorists or other non-state actors” (RC-2/4, dated 18 April 2008).
6. The Second Review Conference also reaffirmed concerns expressed at the First Special Session of the Conference of the States Parties to Review the Operation of the

Chemical Weapons Convention that chemical facilities may become subject to attacks or other incidents that could lead to the release or theft of toxic chemicals. The Second Review Conference welcomed the fact that some States Parties had taken measures to minimise such risks and encouraged States Parties to exchange experiences and discuss related issues (paragraph 9.94 of RC-2/4).

7. United Nations General Assembly resolution 60/288 (2006) on the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy has given concrete shape to a multilateral and coordinated response to the global threat of terrorism. The resolution spells out clearly and systematically which areas require and lend themselves to multilateral action. In this context it encourages “the International Atomic Energy Agency and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons to continue their efforts, within their respective mandates, in helping States to build capacity to prevent terrorists from accessing nuclear, chemical or radiological materials, to ensure security at related facilities and to respond effectively in the event of an attack using such materials”.
8. United Nations Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) establishes an obligation for all United Nations Member States to adopt effective and appropriate legal and administrative measures to prevent non-State actors from gaining access to and engaging in activities involving nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons.
9. The yearly United Nations General Assembly resolution entitled “Implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction” states that “the full and effective implementation of all provisions of the Convention, including those on national implementation (article VII) and assistance and protection (article X), constitutes an important contribution to the efforts of the United Nations in the global fight against terrorism in all its form and manifestations” (General Assembly resolution 64/46 (2010)).
10. The Secretariat continues to encourage States Parties to minimise risks linked to attacks or other incidents at chemical facilities that could lead to the release or theft of toxic chemicals. The Secretariat has begun work on developing a strategy on how the OPCW could contribute to enhancing the security of chemical facilities. This strategy envisages developing the role of the OPCW as a platform of support for global cooperation in lessening the chemical threat by promoting awareness of chemical-security best practices and fostering cooperation between chemical professionals.
11. The Secretariat continues to develop relations and partnerships, as appropriate, with relevant regional and international organisations, including international organisations related to chemical safety, chemical industry associations, and the private sector and civil society, in order to promote awareness of the objectives and purposes of the Convention.

Table-top exercise

12. The table-top exercise is an element of Project VII of the EU Council Decision 2009 of 27 July 2009 on the preparedness of States Parties to prevent and respond to attacks involving chemicals, and aims to contribute to the development of the capacities of national industry to reduce the risks of a terrorist attack with the use of toxic industrial

chemicals. This will include preventing terrorist access to materials, equipment, and knowledge that could be used in the development and production of chemical weapons.

13. The table-top exercise, which will be jointly organised by the Government of Poland and the Secretariat, will examine cross-government decision making, information exchange, and conditions to be met to offer assistance from the relevant national and international organisations to prevent terrorist attacks against chemical plants.
14. A terrorist attack at a chemical plant with the release of toxic chemicals will be the basic scenario of the table-top exercise. The main scenario provides for the destruction of a chlorine container at the chemical plant as a result of the terrorist attack, and 20 tonnes of chlorine evaporates instantaneously as a result of the explosion.
15. The specific purposes of the table-top exercise are to assist national authorities, governmental officials, managers of chemical plants, and other agencies of the States Parties in assessing the adequacy of existing plans, policies, and procedures to prevent terrorist attacks on chemical plants, and exercising their decision-making processes, including information exchange.
16. The programme of the table-top exercise will include relevant presentations on the available experience and expertise in the countries of the region and relevant international organisations that can be offered to the States Parties, with the aim to improve safety and security standards in the States Parties that will be attending the exercise. Practical training and live presentations related to the prevention of terrorist acts with the use of toxic chemicals could also be conducted.
17. The table-top exercise will also offer a platform for discussion of the practical issues relating to the contributions that relevant national institutions and industries can make towards the achievement of the non-proliferation of WMD and the prevention of terrorism. The organisers are considering conducting a series of lectures, consultations, and meetings, including a presentation on chemical improvised devices.
18. The table-top exercise should assist in the development of a model based on the same main scenario whereby similar exercises can be conducted in other regions.

Results to be achieved

19. The expected results of the table-top exercise are:
 - (a) increased promotion of chemical safety and security at chemical plants and in the transportation of chemicals;
 - (b) increased capacity of national authorities, governmental officials, managers of chemical plants, and other agencies of the States Parties to prevent terrorist acts with the use of toxic chemicals and to reduce the risk of terrorist access to materials, equipment, and knowledge that could be used in terrorist attacks on chemical plants; and
 - (c) increased capacity of national authorities, governmental officials, managers of chemical plants, and other agencies of the States Parties to exchange information on the prevention of terrorist attacks on chemical plants.

20. Progress towards the achievement of the objectives, and the results, will be verified, inter alia, through the information included in the final report and follow-up assessment of the table-top exercise and feedback from stakeholders. All this information will be included in the database maintained by the Secretariat and may be checked against the existing baseline information for comparison purposes.

Participation, organisation, and preparations

21. The table-top exercise is primarily aimed at the countries of Eastern Europe, Central Asia, and the Caucasus, as well as the relevant international organisations. Participation in the exercise is open to representatives of all interested governments and relevant international organisations.
22. The table-top exercise aims to bring together representatives from the industry, governments, international organisations, national agencies, academia, and other institutions that work in different fields, to build a platform for cooperation and exchanges, and the presentation of modern solutions and proposals against terrorism with WMD.
23. It is envisaged that the participants and speakers will be familiar with matters of industrial safety and security, CBRN counter-terrorism, and national emergency response.
24. Participants from the countries of the region will be encouraged to make presentations on their national legal, administrative, and law-enforcement measures to prevent the misuse of toxic chemicals.
25. The main component of the table-top exercise will be conducted in English. All participants are therefore expected to have a good working knowledge of this language, both written and oral.

Preparatory meeting for the exercise

26. A preparatory meeting for the table-top exercise is scheduled to take place at the OPCW headquarters on 24 and 25 June 2010 (prior to the Sixty-First Session of the Executive Council).
27. The meeting will aim to define the final scenario and roles of the participants (from governments and related international organisations), and the proposed activities. The meeting will also define legal, organisational, and logistic issues linked to the participation of an international component in the table-top exercise, and will decide on the scope of activities and rules of engagement between national and international targeted groups and stakeholders.

Sponsorship and invitations

28. The Secretariat expects to be able to sponsor the participation of a limited number of participants in the table-top exercise. For sponsored participants, the Secretariat will cover the costs of travel and medical insurance, and will provide a daily subsistence allowance to cover sundry expenses.
29. Regarding diversity balance, the table-top exercise will involve States Parties whose economies are developing or in transition, but will also include other States Parties from developed countries as observers. In order to increase the participation of female

candidates in the table-top exercise, the invitation Note will strongly encourage applications from qualified female candidates.

30. Further details regarding the venue of the table-top exercise, accommodation, and sponsorship will be included in the invitation Note to be issued separately at a later date.

Coordination and contact information

31. The Office of Special Projects (OSP) is responsible for coordinating with all relevant units of the Secretariat to enhance the contribution of the OPCW to global anti-terrorism efforts and global efforts towards disarmament and non-proliferation of WMD. The OSP also maintains contacts and exchanges with relevant international, regional, and subregional organisations in the field of counter-terrorism.
32. Mr Krzysztof Paturej, Director of Special Projects at the OPCW, will be responsible for the overall coordination of the Secretariat's preparations and conduct of the table-top exercise (telephone: +31 (0)70 416 3077; e-mail: paturej@opcw.org). Additional information may be obtained from the OSP. The contact persons are Mr Irakli Beridze, Special Projects Officer, who can be reached at +31 (0)70 416 3073, e-mail: iberidze@opcw.org, and Ms Nadezda Malyutina, Senior Secretary, who can be reached at +31 (0)70 416 3492, e-mail: nmalyutina@opcw.org.
33. The preparations for the table-top exercise, including its planning and conduct, are being co-ordinated by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Polish National Authority) on behalf of Poland. Further information can be obtained from the following contact persons from the official authorities of Poland:

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