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ENGLISH only

NOTE BY THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL**CALL FOR NOMINATIONS FOR THE SIXTEENTH REGIONAL MEETING OF
NATIONAL AUTHORITIES OF STATES PARTIES IN ASIA
THIMPHU, BHUTAN
19 – 21 JUNE 2018**

1. On behalf of the Government of Bhutan and the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), the Director-General wishes to invite National Authorities to nominate representatives to attend the Sixteenth Regional Meeting of National Authorities of States Parties in Asia, which will be held in Thimphu, Bhutan, from 19 to 21 June 2018.
2. At its Eighth Session, the Conference of the States Parties (hereinafter “the Conference”) adopted a plan of action regarding the implementation of obligations under Article VII of the Chemical Weapons Convention (hereinafter “the Convention”) (C-8/DEC.16, dated 24 October 2003), and at its subsequent regular sessions adopted decisions on the follow-up to that plan (C-10/DEC.16, dated 11 November 2005; C-11/DEC.4, dated 6 December 2006; C-12/DEC.9, dated 9 November 2007; C-13/DEC.7, dated 5 December 2008, C-14/DEC.12, dated 4 December 2009; and C-15/DG.11, dated 27 October 2010). The Second and Third Review Conferences¹ encouraged the States Parties and the Technical Secretariat (hereinafter “the Secretariat”) to continue to support the implementation by States Parties of the aforementioned decisions of the Conference in order for them to achieve full implementation of their Article VII obligations.
3. The first two days of this regional meeting of National Authorities (19 and 20 June) will serve as a forum in which the States Parties in the region can discuss and share experiences regarding national implementation of the Convention, and in particular issues related to the trade in chemicals and the role of customs in enforcing the Convention transfers regime for scheduled chemicals. It will be an opportunity for National Authorities, customs authorities, and representatives of the relevant international and regional organisations to discuss how to strengthen cooperation among relevant stakeholders to improve the control of cross-border movements of chemicals.

¹ The Second and Third Special Sessions of the Conference of the States Parties to Review the Operation of the Chemical Weapons Convention.



4. The last day of the three-day meeting (21 June) will serve as a forum in which National Authority representatives can cultivate mutual cooperation and support, discuss various national implementation issues, and exchange views on the challenges and opportunities for advancing the fulfilment of their obligations under the Convention.
5. The objectives of the meeting are to:
 - (a) discuss the regional trends in the trade in chemicals and the role of customs authorities in Convention implementation, and to identify customs needs and ways to address them;
 - (b) raise awareness among customs authorities and National Authorities on the regional and global projects and operations that target illicit trade in dual-use chemicals;
 - (c) discuss possible support to National Authorities, customs authorities, and other national stakeholders for the purpose of ensuring enforcement of the Convention transfers regime for scheduled chemicals;
 - (d) discuss and identify the national issues regarding Convention implementation that are of particular importance to the National Authorities of Asia, and to cultivate bilateral and regional cooperation and support; and
 - (e) hold bilateral meetings with Secretariat staff on issues pertaining to national implementation, including progress on the adoption of national legislation and the implementation of Article VI requirements.
6. The expected results of the meeting include:
 - (a) improved understanding of the role of customs in Convention implementation;
 - (b) the identification of customs needs and of opportunities to address them, including through the support provided by international and regional organisations;
 - (c) strengthened cooperation between National Authorities and customs authorities; and
 - (d) the collection of feedback on the draft national Convention implementation checklist and on the design of the national implementation framework.
7. The provisional programme for the regional meeting is attached as Annex 1 to this Note.
8. The Secretariat expects to be able to sponsor two representatives from each State Party in the region: one representing the National Authority and the other the customs authority. Nominees representing customs authorities should have experience or knowledge in the trade and control of strategic goods. Each nomination should specify whether sponsorship is a condition of the nominee's participation.

9. Once they have been accepted to participate in the regional meeting, customs authority representatives will be expected to provide a brief overview of the customs issues they encounter in relation to Convention implementation. This overview should be sent to the Secretariat through their respective National Authorities, and should include summaries of: the current level of awareness among the State Party's customs officers of the Convention and national obligations thereunder; national customs training programmes, particularly on the identification of dual-use chemicals and transfer control of strategic goods; frameworks for cooperation with customs laboratories, licencing authorities, and other stakeholders; subregional and regional trends in the trade in chemicals; and experiences and challenges pertaining to the implementation of Convention obligations. Some of the customs representatives may be asked to make a presentation during the regional meeting.
10. For sponsored participants, the Secretariat will cover the costs of travel, hotel accommodation, meals, and medical insurance, in addition to a limited subsistence allowance to cover terminal and sundry expenses. Sponsored participants who do not intend to use the accommodation arranged by the Secretariat are requested to indicate this as soon as possible to prevent the Secretariat from incurring hotel cancellation fees. In any case, the Secretariat will not cover the costs of any accommodation that it has not arranged.
11. When making travel arrangements for sponsored participants, the Secretariat will seek the most economical options. The Secretariat will purchase tickets and send them to the participants. Participants will be allowed to purchase tickets locally only if this leads to further savings for the Secretariat. Participants who have not been sponsored will be requested to make their own travel and accommodation arrangements. In order to keep costs to a minimum, sponsored participants are expected to arrive **no earlier than Monday, 18 June 2018 and to depart no later than Thursday, 21 June 2018 (in the case of customs representatives) and no later than 22 June 2018 (in the case of National Authority representatives)**. The Secretariat's agreement is required for any changes to these arrival and departure dates. The Secretariat will not cover expenses unrelated to the meeting or that result from changes in travel arrangements that it has not authorised. Sponsored participants must bear all costs resulting from changes they make, including cancellations, once the Secretariat has purchased tickets.
12. Participants are requested to obtain any necessary visas (including transit visas) before travelling to Bhutan. When applying for any required entry visa, they should present the Embassy or Consulate of Bhutan with a copy of the acceptance letter from the OPCW.
13. The meetings will be conducted in English. All participants are therefore expected to have a good oral and written command of English.
14. Interested National Authorities and customs representatives are invited to register their nominations online through Eventus—the OPCW event management system (<https://apps.opcw.org/eventus>). Interested applicants should first create an account and then register for the event. All nominations must be endorsed by the Head or Chief Coordinator of the National Authority. The endorsement form, which is attached as Annex 2 to this Note, must be uploaded during the online registration

process. Nominations without an endorsement will not be considered. All nominations must be received by the Secretariat **no later than Monday, 2 April 2018**. Interested applicants who, for technical reasons, are unable to submit an application online are requested to send an email to ipb@opcw.org with a reference to the name and location of the meeting in the subject line of the message.

15. National Authorities are kindly requested to note that the Secretariat will not accept any nominations after the final nomination submission deadline.

Annexes:

- Annex 1: Provisional Programme
- Annex 2: National Authority Endorsement Form

Annex 1

**SIXTEENTH REGIONAL MEETING
OF NATIONAL AUTHORITIES OF STATES PARTIES IN ASIA
THIMPHU, BHUTAN
19 – 21 JUNE 2018
PROVISIONAL PROGRAMME**

Time	Activity
<i>Tuesday, 19 June 2018</i>	
08:30 – 09:00	Registration of participants
09:00 – 09:30	Opening remarks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Representative of the Government of Bhutan – Representative of the OPCW
09:30 – 09:45	Group photograph
09:45 – 10:15	Objectives of the meeting, introduction of the themes, OPCW activities and programmes relating to customs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Implementation Support Branch (OPCW) – State Party participant from the training-of-trainers customs training programme
10:15 – 11:00	Presentations and panel discussion on the role of customs control and the Convention transfers regime for scheduled chemicals, the maintenance of national and regional security, and available tools and programmes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – World Customs Organization – Declarations Branch (OPCW) – States Parties
11:00 – 11:30	<i>Coffee/tea break</i>
11:30 – 13:00	Presentations and panel discussion – continued
13:00 – 14:00	<i>Lunch</i>
14:00 – 15:30	Breakout group discussion 1: Identification of customs needs for effective cross-border control of toxic chemicals and recommended actions
15:30 – 16:00	<i>Coffee/tea break</i>
16:00 – 17:00	Presentation of the outcomes of breakout group discussion 1
17:00	Wrap-up of day 1
<i>Wednesday, 20 June 2018</i>	
09:00 – 09:30	Update on Article VI implementation and related verification issues <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Declarations Branch (OPCW)
09:30 – 11:00	Discussion of good practices and challenges in cooperation between National Authorities, customs authorities, and other national stakeholders in relation to the cross-border control of dual-use chemicals <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – States Parties
11:00 – 11:30	<i>Coffee/tea break</i>
11:30 – 13:00	Discussion of good practices and challenges – continued
13:00 – 14:00	<i>Lunch</i>

Time	Activity
14:00 – 15:30	Breakout group discussion 2: Mechanisms and opportunities for cooperation among the National Authorities, customs authorities, and other national stakeholders
15:30 – 16:00	<i>Coffee/tea break</i>
16:00 – 17:00	Presentation of the outcomes of breakout group discussion 2
17:00	Wrap-up of day 2
<i>Thursday, 21 June 2018</i>	
09:00 – 10:00	Updates on Convention implementation and support programmes, introduction of the implementation checklist and the national implementation framework – Implementation Support Branch (OPCW) – Plenary discussion
10:00 – 10:30	Towards the Fourth Review Conference: perspectives of National Authorities in Asia – introduction – Implementation Support Branch (OPCW)
10:30 – 11:00	Breakout group discussion 3: Perspectives of National Authorities in Asia in relation to the Fourth Review Conference
11:00 – 11:30	<i>Coffee/tea break</i>
11:30 – 13:00	Breakout group discussion 3 – continued
13:00 – 14:00	<i>Lunch</i>
14:00 – 15:30	Presentation of the outcomes of breakout group discussion 3 – Plenary discussion on the way forward
15:30 – 16:00	<i>Coffee/tea break</i>
16:00 – 17:00	Evaluation and closure of the meeting

Annex 2**SIXTEENTH REGIONAL MEETING
OF NATIONAL AUTHORITIES OF STATES PARTIES IN ASIA
THIMPHU, BHUTAN
19 – 21 JUNE 2018****ENDORSEMENT BY THE NATIONAL AUTHORITY**

This form must be signed, duly sealed, and uploaded when submitting your application electronically (<https://apps.opcw.org/eventus>)

I, _____, Head/Chief Coordinator of the National Authority of the State Party of _____, on behalf of the Government of _____, hereby endorse the nomination of Mr/Ms _____, holding the position/designation of _____ in the Office/Division/Branch of _____, as indicated in the attached nomination form, for participation in the Sixteenth Regional Meeting of National Authorities of States Parties in Asia, to be held in Thimphu, Bhutan, from 19 to 21 June 2018.

Signature: _____

Name: _____

Designation: _____

Telephone: _____

Email: _____

Official seal of the National Authority: