



NOTE BY THE TECHNICAL SECRETARIAT

**UPDATE ON EVENTS ORGANISED BY THE TECHNICAL SECRETARIAT IN THE
AREA OF INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AND ASSISTANCE
SEPTEMBER – DECEMBER 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”), in particular Articles VII, X and XI thereof. This Note covers the period from 1 September to 31 December 2017.

IMPLEMENTATION SUPPORT – ARTICLE VII

Stakeholder forums on the adoption of national implementing legislation

2. The stakeholder forums were intended for States Parties that have yet to adopt Convention implementing legislation, those that have successfully adopted such legislation, as well as representatives from relevant international and regional organisations. The aim was to share information and knowledge about effective national implementation of the Convention. During the period under review, three stakeholder forums were held, as follows:
 - (a) 12 to 14 September 2017 in Yaoundé, Cameroon, for States Parties in Africa. Forty-five participants from 12 States Parties attended;
 - (b) 26 to 28 September 2017 in Santiago, Chile, for States Parties in Latin America and the Caribbean (GRULAC). Sixty participants from 12 States Parties attended; and
 - (c) 13 to 15 November 2017 in The Hague, the Netherlands, for States Parties in Asia. Thirty-six participants from 12 States Parties attended.
3. The forums were also attended by representatives of relevant international and regional organisations, including: the United Nations Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540; the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute; the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean; the Caribbean Community; and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development.



4. The forums raised awareness and improved the knowledge among the participants from States Parties that have yet to adopt implementing legislation about the significance of national legislation and the relevant steps required to implement the Convention. They were also a useful opportunity for participants to learn about and share good experiences with other participants and partners, and to promote networking and cooperation among the States Parties. The main outcome of the forums was the development of indicative national road maps towards the adoption of national Convention implementing legislation.

The National Authorities Mentorship/Partnership Programme

5. The National Authorities Mentorship/Partnership Programme aims to enhance national capabilities for the effective functioning of National Authorities through learning and the sharing of knowledge, best practices, and experiences. It promotes country-to-country support, networking, and cooperation. During the reporting period, two Mentorship/Partnership Programmes were implemented as follows:
 - (a) a first visit by the Plurinational State of Bolivia to Cuba took place from 13 to 17 October 2017; and
 - (b) a first visit by Guatemala to Argentina took place in August 2017, followed by a return visit by Argentina to Guatemala from 9 to 13 October 2017.
6. As a result of these visits, the Plurinational State of Bolivia and Guatemala committed to take forward the implementation process.

Training course for representatives of National Authorities on fulfilling Article VI obligations (declarations and inspections), The Hague, the Netherlands, 18 to 22 September 2017

7. This five-day training course for representatives of National Authorities was intended to improve the capacities of States Parties to implement effectively Article VI of the Convention.
8. During the course, 28 participants from 28 States Parties from all regions gained and improved their technical knowledge and practical skills on various aspects of declarations and inspections under the provisions of Article VI, including on the Electronic Declarations tool for National Authorities (EDNA) and the Secure Information Exchange (SIX) system.

Fourth Annual Meeting of Representatives of Chemical Industry and National Authorities of States Parties to the Convention, Doha, Qatar, 17 to 19 October 2017

9. The main purpose of the meeting was to improve collaboration between National Authorities and industry for the effective implementation of the Convention.
10. As on previous occasions, the Fourth Meeting provided an opportunity to promote an exchange of views, collaboration among stakeholders, and networking. Thirty representatives of chemical industry, the representatives of the National Authorities of 16 States Parties, and over 30 national participants from Qatar working in industry outreach participated in the meeting. A special focus was placed on the need for a

more effective and efficient verification mechanism matching the continuous advancements in science and technology, as highlighted in the recommendations of the Third Review Conference.¹ Similar to previous years, the event was implemented with a voluntary contribution from Qatar.

Influential Visitors Programme with Nigeria, The Hague, the Netherlands, 18 to 20 October 2017

11. The Third Influential Visitors Programme was implemented with Nigeria. It was intended to increase understanding and raise awareness among relevant policymakers and stakeholders about the relevance of the Convention, and the importance of its implementation and the adoption of national legislation. Nigeria's delegation included a member of the Nigerian Senate, the Permanent Secretary and Chairman of the National Authority on the Chemical and Biological Weapons Convention (NACBWC), as well as the Deputy Director of the NACBWC and the Senior Counsellor of the Permanent Representation of Nigeria to the OCPW.
12. During the visit, the delegation met with the Director-General and senior staff members in the Secretariat to discuss Nigeria's national implementation of the Convention and other relevant issues. As a result, Nigeria's delegation committed to take forward the implementing legislation and developed an action plan with the intention of adopting the draft implementing legislation by the second quarter of 2018.

Eighteenth Internship Programme for Legal Drafters and National Authority Representatives, The Hague, the Netherlands, 6 to 10 November 2017

13. The programme was aimed at providing technical support to States Parties that have yet to develop implementing legislation for the Convention. The Eighteenth Programme was attended by four representatives from Sierra Leone and Suriname.
14. As a result of the Programme, participants were equipped with the technical skills and information on the legal and technical requirements of the Convention and the work of the OPCW. This enabled them to develop a draft of national implementing legislation and an indicative road map to pursue adoption upon their return.

The Nineteenth Annual Meeting of National Authorities, The Hague, the Netherlands, 22 to 24 November 2017

15. The main purpose of the annual meeting of the National Authorities is to provide an opportunity for National Authorities to highlight and discuss and exchange information and views on relevant issues to enhance their capacity to effectively implement the Convention, and to promote cooperation and networking among National Authorities and the Secretariat. The Nineteenth Meeting brought together a total of 178 representatives from 123 States Parties, representatives from relevant international organisations, and other stakeholders.

¹ Third Special Session of the Conference of the States Parties to Review the Operation of the Chemical Weapons Convention.

16. The anticipated objectives were successfully achieved at the annual meeting, with a positive impact on Convention implementation.

National workshop on the Chemical Weapons Convention for Namibia, Windhoek, Namibia, 6 December 2017

17. The workshop on the Convention for the Standing Committee on Security, Constitutional and Legal Affairs of Namibia was organised by the National Authority of Namibia as a follow-up to the Influential Visitors Programme with that State Party in early 2017. It aimed at increasing understanding and awareness about the Convention among senior Namibian policymakers, and underscored the necessity and urgency of adopting national implementing legislation. The workshop was attended by representatives from various ministries and stakeholder agencies.
18. It is expected that Namibia will be able to have its draft bill tabled for consideration in the first quarter of 2018.

ASSISTANCE AND PROTECTION – ARTICLE X

Assistance and Protection Project for the Economic Community of West African States – Ghana National Workshop, Accra, Ghana, 18 to 20 September 2017

19. The Ghana National Workshop was an integral part of the Secretariat's implementation strategy under the assistance and protection project for Member States that are also members of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), in the framework of the fourth phase of the Africa Programme.² The workshop was intended to assist Ghana in the conduct of an initial needs assessment, to define the chemical threats present in the country and to foster the development of a national protection programme commensurate with the identified threats.
20. During the workshop, 50 participants representing more than 20 Ghanaian government agencies identified the specific impediments to chemical threat awareness in Ghana, which further hinder the country's ability to develop emergency response plans as well as practical, cost-effective strategies for improving threat awareness. Also, as a concrete measure, the participants developed a draft, achievable action plan to address the issues identified in the preliminary needs assessment.

International course on medical management of chemical casualties, Xi'an, China, 18 to 22 September 2017

21. This course, intended for medical personnel from all States Parties, focused on the medical treatment of victims suffering from exposure to chemical warfare agents or toxic industrial chemicals, with particular emphasis on the challenges of hospital or facility-based medical treatment.
22. The course enabled 26 participants from 16 States Parties to strengthen their skills in rapidly recognising the effects of exposure to chemical warfare agents or toxic industrial chemicals, and in the medical treatment modalities indicated in such cases.

² The OCPW Programme to Strengthen Cooperation with Africa on the Chemical Weapons Convention.

As part of the course, a special training at the simulation centre of the military hospital in Xi'an enabled the participants to observe the different treatment methods for patients exposed to chemical weapons agents or toxic industrial chemicals.

Advanced assistance and protection course for police first responders in Asia, Seoul, the Republic of Korea, 25 to 29 September 2017

23. This advanced course provided training to first responders from the Asia region, with a particular emphasis on law enforcement personnel. It covered various topics related to response to chemical threats, such as identification and detection of chemical warfare agents, protection of personnel during a chemical emergency, and decontamination operations. Rescue and first aid operations in contaminated areas were also covered at length.
24. During the course, 17 experts from 11 States Parties, most of whom had successfully completed the basic course on assistance and protection in June 2017 in the Islamic Republic of Iran, gained theoretical and practical training on chemical warfare agents and toxic industrial chemicals.

OPCW training course for instructors, The Hague, the Netherlands, 6 to 13 September 2017

25. This course helped participating States Parties enhance the abilities and skills of their national instructors in the training of first responders, including on how to provide protection against chemical weapons and other toxic chemicals and how to manage chemical incidents.
26. During the course, 24 participants from 22 States Parties conducted exercises on the use of individual protective equipment and practiced monitoring, detection, decontamination, and sampling techniques. The course also served as a platform for the exchange of information and experiences in the implementation of the provisions of Article X of the Convention.

Assistance and protection course for instructors from GRULAC States Parties, Madrid, Spain, 25 September to 4 October 2017

27. The training course was part of the regional capacity-building approach aimed at enhancing the preparedness of GRULAC States Parties to respond to chemical attacks and incidents involving toxic industrial chemicals.
28. During this "train-the-trainers" course, 25 expert chemical emergency first responders from 19 States Parties were provided with theoretical and practical knowledge on response to chemical attacks and incidents, including procedures in the areas of individual protection, detection, decontamination, reconnaissance, sampling techniques and practices, and treatment of victims.

Training for police first responders from Asian States Parties, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 16 to 20 October 2017

29. This course aimed at strengthening and enhancing the capacity of Asian States Parties to respond to chemical attacks and incidents involving toxic industrial chemicals. It was the final phase of the training cycle for first responders from Asian States Parties.

30. As a result of the training, 20 police first responders from 14 States Parties gained theoretical and practical knowledge on protection, detection, and decontamination equipment to respond to chemical attacks and incidents involving toxic industrial chemicals and chemical warfare agents. They also learned about the use of relevant individual equipment, as well as the management of responses to such threats.

Subregional training for first responders from East African Community Member States, Jinja, Uganda, 18 to 25 October 2017

31. The training was part of the Secretariat's efforts to strengthen national and regional response capacity of the OPCW Member States that are also members of the East African Community (EAC), within the framework of the fourth phase of the Africa Programme.
32. During the training, 39 first responders and emergency planning personnel from EAC Member States gained theoretical and practical knowledge and skills on the protection, detection, and decontamination equipment used to respond to chemical attacks and incidents involving toxic industrial chemicals. They also learned about the use of the relevant individual equipment, as well as the management of responses to such threats. The training resulted in the identification of a regional core team of instructors who have already completed the entire training cycle. This newly established team will lead the 2018 edition of the training. As a final result, the annual training for first responders in EAC Member States is now sustainable.
33. This significant achievement is the outcome of two-year project of the Secretariat, with the support of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the Czech Republic, and the engagement of the Member States in the region.

OPCW advanced laboratory skills course, Zemianske Kostol'any, Slovakia, 6 to 16 November 2017

34. This specialised advanced laboratory skills course was intended for States Parties' field laboratory professionals and sought to build upon their established expertise and specific experience in the analysis of chemical warfare agents in the field and laboratory settings.
35. During the course, nine experts from six States Parties gained knowledge and skills on the preparation of samples for chromatographic analysis and the detection of any scheduled chemicals and their degradation or reaction products and precursors. They also learned about the necessary safety measures when working with samples contaminated with chemical weapons agents.

Table-top exercise for States Parties from GRULAC, Mexico City, Mexico, 6 to 10 November 2017

36. The exercise was intended to enhance the capacity of States Parties from GRULAC on the management of responses management to chemical threats.
37. During the exercise, 30 experts from 16 States Parties gained theoretical and practical knowledge and skills on the regional coordination of responses to chemical incidents using the incident command system approach. The training generated ideas and

suggestions aimed at enhancing regional coordination and mutual support under Article X of the Convention, using available disaster response mechanisms in cases of chemical attacks, including coordination with international and regional organisations. The exercise was funded using resources from the regular budget and a voluntary contribution from the European Union.

International advanced assistance and protection course, Islamabad, Pakistan, 13 to 17 November 2017

38. This advanced course intended for first responders aimed at enhancing States Parties' response capability against chemical incidents.
39. The course provided theoretical and practical knowledge on response to chemical incidents to 13 participants from nine States Parties, who had successfully completed the basic course held in Serbia in June 2017. The course included training on the use of protective equipment, the types and characteristics of chemical warfare agents and munitions, and detection and decontamination methods.

Advanced assistance and protection course and field exercise for Arabic-speaking States Parties, Doha, Qatar, 4 to 8 December 2017

40. The course was the final phase of the training cycle for Arabic-speaking States Parties in 2017 and aimed at enhancing the response capacity of first responders in the region.
41. During the course, 21 participants from nine States Parties, who had attended the basic course held in Morocco in May 2017, were provided with advanced training in planning and building a support team for detection, protection, and decontamination operations in contaminated areas. Participants also received training in appropriate emergency response and countermeasures to incidents involving chemical warfare agents and toxic industrial chemicals.
42. The course was funded through a voluntary contribution from Qatar.

Third meeting of assistance and protection training centres, Doha, Qatar, 6 to 8 December 2017

43. The meeting of the assistance and protection training centres was intended to update training centre representatives on the implementation of certain recommendations from the second meeting (held in September 2014 in Slovakia) and to review the relevant OPCW activities conducted over the course of the intervening period.
44. The meeting provided 22 representatives from 17 training centres an opportunity to discuss and make suggestions on several issues, including measures to harmonise training curricula related to Article X and to promote cooperation and exchanges between training centres to improve Article X programmes.
45. The meeting of training centres was attended by those involved in the provision of capacity-building training under Article X.
46. The course was funded through a voluntary contribution from Qatar.

Swiss laboratory course, Spiez, Switzerland, 27 November to 1 December 2017

47. The Swiss laboratory training course is offered each year by the Swiss Government in conjunction with its offer of assistance under Article X.
48. During the course, seven participants from seven States Parties gained knowledge and skills on several issues related to the sampling and identification of chemical warfare agents in the context of chemical emergency response, using the Swiss field laboratory. The course included techniques on how to extract the different chemical weapons agents from multiple surfaces and identify them using thin-layer chromatography. A brief introduction to gas chromatograph/mass spectrometry (GC/MS) was also provided to the participants.

Regional assistance and protection field exercise for first responders from Asian States Parties, Singapore, 18 to 22 December 2017

49. This course, intended for first responders of States Parties in the Asia region, aimed at providing practical training and a field exercise on chemical emergency response. The course was intended for participants in the regional training cycle, which had begun in Sri Lanka in February 2017 and continued with the advanced course in China in July 2017.
50. As a final result, the training cycle led to the formation of a group of 21 well-trained first responders from 12 States Parties, who gained in-depth knowledge and skills in protection and response measures and in the management of emergencies involving chemical warfare agents and toxic industrial chemicals, through table-top and field exercises.

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION – ARTICLE XI

Workshop on policy and diplomacy for scientists: Introduction to responsible research practices in chemical and biochemical sciences, Trieste, Italy, 12 to 15 September 2017

51. The workshop was intended to raise awareness in the States Parties among young scientists who hold a PhD in natural sciences and work in institutions involved in the fields of applied chemical or biochemical or related sciences (research, academia, or industry).
52. The workshop also aimed at raising awareness among young scientists on the policy and diplomacy aspects that are related to the use of chemicals in various scientific disciplines, including chemistry, biochemistry, biotechnology, and other related fields. In particular, scientists were updated on the Convention and other international treaties and regulatory tools governing the transfer and the use of chemicals. Aspects related to sustainability, ethics, and responsibility in research practices, as well as safety and security norms and standards in science, were also addressed.
53. The event was attended by 20 participants from 20 States Parties, with a number of international experts lecturing at the workshop. Funding was provided from the regular budget.

Forum of the peaceful uses of chemistry: Developing a cradle-to-grave chemical responsibility culture, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 18 to 20 September 2017

54. The forum was intended for chemists, chemical engineers, and other experts from government, industry, and academia with managerial and leadership responsibilities related to the implementation of the Convention and to chemical trade and export control.
55. The forum provided an opportunity to 37 participants from 14 States Parties to exchange views and discuss various cutting-edge issues in the area of peaceful chemistry. The overall objective of this forum was to create a platform for sharing lessons learned and best practices in the management of chemicals throughout their life cycle.

Associate Programme 2017 (the Netherlands, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and elsewhere), 28 July to 29 September 2017

56. The main purpose of the Associate Programme is to raise awareness about the goals of the Convention among scientists and engineers from countries whose economies are either developing or in transition, and to expose them to advanced industrial practices.
57. During the eighteenth edition of the programme, 32 participants from States Parties worldwide were equipped with theoretical and practical knowledge and skills required to operate effectively and safely in a modern chemical industry environment. They also gained knowledge about the Convention, which will enhance States Parties' capacity to implement the industry-related provisions of the Convention and broaden the talent pool of those in the National Authorities and other relevant institutions responsible for implementation. To date, 18 Associate Programmes have been attended by a total of 456 qualified personnel from 121 States Parties.

Training workshop in Russian on best practices for developing the Responsible Care[®] programme for the chemical industry, Moscow, the Russian Federation, 13 to 17 November 2017

58. The workshop was intended for environmental health and safety managers, qualified technologists, and representatives of chemical industry associations and governmental organisations from Russian-speaking States Parties.
59. During the workshop, 15 participants from seven States Parties discussed various topics related to sustainability, safety, and security in chemical industries. In particular, they enhanced their knowledge and skills in the Responsible Care[®] programme.

Workshop on green and sustainable chemistry in the context of the Convention, OPCW Headquarters, The Hague, the Netherlands, 16 and 17 November 2017

60. The main purpose of the workshop was to facilitate discussions and dialogue among the States Parties and relevant stakeholders (industry associations and academia, international and regional organisations) on green and sustainable chemistry, and on other initiatives and approaches for safer chemical processes in connection with the

goals of the Convention regarding the safety of people and protection of the environment. The ultimate objective was to explore areas of potential cooperation and partnership towards the achievement of the Convention's objectives.

61. During the workshop, 22 highly qualified experts and participants representing States Parties addressed different topics on the agenda. They produced fruitful dialogue and identified some areas that could be explored for further potential collaboration between the various stakeholders. The main result of this exercise was the general recognition of the role of the OPCW in continuing to facilitate discussions among different stakeholders on various initiatives, including green and sustainable chemistry, in cooperation with partners and in accordance with the OPCW's mandate.

Review and evaluation workshop of the components of an agreed framework for the full implementation of Article XI, The Hague, the Netherlands, 21 November 2017

62. The workshop was intended to facilitate deliberation among States Parties to review and evaluate international cooperation programmes under Article XI of the Convention.
63. During the workshop, 60 participants from 38 States Parties discussed a wide range of issues related to Article XI, under the three main areas of integrated chemicals management, enhancement of laboratory capabilities, and promotion of chemical knowledge.
64. The workshop resulted in a compilation of ideas and suggestions that emerged from the discussions.

The Fifth Annual Webinar of the Associate Programme Alumni Association, 25 November to 1 December 2017

65. The ultimate goal of the webinar, intended for alumni of the Associate Programme, is to enhance the capacity of National Authorities to better implement the Convention.
66. During the webinar, 65 Associate Programme alumni interacted and exchanged views, which resulted in interesting and valuable ideas and recommendations aimed at improving the Programme's curriculum and increasing its impact.

Regional workshop on chemistry for safety, security, and environmental protection, Buenos Aires, Argentina, 11 and 12 December 2017

67. The workshop was intended for scientific community experts, including the former grantees of the OPCW Programme for Support of Research Projects, and other experts from the region.
68. During the workshop, 27 participants representing 12 States Parties discussed scientific developments and state-of-the-art policy related to green and sustainable chemistry applications, renewable bio-based resources for chemicals production, and the clean-up of polluted sites in States Parties from GRULAC. The participants also highlighted the results achieved by the research projects in the field, which had previously been funded solely by the OPCW or co-funded with the International Foundation for Science.

Course on the development of analytical skills for analytical chemists from laboratories supporting customs services, Rijswijk, the Netherlands, 11 to 15 December 2017

69. The course was intended for analytical chemists from laboratories that support, or plan to support, customs services or offices in States Parties whose economies are either developing or in transition.
70. During the course, 10 participants from 10 States Parties acquired sound knowledge on general aspects of the Convention and the OPCW and gained further experience and practical knowledge of the analysis of chemicals related to the Convention.

Course on the enhancement of laboratory skills in quantitative mass spectrometry to analyse chemicals related to the Convention, Finnish Institute for Verification of the Chemical Weapons Convention (VERIFIN), Finland, 11 to 22 September 2017

71. This course, intended for laboratory experts from all States Parties, allowed six participants from six States Parties to enhance their skills in the analysis of Convention-related chemicals using mass spectrometry, and in equipment maintenance and sample collection and storage.

Analytical skills development for the analysis of Convention-related chemicals, Rijswijk, the Netherlands, 6 to 10 November 2017

72. This course was aimed at assisting six qualified analytical chemists from Algeria in acquiring the necessary analytical skills in the use of mass spectrometry to analyse chemicals related to the implementation of the Convention.
73. This course was funded through a voluntary contribution from Spain.

Seoul workshop on the peaceful development and use of chemistry for Member States of the OPCW in the Asia Region, Seoul, the Republic of Korea, 1 to 3 November 2017

74. This workshop was intended for governmental representatives of Asian Member States, chemical industry associations, and managers involved in chemical safety and security and in the Responsible Care[®] programme.
75. During the workshop, 31 participants from 17 States Parties gained further understanding and knowledge in the area of chemical safety and security management, including security risk assessments, chemical threat reduction, and mitigation strategies.

Seminar on advanced chemical safety and security management, Dhaka, Bangladesh, 18 and 19 October 2017

76. This programme was intended for governmental representatives, chemical industry associations, and managers involved in chemical safety and security and in the Responsible Care[®] programme for chemical security.

77. During the seminar, 38 participants from 10 States Parties improved their knowledge and skills in the area of chemical safety and security management for small and medium-sized chemical companies.

Workshop on green and sustainable chemistry, The Hague, the Netherlands, 16 and 17 November 2017

78. The workshop was intended to bring together representatives and experts from governments, scientific communities, chemical industry, international organisations, and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to discuss and exchange views and experiences on green and sustainable chemistry and related matters.
79. The workshop provided an opportunity to share information on relevant initiatives and programmes facilitated by stakeholders in industry, academia, government, international organisations, and NGOs.
80. The seminar, attended by 23 experts from States Parties, was funded through the regular budget.

Analytical skills development for the analysis of Convention-related chemicals, Rijswijk, the Netherlands, 4 to 8 December 2017

81. This course equipped six participants from Morocco with knowledge and analytical skills in the use of mass spectrometry to analyse chemicals related to the implementation of the Convention.
82. This course was funded through a voluntary contribution from Spain.

Analytical skills development course in defence science and technology, Melbourne, Australia, 4 to 15 December 2017

83. This analytical skills development course was intended for laboratory experts and equipped 11 participants from 11 States Parties with knowledge and skills in the analysis of Convention-related chemicals using GC/MS, and in equipment maintenance and sample collection and storage.