



**NOTE BY THE TECHNICAL SECRETARIAT**

**UPDATE ON EVENTS ORGANISED BY THE TECHNICAL SECRETARIAT IN THE  
AREA OF INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AND ASSISTANCE  
JANUARY TO APRIL 2017**

**INTRODUCTION**

1. The aim of this Note is to provide the Members States of the OPCW with information on a four-monthly basis regarding the capacity-building activities delivered by the Technical Secretariat (hereinafter “the Secretariat”) through its international cooperation and assistance programmes. These programmes support Members States’ efforts to effectively implement the Chemical Weapons Convention (hereinafter “the Convention”), and in particular Articles VII, X and XI thereof. This Note covers the period from 1 January to 30 April 2017.

**IMPLEMENTATION SUPPORT – ARTICLE VII**

**Workshop for legal drafters and National Authority representatives from States Parties in the Caribbean and Central America, Bridgetown, Barbados, 21 to 24 March 2017**

2. The workshop was intended for representatives of relevant institutions in States Parties in the Caribbean and Central America that have yet to adopt their implementing legislation in accordance with Article VII of the Convention (Antigua and Barbuda, the Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, the Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Suriname). The main objective of the workshop was to provide tailor-made assistance to these countries in developing the initial draft of their national implementing legislation. The workshop was also attended by representatives of other States Parties from the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States (GRULAC), the United States of America, and the Caribbean Community (CARICOM).
3. During the workshop, the participants enhanced their understanding of the thematic areas and issues under the Convention and produced draft implementing legislation covering all initial measures, which could be considered for adoption by their relevant authorities in order to give full force and effect to the Convention. The participants also developed and presented action plans containing activities that they would undertake to move the adoption process forward within indicative timelines.



4. The workshop was attended by 30 participants from nine States Parties in the Caribbean and Central America. Funding was provided through a voluntary contribution from the European Union (EU).

**Basic course for personnel of National Authorities involved in the implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention, The Hague, the Netherlands, 3 to 7 April 2017**

5. This course was intended primarily for new personnel of National Authorities (NAs) who are responsible for the specific tasks involved in implementing the Convention at the national level, and who do not have previous experience in this area, in the context of the rotation and mobility of NA staff. The programme of the course included an overview of the Convention, its obligations and requirements for implementation, and the responsibilities of NAs in this regard. The specific objective of the course was to support States Parties' efforts to fulfil the aims set out in the plan of action for the implementation of obligations under Article VII of the Convention.
6. The participants gained the necessary skills and knowledge to effectively discharge their responsibilities, including drafting annual reports on implementing legislation, national protection programmes, annual submissions of declarations, and the receiving and coordinating of inspections. The participants also gained an understanding of the significance of stronger linkages and coordination among the relevant national stakeholders in their respective countries.
7. The course was attended by 47 participants representing 44 States Parties. Funding for the course was provided from the regular budget.

**International conference on chemical disarmament and security: The OPCW's contributions to global peace and security, Doha, Qatar, 10 and 11 April 2017**

8. The conference gathered senior government policymakers, representatives of international and regional organisations, industry associations, academia, and experts from non-governmental organisations. It was organised in the context of the celebration of the Convention and the Twentieth Anniversary of the OPCW.
9. The conference was aimed at creating a forum for the discussion of the national and international community's experiences and achievements to date in chemical disarmament and security, and of the contributions of the OPCW in this regard.
10. Participating experts and officials discussed relevant issues regarding the Convention as it relates to the international, regional, and national regulatory mechanisms that aim to establish controls as a measure against the proliferation of chemical weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. They also discussed the ongoing and planned initiatives for the security of chemical facilities and the transport of chemicals to eliminate or reduce risks.
11. The conference highlighted the contributions and achievements of the OPCW since its establishment 20 years ago in the areas of chemical disarmament and international security. It also gave the participants an opportunity to discuss future directions for the OPCW and other relevant actors, including other international and regional organisations, governments, and industry and civil society. Participants also discussed

the current approaches to chemical security and the current and emerging trends that need to be addressed by the Organisation and the international community as a whole.

12. Qatar also organised an exhibition highlighting the milestones and achievements of the OPCW throughout its 20-year history, as well as the work of the Qatari National Committee for the Prohibition of Weapons and the Doha Regional Centre for Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear Training.
13. The course was attended by 80 participants from 40 States Parties, including local participants. Funding for the course was provided through a voluntary contribution from Qatar.

**Influential Visitors Programme for Namibia, The Hague, the Netherlands, 19 to 21 April 2017**

14. The Influential Visitors Programme is intended mainly for senior officials of States Parties whose draft implementing legislation has already been considered by the relevant ministries and stakeholders in their countries, but which require political momentum in order to advance the passage of such legislation within their respective national systems. The Programme was successfully launched in 2015 for Uganda and resulted in adoption of the national legislation by the Ugandan Parliament.
15. The delegation of Namibia included a member of Parliament, the Permanent Secretary and Chief of the Legislative Drafting Committee of the Ministry of Justice, as well as senior officials from the Ministry of Industrialisation, Trade and Small and Medium-Sized Enterprise Development, and the Ministry of International Relations and Cooperation.
16. The programme of the visit included meetings with the Director-General, Ambassador Ahmet Üzümcü, and other senior officials of the OPCW. The Secretariat also delivered presentations which gave the Namibian delegation an overview of the provisions of the Convention and the status of its implementation, and of ongoing efforts to address emerging threats and to promote its universality. The programme also comprised a visit to the OPCW Laboratory and Equipment Store in Rijswijk.
17. The programme, which was funded from the regular budget, enabled the delegates to gain a better understanding of the Convention and the importance of the early adoption of Convention implementing legislation for the effective implementation of the Convention at the national level. The Namibian delegation prepared and reviewed an action plan for the adoption of its draft implementing legislation, which is expected by the end of 2017.

**ASSISTANCE AND PROTECTION – ARTICLE X**

**Regional basic course on emergency response to chemical incidents, Colombo, Sri Lanka, 6 to 10 February 2017**

18. The course was intended for first responders in States Parties from Asia. Its main objective was to provide participants with training on the basic principles of chemical defence and appropriate response and countermeasures in the event of incidents involving chemical warfare agents and toxic industrial chemicals, under Article X of

the Convention. The course marked the opening of a regional training cycle for the Asia region, which will be continued in China with an advanced course in July 2017.

19. The course equipped participants with knowledge and skills in the use of protective equipment, the types and characteristics of chemical warfare agents, detection and decontamination techniques, as well as first aid for chemical casualties. For this purpose, participants had the opportunity to practise skills while wearing chemical protective equipment, to use different types of detection and monitoring equipment, and to conduct exercises regarding rescue and first aid for chemical casualties.
20. The course was attended by 37 participants from 15 States Parties in Asia. The sponsored participants will continue their training cycle with the upcoming advanced course in China in July 2017. The course was co-funded using resources from the regular budget and a voluntary contribution from the EU.

**Fifth Swiss advanced course on assistance and protection against chemical weapons, Stans, Switzerland, 20 to 24 February 2017**

21. This course was intended for first responders from States Parties from different regions who had passed the basic training course previously provided by the Swiss Army. It aimed at providing advanced training under Article X of the Convention.
22. The participants gained knowledge and skills on the use of protective equipment, types and characteristics of chemical warfare agents, detection and decontamination techniques, as well as first aid to chemical casualties. They had an opportunity to exercise previously acquired skills extensively in all areas of knowledge relevant to chemical defence.
23. The course was attended by 20 participants from 18 States Parties who are now eligible to attend the exercise and laboratory training courses also offered by Switzerland. Funding for the course was provided from the regular budget.

**First regional advanced assistance and protection course for police first responders from States Parties from the GRULAC region, Bogotá, Colombia, 3 to 7 April 2017**

24. This course was piloted for the first time in the GRULAC region, building on the success achieved in the course modality in Asia. It was intended mainly for first responders from the police and law enforcement bodies, and aimed at equipping the participants with skills and knowledge in the principles of chemical defence and appropriate responses and countermeasures in the event of incidents involving chemical warfare agents and toxic industrial chemicals. The course also aimed at facilitating networking and information exchange among the participants, with a view to integrating them into the growing network of regional first responders trained by the OPCW, as a contribution to the enhancement of Article X in the GRULAC region.
25. The participants gained relevant skills and knowledge and tools and practical training in the types and characteristics of chemical warfare agents, the use of protective equipment, detection and decontamination techniques, as well as first aid to chemical casualties, with a particular emphasis on sampling and forensic procedures.

26. The course was attended by 26 participants from 14 States Parties from the GRULAC region. Funding for the course was provided from the regular budget.

**Assistance and protection project for Members States of the Economic Community of West African States – Burkina Faso national workshop on the development of national protection programmes, Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, 10 to 13 April 2017**

27. This workshop was intended for the key stakeholders in Burkina Faso involved in assistance and protection against chemical threats. It aimed at supporting the country's efforts to build its capacity to respond to chemical threats.
28. The workshop enabled participants to understand the specific impediments to chemical threat awareness in Burkina Faso, which obstruct the country's ability to develop emergency plans in response to those threats. In addition, participants were able to identify practical, inexpensive strategies for improving threat awareness, using existing data and low-cost resources. The workshop concluded with the drafting of an achievable, accountable action plan to resolve the issues identified in the preliminary needs assessment and to further support the development of a tailored national protection programme.
29. The event was attended by more than 30 local participants from Burkina Faso representing more than 15 government agencies and ministries. With the exception of staff travel, which was covered by the regular budget, this workshop was funded entirely by the Government of Burkina Faso.

**INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION – ARTICLE XI**

**Seminar on the Chemical Weapons Convention and chemical safety and security management for Member States of the OPCW in the Asia Region, Doha, Qatar, 21 to 23 February 2017**

30. This programme was intended for Asian States Parties' governmental representatives, chemical industry associations, and managers involved in chemical safety and security and in the Responsible Care® programme. The seminar was especially designed to enhance knowledge in the area of qualitative and quantitative safety and security risk assessment and chemical threat reduction and mitigation strategies, as well as to build awareness of regional issues regarding implementation of the Convention.
31. The participants gained a better understanding and knowledge about risk management in terms of chemical safety and security. They became aware of the importance of developing a qualitative risk management plan for small and medium-sized chemical industries to prevent the misuse of toxic chemicals.
32. The event was attended by 60 participants from 19 Asian States Parties. Funding was provided through a voluntary contribution from Qatar.

**Workshop on needs assessment and best practices on chemical safety and security management for the African Region, 27 February to 1 March 2017, Yaoundé, Cameroon**

33. The workshop was intended for experts from government agencies, chemical industry, academia, and relevant stakeholders in the field of chemical safety and security management in the Africa region. It was the second event in a series, following the first held in Latvia in 2016. The workshop was aimed at providing a platform for representatives of OPCW Member States in Africa to share needs, experiences, lessons learned, and best practices related to chemical safety and security management that have been adopted in their respective countries, in order to promote knowledge exchange and the development of relevant mechanisms, including on technical and legislative aspects.
34. Participants exchanged views and ideas on the relevant subjects. The outcomes of the participants' discussions were drafted in a relevant addendum report on the assessment of needs and best practices in chemical safety and security management in the Africa region.
35. The workshop was attended by 30 participants from 17 African States Parties. Funding for the workshop was provided from the regular budget.

**Workshop on needs assessment and best practices on integrated chemical management, Jakarta, Indonesia, 20 to 22 March 2017**

36. The workshop was intended for experts from States Parties whose economies are developing or in transition, including experts from government agencies, chemical industry, academia, and relevant stakeholders in the field of integrated chemicals management. It aimed at raising awareness and promoting the exchange of views and knowledge on the different aspects of integrated chemicals management.
37. The outcomes of the participants' discussions were drafted in a relevant report reflecting the ideas and views presented.
38. The workshop was attended by 44 Participants from 22 States Parties. Funding was provided from the regular budget.

**Course for Member States in the Africa Region on analytical skills development at the Finnish Institute for Verification of the Chemical Weapons Convention (VERIFIN), Helsinki, Finland, 21 to 31 March 2017**

39. This analytical skills development course was intended for laboratory experts from African States Parties, and aimed at assisting qualified personnel (analytical chemists) from Africa in acquiring the necessary analytical skills related to the implementation of the Convention. The course equipped the participants with knowledge and skills in the analysis of Convention-related chemicals using gas chromatography/mass spectrometry, and in equipment maintenance and sample collection and storage.
40. The course was attended by 17 participants from 13 African Member States. Funding was provided through a voluntary contribution from the EU.

**Seminar on chemical safety and security management for Member States of the OPCW in Africa, Kampala, Uganda, 27 to 29 March 2017**

41. This seminar was intended for representatives of government, chemical industry associations, and managers involved in chemical industry safety and security and in the Responsible Care® programme. The seminar focused on safety and security management in Africa, Responsible Care®, chemical threat reduction and vulnerability assessments, and qualitative and quantitative safety and security risk assessments. The seminar enabled participants to gain a better understanding and increase their awareness on different aspects related to chemical safety and security, such as handling, transport, storage, and disposal of chemicals. It also increased participants' awareness of regional issues concerning the implementation of the Convention and of the need for a common regional approach on supply chain management, and to develop a layer of protection to prevent the misuse of chemicals and minimise transfer discrepancies between countries.
42. The seminar was attended by 18 participants from 15 African States Parties. Funding was provided through a voluntary contribution from the EU.

**Two parallel annual courses on loss prevention and safety promotion in the chemical process industries, for Member States in Africa and Member States in the Asia and GRULAC regions, Wuppertal, Germany, 3 to 7 April 2017**

43. These courses were designed for professionals in industry, academia, and governmental agencies working on aspects of chemical safety in States Parties in the above-mentioned regions. The programme aimed at providing and improving the knowledge of participants in sustainable safety management as it relates to the chemical industry, including risk evaluation methods (both operational and environmental), emergency planning, and risk and disaster communication.
44. The participants gained the necessary skills to fulfil their responsibilities and to develop sustainable safety management in the chemical industry, and committed to contribute to the development of a culture of safety in their working environments. They joined the network of OPCW course alumni in order to follow up on their participation and post-course activities.
45. The courses were attended by 12 participants from Africa and 11 participants from the Asia and GRULAC regions. Funding was provided through a voluntary contribution from the Federal Government of Germany.

**Course for Member States in the GRULAC region on chemical safety and security management in laboratories, Buenos Aires, Argentina, 24 to 28 April 2017**

46. The course was intended for personnel working in the application of occupational safety measures in chemical laboratories in Member States of the GRULAC region. It aimed at providing participants with knowledge about policy and practical aspects of safety and security management in chemical laboratories. Participants improved their knowledge in the relevant areas and expressed their commitment to disseminate this knowledge in their institutions and to promote the adoption of better and safer practices in chemical laboratories.

47. The course was attended by 44 participants from 12 Member States in the GRULAC region. Funding was provided from the regular budget.

**Fellowship programme**

48. During the reporting period, two fellowships were completed (Philippines–Japan and Brazil–Finland) and another three began and are ongoing (Cameroon–France, Nigeria–South Africa, and Uganda–Sweden).

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