

**REPORT OF THE SEVENTEENTH SESSION  
OF THE ADVISORY BOARD ON EDUCATION AND OUTREACH****1. AGENDA ITEM ONE – Opening of the session and welcome address by the Director-General**

- 1.1 The Chairperson of the Advisory Board on Education and Outreach (ABEO), Prof Magda Bauta Solés, opened the Seventeenth Session of the Board on 11 June 2024 at 10:00. She welcomed all Board members and observers to this session in The Hague and thanked the Director-General of the OPCW, Ambassador Fernando Arias, for delivering opening remarks.
- 1.2 The Director-General welcomed the ABEO members and observers to the Seventeenth Session of the Board and thanked Ms Dorine van der Wal, expert in youth engagement at the World Health Organization (WHO) and Ms Lucía Mantecón, Visiting Professor at Rey Juan Carlos University, for having accepted to share their insights on youth engagement.
- 1.3 The Director-General highlighted the importance of education and outreach, in line with States Parties' statements during the preparatory process for the Fifth Review Conference.<sup>1</sup> He recalled that the OPCW had continued its effective engagement with diverse audiences to raise awareness about the risks and threats posed by modern chemistry when not used for peaceful purposes.
- 1.4 Furthermore, the Director-General commented that the future of the OPCW would be defined by the ability of the Organisation to keep pace with the spectacular progress in the fields of science and technology, and referred to the meeting held with external experts at the OPCW Centre for Chemistry and Technology (ChemTech Centre) in April 2024 to examine the potential of artificial intelligence (AI) in the OPCW's work. The workshop examined risks, opportunities, and challenges that AI might pose to the implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention (the Convention) and how to best take advantage of opportunities and mitigate risks to prevent the re-emergence of chemical weapons. Accordingly, the Director-General encouraged the ABEO to provide academic advice and support regarding the impacts of AI, particularly on education and outreach and awareness-raising.

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<sup>1</sup> Review Conference = Special Session of the Conference of the States Parties to Review the Operation of the Chemical Weapons Convention.



- 1.5 The Director-General further added that the Secretariat would continue to closely monitor AI and other specific scientific and technological developments with the support of the Scientific Advisory Board (SAB) and the scientific community in general.
- 1.6 The Director-General recalled the need to use the full potential of the ChemTech Centre, and welcomed the Board's work on its "blue book", which would serve as a tool to promote the Centre.
- 1.7 The Director-General also valued the Board's current work focused on updating its Strategic Plan to align education and outreach priorities with OPCW strategic priorities, following the completion of destruction of all declared chemical weapons. He further acknowledged the importance of having an inventory of academic institutions with courses on the Convention that the ABEO was compiling, as well as the core syllabus for educators wishing to start a course on the Convention.
- 1.8 The Director-General encouraged the Board to continue its cooperation with the International Cooperation and Assistance Division (ICA), and welcomed the annual practice by the ABEO to brief States Parties on its activities to facilitate decision-making processes. He also thanked the Permanent Representation of Germany for co-sponsoring the ABEO briefing to States Parties.
- 1.9 In conclusion, the Director-General underlined that, in an age in which science and technology were advancing at a fast pace, it was more important than ever that future generations of scientists and practitioners understand the risks presented by those developments. He added that education and outreach efforts were key to upholding the norm against use of chemical weapons and fostering an intergenerational culture of cooperation and peace.
- 1.10 The Director-General sincerely thanked the departing Board members—Prof Graciela González, Prof Rocael Hernández Rizzardini, Prof Mohd Jamil Maah, Dr Craig Cormick, and Mr Shahab Ud Din—for their meaningful contributions to the Board's work in the last few years, and wished them success in their future endeavours.
- 1.11 The Board thanked the Director-General for his guidance on priority areas related to education and outreach and assured the Director-General that it remained at the disposal of the Technical Secretariat (the Secretariat).

## **2. AGENDA ITEM TWO – Adoption of the agenda and appointment of a drafting committee**

- 2.1 The ABEO adopted the following agenda for its Seventeenth Session:
  1. Opening of the session and welcome address by the Director-General
  2. Adoption of the agenda and appointment of a drafting committee
  3. Informal consultations and discussion among all Board members on the update of the ABEO Strategic Plan
  4. Model United Nations implementation at Rey Juan Carlos University (Madrid) and lessons learned – Ms Lucía Mantecón, Visiting Professor at Rey Juan Carlos University

5. Implementation of the Global Model WHO and lessons learned: Youth initiatives, with a particular focus on the Briefing Centre and Youth Council – Ms Dorine van der Wal, Youth Engagement, Health and Multilateral Partnerships, WHO
  6. Core syllabus on courses on the Chemical Weapons Convention and the OPCW and possible roster of experts at no cost to the Technical Secretariat – Prof Graciela González
  7. Blue book for the ChemTech Centre – Discussion by all Board members on the final version to be agreed by the Board
  8. Briefing on informal consultations on engagement with civil society – Ms Elisabeth Waechter, Head of the Public Affairs Branch and OPCW Spokesperson
  9. Preparation of the briefing to the States Parties by Board members
  10. Wrap-up and main conclusions from the feedback received from States Parties during the briefing
  11. Presentation of the inventory of academic institutions with courses on the OPCW and/or the Chemical Weapons Convention: Agreement by the Board on the final document – Prof JaneFrances Ihedioha
  12. OPCW activities and links with some Sustainable Development Goals – Mr Szymon Bocheński, Senior Policy Officer in the Office of Strategy and Policy
  13. Update on SAB activities – Mr Peter Hotchkiss, Science Policy Adviser and SAB Secretary
  14. Election of the ABEO Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson for 2025
  15. Statement by the elected Chairperson
  16. Update on the International Conference on Chemistry Education 2024 and participation of ABEO members – Prof Supawan Tantayanon
  17. Topics identified for further consideration at the Eighteenth Session of the ABEO
  18. Report on intersessional activities of Board members
  19. Vision on the implementation of a fellowship programme for women in chemistry by the OPCW: Opportunities and challenges – Mr Zaven Hakopov, Knowledge Management Advisor
  20. Dissemination of the National Autonomous University of Mexico diploma course in all regions
  21. Any other business
  22. Wrap-up, main conclusions, and closure of the meeting
- 2.2 The Board appointed Prof Magda Bauta Solés, Prof Supawan Tantayanon, Dr Richard Guthrie, and Mr Shahab Ud Din as drafting committee members.

**3. AGENDA ITEM THREE – Informal consultations and discussion among all Board members on the update of the ABEO Strategic Plan**

3.1 Dr Craig Cormick led an informal consultation and discussion with all Board members on the updated ABEO Strategic Plan. Dr Cormick reaffirmed the integral role of the Strategic Plan in setting the priorities and direction of the ABEO’s agenda. Considering that the last Strategic Plan was dated February 2021,<sup>2</sup> an update was necessary to steer the ABEO in the contemporary context.

3.2 The discussion began with stipulating that the vision, goals, and objectives of the Strategic Plan should realign with the current context of the OPCW in the post-destruction phase. The objectives and priorities of the Strategic Plan should therefore align with the current strategic priorities of the OPCW, in line with the Medium-Term Plan of the OPCW, the most recent version of which had been published in the summer of 2023 (EC-104/S/1\* C-28/S/1, dated 14 August 2023). In the updated Strategic Plan, the ABEO agreed to enhance its relationship with the ChemTech Centre, update the “blue book” of relevant experts and institutions, and improve the reach of the OPCW’s e-learning activities by clarifying the target audiences. The strategy employed to achieve such goals would involve situating these priorities in the short-, mid- and long-term to evaluate the time, resources, and effort needed to accomplish each strategic objective.

3.3 The Board agreed to reflect the follow-up of AI in line with Director-General’s guidance, especially regarding its impact on education and outreach and raising awareness of the importance of the Convention.

3.4 Following the informal consultations on the update of the Strategic Plan, the final document was agreed by all Board members. Revisions to the updated plan included elaborating on key audiences, specifying the influencers and implementers, and providing realistic and practical time frames for each goal and objective. Additionally, the designation of champions among the ABEO members to progress each of the goals and objectives of the Strategic Plan was discussed. A review was proposed to assess the completion of such tasks and to re-evaluate the priorities and relevance of the outstanding ABEO goals and objectives.

**4. AGENDA ITEM FOUR – Model United Nations implementation at Rey Juan Carlos University (Madrid) and lessons learned – Ms Lucía Mantecón, Visiting Professor at Rey Juan Carlos University**

4.1 Ms Lucía Mantecón shared her experience since 2013 in organising Model United Nations at Rey Juan Carlos University in Madrid, and shared lessons learned to reach out more effectively to youth. She commented that she had coordinated her presentation with the ABEO Chairperson and Board member Vicente Garrido Rebolledo in a meeting that had been held in Madrid two weeks prior. Ms Mantecón explained that Model United Nations was a university simulation in which students from several degree programmes debate on behalf of the United Nations member countries. Each representative, or “delegate”, worked on a committee in which specific topics, from social issues to economics, were discussed. Students were assigned different roles as

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<sup>2</sup> Annex 2 to ABEO-10/1 (dated 10 February 2021).

delegates, chairpersons, or members of staff or of the press. In general, the profile of participants was that of students pursuing social sciences degrees. In the Model United Nations at Rey Juan Carlos University, 70% of students were Spanish and the remaining 30% from the other regions of the world.

- 4.2 The goal of each committee was to reach a majority agreement among the delegations and draft a working paper that would eventually become a resolution. The simulation was conducted in two stages, the first consisting of pre-event activities such as the preparation of guides and position papers drafted by delegations, as well as time devoted to learning the rules. The second stage was the event itself, which consisted of a debate, negotiations, and adoption of resolutions. The agenda of a Model United Nations simulation included formal debates, social events, as well as side events made possible through collaboration with non-governmental organisations (NGOs), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Spanish diplomatic school, among others.
- 4.3 Ms Mantecón highlighted that in the past year her programme had coordinated simulations of 22 committees, with 50 students in each committee. Each committee debated different topics of interest that took into account global scenarios and the current United Nations agenda.
- 4.4 Recalling that the Model United Nations exercise began in 2013, Ms Mantecón commented that the programme for university students at Rey Juan Carlos University was the largest in Europe, with 1,500 students having participated in the 13 editions. Furthermore, Rey Juan Carlos University also coordinated Model United Nations simulations for secondary school students aged 12 to 17, and also worked with a Model United Nations Club (a community of 400 students receiving trainings throughout the year).
- 4.5 Regarding programme costs, 91% of the total budget came from fees paid by students (EUR 25 per student), sponsors covered 5%, and university financial contributions made up the remaining 4% of the budget. The university also provided the infrastructure support.
- 4.6 The main benefits for students included, among others, the acquisition of professional skills, a sense of belonging to a community that could not be provided through classroom lectures, learning about the United Nations and the States they were representing as delegates, and the acquisition of practical knowledge on how to apply the rules of procedure of each organ of the United Nations. These benefits fostered engagement of youth with international organisations.
- 4.7 Ms Mantecón commented that in the case of a Model Chemical Weapons Convention, the goal initially would be to have 150 students, to engage students from technical degrees, and to select topics of interest for students, while organising two side events that would add extra value to the experience.
- 4.8 The ABEO Chairperson, on behalf of the Board, thanked Ms Mantecón for sharing her experience and insights, and highlighted that a Model United Nations programme dedicated to the Convention would be an opportunity for the OPCW, through Rey Juan Carlos University, to reach out to a very important segment of students. The subsequent discussion with the Board focused on practical aspects, such as student accommodation, ways to recruit international students, the type of support that would be needed from

the OPCW (promotion of the Model Convention programme, guest speakers from the Secretariat, financial support), and the challenge of recruiting students pursuing technical degrees.

- 4.9 The Board agreed that the implementation of a Model Convention simulation in 2025, with the potential reach to a significant number of students at Rey Juan Carlos University in Madrid, would be an opportunity to engage youth. At the same time, this simulation would contribute to raising awareness of the relevance of the Convention. As a result, the Board agreed to recommend the implementation of this activity to the Director-General, subject to the confirmation of more detailed information on required funding and other resources necessary to implement such a programme.

**5. AGENDA ITEM FIVE – Implementation of the Global Model WHO and lessons learned: Youth initiatives, with a particular focus on the Briefing Centre and Youth Council – Ms Dorine van der Wal, Youth Engagement, Health and Multilateral Partnerships, WHO**

- 5.1 Ms van der Wal, Youth Engagement, Health and Multilateral Partnerships at the World Health Organization (WHO), delivered a presentation on the implementation of the Global Model WHO and the lessons learned from youth initiatives, highlighting in particular the roles of the WHO Briefing Centre and Youth Council.

- 5.2 Ms van der Wal began by outlining the genesis of the Global Model WHO, emphasising its collaborative nature. The inaugural model held last year attracted 250 participants from 45 countries and was held virtually, a format that facilitated the involvement of a diverse range of participants representing various countries and student demographics. This year, the Model was held in person for the first time at WHO headquarters, hosting 350 students from around the globe. The event was managed by the World Federation of United Nations Associations, with the WHO providing promotional support, expertise, advice, and mentorship to the participating students. Such collaboration was critical, ensuring the event closely simulated the meetings of the WHO through rigorous research and planning.

- 5.3 Ms van der Wal highlighted the six simulation topics, designed to engage students from a broad spectrum of disciplines beyond medical fields, including law, diplomacy, international relations, nursing, pharmaceuticals, and economics. This diversity of participants aimed to foster comprehensive discussions and diverse viewpoints in the creation of resolutions. The initiative's primary goal was capacity building, to equip young participants with negotiation skills and mentoring, in preparation for potential future roles within the WHO. Participants underwent eight hours of training, during which they were assigned to research projects and had to represent a country different from their own, enhancing their preparation and understanding of global perspectives.

- 5.4 The strength of the conference, as Ms van der Wal noted, lied in its ability to impart to young people crucial life skills, such as consensus-building, standing firm on viewpoints, and independently handling complex issues. The conference spanned six days, beginning and ending with sessions at the Palais des Nations in Geneva, with three days devoted to negotiations.

- 5.5 The subsequent discussion focused on various aspects, such as the selection process, the number of WHO experts involved and their capacity to educate students, among other topics. Ms van der Wal commented that WHO staff eagerly participated, enjoying the interaction and informal engagement with students. Regarding the selection process, Ms van der Wal explained that there were separate sections for high school and university students, with both individual and delegation-based applications having been considered on a first-come first-served basis. Feedback mechanisms were addressed, with Ms van der Wal indicating that the consistently positive responses from universities and their recurring participation were key to the programme's success. Incentives for participants included fully funded trips and special diplomas upon completion, which added value to the CVs of the participants.
- 5.6 Ms van der Wal clarified that the project had not been profit-driven; the registration fees covered the event's expenses. Gender equity in participant selection was discussed, with a focus on geographical diversity and the inclusion of students from low-income countries. The training on negotiation included sections devoted to cultural, religious, political, economic, and social aspects, requiring students to step out of their comfort zones. Ms van der Wal highlighted that the outcome of negotiation exercises had been reflected in resolutions which, if adopted by consensus, would be forwarded to the Director-General of the WHO for potential implementation, showcasing the innovative perspectives brought by youth.
- 5.7 The Board thanked Ms van der Wal for her presentation and insights regarding youth engagement and agreed to stay connected to continue exchanging information on youth engagement in the coming months.
- 6. AGENDA ITEM SIX – Core syllabus on courses on the Convention and the OPCW and possible roster of experts at no cost to the Technical Secretariat – Prof Graciela González**
- 6.1 Prof Graciela González shared a presentation with an outline of a possible core syllabus inspired by the National Autonomous University of Mexico syllabus that would serve as a tool for educators wishing to launch a course on the Convention. She suggested further discussing the details of each element of the syllabus with the Board. Prof González commented that the target audiences could be States Parties and chemistry and international relations students, among others, as well as young professionals and the general public.
- 6.2 Prof González further highlighted the possibility of preparing a roster of experts, including current ABEO members, and of identifying former ABEO members, ChemTech Centre ambassadors, and professors.
- 6.3 The Board commented that the roster of experts would be an internal document of the Secretariat that would not be posted on the OPCW website. The Board also highlighted that generic videos could be a useful educational resource and that links to videos used at national level by States Parties to reach out to chemical industry could also be included in the core syllabus, if considered by the Secretariat. The Board also recalled its willingness to record short videos (two to three minutes each) based on each member's area of expertise and make these available to the Secretariat, if such additional resources were deemed useful.

- 6.4 The ABEO agreed that once the core syllabus was finalised it would be useful to include links to educational resources for each section, and to submit it for the consideration of the Director-General with the suggestion of uploading it to the OPCW webpage.
- 7. AGENDA ITEM SEVEN – Blue book for the ChemTech Centre – Discussion by all Board members on the final version to be agreed by the Board**
- 7.1 Prof Hernández Rizzardini referred to the structure of the ChemTech Centre blue book, and commented that the list of institutions and individuals that would help promote the Centre should be an internal document of the Secretariat.
- 7.2 The Board reviewed the different sections and agreed to include the following suggestions as examples: relevant international organisations, ambassadors, Nobel Laureates, and The Hague-OPCW Award laureates. The Board considered that the criteria according to which the persons and institutions would be selected should be defined in the blue book, and that the Secretariat would need to have in place a procedure to identify them based on these criteria. The Board discussed the idea of a selection or screening committee that would be geographically diverse and would follow a procedure to identify the persons and institutions. This selection committee could have a balanced composition, with one representative per regional group for the States Parties, one representative of the Secretariat, one representative of the ABEO, and one from the SAB.
- 7.3 The Board also discussed the idea of limiting the number of individuals and institutions in the blue book and agreed that there was a need to implement procedures that could be determined by the selection committee. Afterwards, the Board highlighted the need to have relevant information for each of the “sections”, background information about the individuals, the institutional areas that were related to the ChemTech Centre or, for example, the specific roles that could potentially be filled by the ambassadors promoting the ChemTech Centre.
- 7.4 The Board added that the goals for collaboration outcomes and the development of possible partnerships to enhance collaboration should also be reflected in the final version of the document. The Board agreed to submit this internal document to the Director-General once finalised, with the caveat that this was just a first stage. Regarding the need to understand how the agenda of activities at the ChemTech Centre was coordinated, the Board commented that it would be useful to hear from the staff involved in this function. The ABEO Secretary commented that she would reach out to her colleagues in the Office of Strategy and Policy involved in the ChemTech Centre programmes and activities calendar, among other functions, in order to brief the Board at its next session.
- 8. AGENDA ITEM EIGHT – Briefing on informal consultations on engagement with civil society – Ms Elisabeth Waechter, Head of the Public Affairs Branch and OPCW Spokesperson**
- 8.1 Ms Elisabeth Waechter provided a comprehensive briefing on the ongoing informal consultations regarding the engagement of civil society with the OPCW. Her presentation focused on the evolving role of civil society in disarmament processes, the historical context, recent developments, and future directions for enhancing this engagement.



- 8.2 Ms Waechter acknowledged the crucial role played historically by civil society in disarmament treaties, as they have often been catalysts for the creation and implementation of disarmament and non-proliferation agreements. She highlighted a significant increase in interest among OPCW Member States in civil society engagement, notably since the Third Review Conference, which set the stage for expanded civil society involvement in OPCW processes. The topic was again on the agenda of the Fifth Review Conference, after which a series of informal consultations was initiated, involving all Member States to explore ways to improve interactions with civil society. Building on these efforts, in September 2023, Germany and Ecuador (later replaced by Costa Rica) initiated a series of informal consultations aimed at enhancing the engagement of the OPCW with civil society. To date, five sessions had been held, focusing on different aspects of the interaction between States Parties and civil society actors, thereby reinforcing the role of civil society in the OPCW's activities and decision-making processes.
- 8.3 Ms Waechter presented findings from a desk review on civil society engagement since 1997, which identified 285 civil society organisations accredited with the OPCW, comprising traditional NGOs and a diverse mix of academic institutions, think tanks, industry bodies, and individuals. A notable issue revealed was the geographic imbalance, with the Latin America and the Caribbean and the Eastern European groups being underrepresented.
- 8.4 Ms Waechter additionally provided the results of a survey conducted in February 2024 among 51 participants. The findings confirmed the organisational and geographical imbalances noted in the desk review, and underlined the desire to further improve outreach, communication, and interaction among civil society organisations, as well as between civil society and the OPCW. In addition to taking advantage of the opportunity to participate in sessions of the Conference of the States Parties (the Conference), respondents called for more sustained year-round engagement.
- 8.5 Ms Waechter outlined the next steps that had been identified in the informal consultations, including streamlining the accreditation procedures and a review to assess the impact of civil society involvement on the implementation of the Convention.
- 8.6 In her closing remarks, Ms Waechter stressed the need for a comprehensive strategy for youth engagement, identifying a gap in the current approach. She acknowledged the complexity of balancing political considerations with effective civil society engagement and emphasised the importance of translating discussions into practical actions to advance the OPCW's mission.
- 8.7 The following discussion focused on streamlining the accreditation process for civil society organisations, addressing funding concerns, and exploring workshops on fundraising, particularly for organisations focused on victim support. Consensus emerged on broadening civil society involvement to include think tanks and industry actors, establishing regular year-round interactions, and refining the accreditation process.
- 8.8 The Board thanked Ms Waechter for her update.

**9. AGENDA ITEM NINE – Preparation of the briefing to the States Parties by Board members**

- 9.1 The Board reviewed the slides prepared by Prof Magda Bauta Solés that would be shared with States Parties at the briefing, and agreed to include recent preparatory meetings, particularly on youth engagement, that had been held to prepare its Seventeenth Session.
- 9.2 Board members agreed to provide accurate and more detailed information to answer questions on current priority areas of work, such as the update of the ABEO Strategic Plan, the inventory of academic institutions with courses on the Convention, or the ChemTech Centre’s blue book.
- 9.3 The Board highlighted the need to use practical examples to illustrate the main aspects of the ABEO’s current activities.

**10. AGENDA ITEM TEN – Wrap-up and main conclusions from the feedback received from States Parties during the briefing**

- 10.1 The ABEO Chairperson summarised the main aspects of the briefing to States Parties on ABEO activities: the interest of States Parties had been demonstrated by the significant attendance of more than 40 delegations from all geographical groups. The Chairperson added that no delegation left the briefing in spite of it exceeding by 30 minutes the scheduled time of one hour, which showed the interest in education and outreach activities and its increasing role in preventing the re-emergence of chemical weapons, which had been acknowledged by the States Parties.
- 10.2 The Board commented on the positive feedback received from States Parties, particularly regarding the current diverse composition of the ABEO and the most recent activities to project the relevance of the Convention. The Board valued the support expressed by delegates for the ongoing cooperation with the ICA and the role of the Board in assisting with tailor-made webinars and trainings for National Authorities, provided at their request. The Board concluded that the annual briefing on ABEO activities had added value, also for new diplomats taking up their functions in The Hague, and agreed to consider delivering briefings on ABEO activities for new diplomats.

**11. AGENDA ITEM ELEVEN – Presentation of the inventory of academic institutions with courses on the OPCW and/or the Chemical Weapons Convention: Agreement by the Board on the final document – Prof Janefrances Ihedioha**

- 11.1 Prof Janefrances Ihedioha shared a presentation on the latest updated inventory of academic institutions offering courses on the OPCW and/or the Convention, so that Board members could contribute with their feedback and fine-tune the final version of the inventory document.
- 11.2 A great strength of this inventory was that it identified universities worldwide, with the aim of covering all regional groups. The main objectives of this inventory were to identify what already existed in terms of academic institutions offering courses on the Convention, to foster collaboration, to increase knowledge about the Convention, and

to increase accessibility to relevant educational opportunities for persons interested in the Convention and the OPCW by centralising information on available courses. It also served to raise awareness about the importance of education in chemical disarmament and to encourage more institutions to develop relevant courses and programmes.

- 11.3 The Board discussed whether a limited number of academic institutions should be reflected in each country, or if this inventory would be open-ended. The Board agreed that at this stage the goal was to identify this network of universities and to submit this list to the Director-General so that, if he deemed appropriate, he could invite States Parties to complete the inventory with universities in their countries offering courses on the Convention. The Board commented that, at a later stage, the establishment of a centralised, easily accessible online database could be envisaged.

**12. AGENDA ITEM TWELVE – OPCW activities and links with some Sustainable Development Goals – Mr Szymon Bocheński, Senior Policy Officer in the Office of Strategy and Policy, OPCW**

- 12.1 Mr Bocheński briefed the ABEO on the recent focus of the Secretariat on identifying the linkages between the OPCW activities and the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). He pointed out that the realisation of the OPCW's mission and adaptation to the changing international security environment required the Organisation to leverage the potential of external stakeholders and benefit from synergies with relevant international actors. By highlighting and referring to links with selected SDGs in its work, as appropriate, the Organisation could broaden its outreach. Mr Bocheński explained that the Secretariat's activities were found to contribute to the implementation of SDGs 3, 12, and 16. As a next step, the Secretariat would devise a communications strategy to highlight these linkages when interacting with external audiences to educate the Secretariat staff.

- 12.2 The ABEO welcomed the presentation and the Secretariat's work on SDGs. Board members highlighted that putting OPCW activities in additional perspective would enable reaching out to new audiences and possibly gaining access to new sources of extrabudgetary funding. The Board requested that it be kept informed about the results of the Secretariat's efforts, particularly the implementation of the communications strategy with respect to SDGs.

**13. AGENDA ITEM THIRTEEN – Update on SAB activities, Mr Peter Hotchkiss, Science Policy Adviser and SAB Secretary**

- 13.1 The Secretary to the Scientific Advisory Board (SAB), Mr Peter Hotchkiss, provided an overview of the recent work of the SAB, to include a summary of its most recent session, as well as the ongoing activities of its Temporary Working Group (TWG) on Chemical Forensics. He began by recounting the mandate of the Board to monitor developments in science and technology relevant to the Convention and the work of the OPCW, and subsequently provide advice based on this information. Of particular note was that the SAB reported directly, and exclusively, to the Director-General, and each Board member, while nominated by their respective States Parties, operated in an independent capacity while on the Board. This was to help ensure that the advice and recommendations on science and technology that the SAB provided were objective, trustworthy, and impartial.

- 13.2 The SAB met for its Thirty-Eighth Session from 27 to 31 May 2024 at the OPCW in The Hague. The session was led by SAB Chairperson Mr Günter Povoden, with Prof Imee Su Martinez as Vice-Chairperson. The SAB had welcomed five new members to the Board this year. At its session, the Board received seven briefings from external speakers on topics including persistent nerve agents; chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear (CBRN) defence innovation; machine learning; unmanned aerial vehicles; metal-organic frameworks; and laboratory automation. The Board also heard from staff members of the Secretariat on various topics of relevance. The Chairperson of the recently established TWG on Chemical Forensics updated the Board on the mandate of the Group and its progress to date. Several Board members also presented their own research and provided updates on recent activities of interest to the SAB. The SAB dedicated time to discussing the impact of AI and other emerging technologies, and to considering its approach to the Sixth Review Conference.
- 13.3 Moving forward, the SAB would continue to assist the Director-General and the Secretariat, as appropriate, in various activities. Likewise, it would continue to ramp up efforts to prepare for its support to the next Review Conference.
- 13.4 The Board thanked Mr Peter Hotchkiss for his briefing and agreed to continue collaboration through ABEO and SAB observers and Secretaries.
- 14. AGENDA ITEM FOURTEEN – Election of the ABEO Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson for 2025**
- 14.1 The Secretary to the ABEO informed the Board of the interest expressed by some Board members in serving as Chairperson or Vice-Chairperson in 2025, and of their support for the candidates that the Board would elect.
- 14.2 The Board re-elected Prof Magda Bauta Solés as Chairperson and elected Prof Ying Zhou as Vice-Chairperson for 2025.
- 15. AGENDA ITEM FIFTEEN – Statement by the elected Chairperson**
- The elected Chairperson thanked Board members for their trust and support and assured them that she would continue to do her best to enjoy the trust of all Board members. She added that she would work closely with the elected Vice-Chairperson to deliver results.
- 16. AGENDA ITEM SIXTEEN – Update on the International Conference on Chemistry Education 2024 and participation of ABEO members – Prof Supawan Tantayanon**
- 16.1 Prof Supawan Tantayanon updated the Board on the current status of preparations of the International Conference on Chemistry Education (ICCE) 2024 and her contacts with the ICA regarding the sponsorship request submitted within the framework of the Conference Support Programme.
- 16.2 She informed the Board that several of its members would attend the ICCE Conference in Pattaya, Thailand in July 2024 and highlighted that OPCW educational resources for young chemists would be promoted during that international event.
- 16.3 The Board thanked Prof Tantayanon for her update.

**17. AGENDA ITEM SEVENTEEN – Topics identified for further consideration at the Eighteenth Session of the ABEO**

The Board agreed to discuss at its next session the opportunity of preparing ABEO briefings for new diplomats and to have a debate on the impacts and opportunities of AI for educational activities implemented by the OPCW. Regarding the priorities identified in the updated Strategic Plan, the Board highlighted the need to identify a champion for each priority, when new ABEO members would start their functions.

**18. AGENDA ITEM EIGHTEEN – Report on intersessional activities of Board members**

18.1 Prof Magda Bauta Solés held meetings with Ms Dorine van der Wal, from the WHO, to prepare the presentation on youth engagement for the Seventeenth Session of the Board. She also held a preparatory meeting in person with Ms Lucía Mantecón, Visiting Professor at Rey Juan Carlos University in Madrid, to coordinate her participation at the Seventeenth Session to discuss her experiences and lessons learned with the implementation of Model United Nations at the university campus. Prof Bauta Solés had also attended (online) the informal consultations on engagement with civil society at the beginning of May, at the request of the co-facilitators.

18.2 Prof Graciela González was preparing a manuscript entitled “From Forensic Chemistry: An Educational Experience” by invitation of the journal Chemistry Teacher International. The manuscript detailed a course she had taught since 2017 at the University of Buenos Aires, covering topics such as ballistics, fires, explosives, chemical warfare agents, and environmental crimes. It also addresses safety measure legislation on chemical substances, the Convention, and the OPCW, as well as ethical debates related to chemical knowledge and access. She has also collaborated in the development of a core syllabus on courses on the Convention and the OPCW and the inventory of academic institutions with courses on the OPCW and/or the Convention presented at the Seventeenth Session of the ABEO.

18.3 During the intersessional period, Dr Craig Cormick co-coordinated with Prof Vicente Garrido Rebolledo the work on the update of the Strategic Plan.

18.4 Dr Ladislava Navrátilová remained actively involved in the activities of the OPCW Assistance and Protection Branch. As the head trainer, she had prepared the following training courses that would be held later in the year: OPCW international sampling course (Czech Republic, 14 to 19 September 2024); OPCW basic training course (Germany, 7 to 11 October 2024); advanced CBRN training course (Paraguay, 21 to 30 October 2024). Additionally, Dr Navrátilová had been in regular contact with the East African team of instructors, with whom she discussed the OPCW training strategy.

18.5 Dr Nezha Barakate informed the Board that during the intersessional period she had worked on the update of the ABEO Strategic Plan. She had obtained the certificate of completion for the “Individual First Aid Kit Course” held in Cha-am, Thailand on 6 May 2024. She had also participated in the training course held in Cha-am, Thailand from 5 to 11 May 2024 on “Safe and Secure Approaches in Field Environments” for experts nominated to the roster for the United Nations Secretary-General’s Mechanism for Investigation of the Alleged Use of Chemical, Biological or Toxin Weapons.

- 18.6 Prof Rocael Hernández Rizzardini had coordinated the work on the ChemTech Centre's blue book with ABEO members during the intersessional period.
- 18.7 Prof JaneFrances Ihedioha had participated in a weekly online training workshop on enhancing the capacities of Nigerian universities to administer online learning programmes, organised by the National Universities Commission in partnership with SUNY Polytechnic Institute in Utica, New York from 3 May to 7 June 2024. This was in preparations for exploring the possibility of developing an online course related to the Convention at the Centre for Distance and e-Learning (CDeL) of the University of Nigeria. During the intersessional period, she had also coordinated the task of collating the inventory of academic institutions offering and developing a core syllabus for courses on the Convention and/or OPCW.
- 18.8 Prof Ying Zhou had mentored two young professors from Zhejiang University of Technology (ZJUT), China, to jointly prepare the 32-hour postgraduate course on chemical ethics, covering the OPCW, the Convention, and The Hague Ethical Guidelines, for the next autumn semester at ZJUT. She promoted OPCW educational resources, such as e-learning modules for universities, to young students and teachers at ZJUT. She also contributed to the updated work on the inventory of academic institutions offering courses on the Convention and/or OPCW.
- 19. AGENDA ITEM NINETEEN – Vision on the implementation of a fellowship programme for women in chemistry by the OPCW: Opportunities and challenges – Mr Zaven Hakopov, Knowledge Management Advisor**
- 19.1 During his presentation to the Board, Mr Zaven Hakopov, the Knowledge Management Advisor at the OPCW, provided a quick recap of the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Fellowship Programme of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), which had been presented at the previous session of the Board. He then outlined a concept for the OPCW fellowship programme for women in chemistry. By providing funding for master's degree studies, the programme would aim to empower female students pursuing advanced degrees in chemical sciences, with a strong emphasis on ethical standards, helping them to become future leaders in the field. By supporting these scholars, the initiative would intend to foster a responsible culture of knowledge and to embed ethical principles deeply within the practice of chemistry. Moreover, as beneficiaries of the fellowship, participants would carry forward a profound awareness of the Convention throughout their careers. Their intrinsic knowledge would enable them to contribute significantly to global efforts aimed at preventing chemical weapons proliferation, thereby advancing the overarching goal of a world free from chemical weapons, while actively engaging in non-proliferation and disarmament initiatives for global peace and security.
- 19.2 Mr Hakopov emphasised the structured execution that would be required for the programme's success, highlighting key steps, such as clearly defining objectives aligned with promoting gender equality, supporting women in chemical science, and building a diverse workforce in the field and eventually for the OPCW. He proposed establishing transparent selection criteria to ensure fairness and inclusivity in candidate selection, and advocated for robust advertisement and outreach strategies to attract diverse applicants globally. Additionally, Mr Hakopov underscored the importance of a streamlined application process and the formation of an expert selection committee

to oversee fair evaluation and selection of fellows. He also emphasised the need for effective monitoring, support mechanisms, and alumni networking initiatives to maximise the impact and sustainability of the fellowship programme. Lastly, he outlined various funding and resource mobilisation options, including government sponsorships, industry partnerships, collaborations with international organisations and foundations, and academic institution engagements to secure sustainable financial support for the programme's continuous growth and success.

- 19.3 The Board members responded positively to the presentation, expressing their enthusiasm for the programme's potential impact and the conceptual approach outlined. Board members posed insightful questions, including inquiries about the geographical diversity of fellowship recipients, which Mr Hakopov affirmed as a critical consideration. He emphasised that maintaining diversity across regions was not only crucial for the programme's credibility, but that it also enhanced its global reach and impact. The ABEO Chairperson also expressed the Board's willingness to actively contribute to various stages of the programme, from outreach efforts to refining selection criteria, to participating in the selection process itself. Mr Hakopov acknowledged the ABEO's substantive expertise and highlighted its integral role in ensuring the programme's success and sustainability.
- 19.4 The Board thanked Mr Hakopov for his presentation and agreed to continue discussions on the subject matter, as appropriate, during the intersessional period.

**20. AGENDA ITEM TWENTY – Dissemination of the National Autonomous University of Mexico diploma course in all regions**

- 20.1 The Board reflected on the best strategies to ensure wide dissemination of the information related to the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM) diploma course in all regions, and agreed to provide a link to the OPCW on their university webpages that would re-direct students to the information on the UNAM course and core syllabus, once they were published.
- 20.2 The ABEO Chairperson also suggested that a brochure with information on the UNAM course be distributed to National Authorities during the annual meeting of National Authorities and that information be disseminated at the regional meeting of National Authorities in Latin America and the Caribbean in early July. Another opportunity to widely disseminate information on the diploma course would be during the side event on educational networks in chemical and biological security, which would be probably held in the margins of the Conference in 2024.
- 20.3 The Director of the Office of Internal Oversight informed the Board that, in principle, a brochure or similar promotional material on the UNAM course would be available to be distributed in autumn.

**21. AGENDA ITEM TWENTY-ONE – Any other business**

- 21.1 One Board member commented that the section devoted to the report on intersessional activities by the Board members in ABEO reports did not indicate the specific reporting period to which this section referred. He further suggested replacing the title of this standing agenda item to read "activities by Board members during the past intersessional period".

- 21.2 The Board Secretary explained that such language had not been included because, since the establishment of the ABEO, past practice had been to report on the activities implemented by Board members since the last ABEO session, meaning during the last intersessional period.
- 21.3 The Board agreed to keep the above-mentioned section as it stood, taking into consideration the annual report on ABEO activities that the Board would provide to the Director-General in line with the ABEO rules of procedure. That report could reflect, as appropriate, the activities carried out by Board members individually and collectively.
- 21.4 Prof González informed the Board that the University of Buenos Aires was exploring the possibility of launching a course similar to the UNAM diploma course.
- 21.5 Several dates were considered by the Board to hold its Eighteenth Session in 2025, with a preference to tentatively hold the next session in the first half of February.
- 21.6 To ensure continuity of the Board's work, ABEO members agreed to meet online with new Board members following their appointment by the Director-General.
- 21.7 The departing ABEO members expressed their sincere gratitude to the Director-General and the Secretariat staff that had interacted with them, and acknowledged the added value of the experience of serving on the Board.
- 22. AGENDA ITEM TWENTY-TWO – Wrap-up, main conclusions, and closure of the meeting**
- 22.1 The Board highlighted the importance of youth engagement to enhance its participation in the chemical disarmament and non-proliferation architecture, and that this target audience was a priority in order to raise awareness about the relevance of the Convention and the OPCW's mission.
- 22.2 Board members agreed to submit to the Director-General the final version of the inventory of academic institutions with courses on the Convention, the proposed core syllabus for educators wishing to start a course on it, and the ChemTech Centre's blue book.
- 22.3 The Chairperson closed the Seventeenth Session of the ABEO on 13 June at 16:15.

Annexes:

- Annex 1: List of Participants at the Seventeenth Session of the Advisory Board on Education and Outreach
- Annex 2: Updated Strategic Plan of the Advisory Board on Education and Outreach (English only)



**Annex 1**

**LIST OF PARTICIPANTS\* AT THE SEVENTEENTH SESSION OF THE  
ADVISORY BOARD ON EDUCATION AND OUTREACH**

1. Prof Magda Lidia Bauta Solés, ABEO Chairperson
2. Prof Graciela Alicia González, ABEO member
3. Dr Craig Cormick, ABEO member (online participation)
4. Dr Ladislava Navrátilová, ABEO member
5. Prof Rocael Hernández Rizzardini, ABEO member
6. Prof Mohd Jamil Maah, ABEO member
7. Dr Nezha Barakate, ABEO member
8. Prof Janefrances Ihedioha, ABEO member
9. Mr Shahab Ud Din, ABEO member
10. Prof Ying Zhou, ABEO member
11. Prof Supawan Tantayanon, ABEO member
12. Dr Richard Guthrie, ABEO member
13. Prof Marietjie Potgieter, observer, IUPAC (online participation)
14. Prof Imee Martinez, observer, SAB
15. Ms Dorine van der Wal, observer, Youth engagement, WHO (online participation)
16. Ms Lucía Mantecón, Visiting Professor, Rey Juan Carlos University, Madrid (online participation)
17. Mr Marcin Wróblewski, Director of the Office of Strategy and Policy, OPCW
18. Ms Silvina Coria, Director of the Office of Internal Oversight, OPCW
19. Ms Elisabeth Waechter, Head of the Public Affairs Branch and OPCW Spokesperson
20. Mr Zaven Hakopov, Knowledge Management Advisor, OPCW
21. Mr Peter Hotchkiss, Senior Science Policy Adviser and SAB Secretary, OPCW
22. Mr Szymon Bocheński, Senior Policy Officer in the Office of Strategy and Policy, OPCW
23. Ms Luisa Sánchez-Bravo, ABEO Secretary, Office of Strategy and Policy, OPCW

- \* Apologies:  
Dr Jason Openo, ABEO member  
Prof Christopher Daase, ABEO member  
Prof Vicente Garrido Rebolledo, ABEO member  
Dr William Garcia (observer: European Chemical Industry Council)

**Annex 2**

**UPDATED STRATEGIC PLAN  
OF THE ADVISORY BOARD ON EDUCATION AND OUTREACH**

**Strategic Plan content**

1. Vision and mission
2. Contextual analysis
3. Priorities of the Director-General
4. Goals and objectives
5. Key target audiences
6. Strategies
7. Evaluation

## 1. VISION AND MISSION

### Vision

- 1.1 The Advisory Board on Education and Outreach (ABEO) facilitates a network of global educators and outreach activities dedicated to maintaining a world free of chemical weapons.
- 1.2 It provides expert advice on education and outreach to the OPCW Director-General, the Technical Secretariat (the Secretariat), the policy-making organs and, upon their request, to States Parties.

### Mission statement

- 1.3 In line with the existing terms of reference of the Board,<sup>3</sup> the ABEO's mission is to support the work of the OPCW by providing specialised advice in areas of education and outreach relevant to chemical disarmament and the prevention of the re-emergence of chemical weapons.

## 2. CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS

Since the previous Strategic Plan was adopted by the ABEO, there have been several significant changes in the Board's operating environment that need to be taken into consideration. These include:

- (a) the completion of the destruction of all declared chemical weapons, meaning a stronger emphasis now needs to be placed on preventing their re-emergence, particularly in light of global instability, and on the prevention of complacency;
- (b) the role of the OPCW Centre for Chemistry and Technology (ChemTech Centre) and the Board's relationship with its work, which is an area of great potential that should be prioritised;
- (c) the rise of artificial intelligence (AI) and the subsequent potential for terrorist groups or rogue actors to develop chemical weapons more easily;
- (d) changing attitudes to what constitutes chemical weapons and forecasting emerging areas that will impact the work of the OPCW, be they technological developments or social changes;
- (e) great strides by the Board and the OPCW in digital learning which can be used to target many of the key audiences, meaning greater efforts in other outreach areas need to be made to match them;
- (f) an increasing impact in identifying and engaging with influencers and implementers; and
- (g) the rise of powerful AI tools, which demands a renewed focus on scientific ethics and the responsible uses of science.

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<sup>3</sup> "Advisory Board on Education and Outreach Terms of Reference" (Annex to C-20/DEC.9, dated 3 December 2015).

### 3. PRIORITIES OF THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL

The ABEO will ensure that its work aligns with the Director-General's priorities by:

- (a) considering the impact of AI on education and outreach as it pertains to preventing the re-emergence of chemical weapons, and providing advice on ethical aspects related to the impact of AI;
- (b) contributing to the educational programmes implemented at the ChemTech Centre, at the request of the Secretariat;
- (c) providing advice on the update of the "Blue book" of relevant experts (professors, inspectors, relevant professionals from the chemical industry, politicians, and diplomats, among others) and institutions (governments, universities, foundations, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), and think tanks, among others) that could support ChemTech Centre programmes or become goodwill ambassadors for the Centre (such as Nobel laureates);
- (d) raising awareness of chemical safety and security and ethical guidelines—particularly the protection of the environment and peaceful uses of chemistry—targeting civil society, academia, and young professionals;
- (e) continuing to establish digital learning relationships with academic institutions by integrating the importance of AI; and
- (f) identifying tools and materials that can be translated into the OPCW's official languages to boost the capacity-building activities of Member States, and continuing to cooperate with the International Cooperation and Assistance Division (ICA), ensuring that all activities and actions have an identified added value and avoid duplication.

### 4. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

4.1 The goals of the ABEO are to:

- (a) provide advice to the Director-General and States Parties and other stakeholders on education and outreach activities that is effective, sustainable, cost-effective, and benefits from the latest advances in education and outreach practices;<sup>4</sup>
- (b) raise awareness of the relevance of the Chemical Weapons Convention (the Convention) and the OPCW's work, using key messages and strategies for each target audience;<sup>5</sup>
- (c) provide strategic advice on the individuals, activities, and projects that strengthen education about the Convention, emerging developments in chemistry, and the ongoing efforts to prevent the re-emergence of chemical weapons;

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<sup>4</sup> Annex to C-20/DEC.9.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

- (d) work closely on the delivery of education and outreach activities that are aligned with the ChemTech Centre's stated education and outreach goals and objectives, ensuring full use of the ChemTech Centre's potential; and
- (e) improve the reach of the OPCW's activities through the latest technologies, including digital learning, both at national and regional levels, and provide advice on systematic translation of materials into OPCW official languages.<sup>6</sup>

4.2 The **objectives** of the ABEO are to:

- (a) provide advice on the development and maintenance of networks and new partnerships with key stakeholders in order to leverage their expertise to help achieve the OPCW's goals;<sup>7</sup>
- (b) monitor, through the Board's biannual meetings and informal intersessional consultations, global education and outreach trends relevant to the goals of the Board, and report on these to the Director-General and to States Parties through the Director-General;<sup>8</sup>
- (c) increase the knowledge, skills, and expertise of States Parties, particularly through the review of current digital learning modules, and provide advice based on the main recommendations provided by the ABEO's Temporary Working Group on E-learning to continually enhance the digital learning offering of the Secretariat;
- (d) continually develop education and outreach materials, and improve existing materials, in accessible formats that increase awareness of the importance of preventing the re-emergence of chemical weapons and that are strategically targeted in terms of time, audience, and need, and for which distribution channels have been identified;
- (e) provide advice on education and outreach work to the Director-General, the policy-making organs and, upon their request, to States Parties and/or National Authorities;<sup>9</sup> and
- (f) evaluate and assess all work regularly undertaken by the Board during ABEO sessions through the broad evaluation mechanisms built into each activity, and report on the outcomes of these evaluations. Results will be used to continually improve the impact of activities.

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<sup>6</sup> Report of the First Session of the Advisory Board on Education and Outreach (ABEO-1/1, dated 29 April 2016).  
<sup>7</sup> Medium-Term Plan of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons 2024 – 2028 (EC-104/S/1\* C-28/S/1, dated 14 August 2023).  
<sup>8</sup> Annex to C-20/DEC.9.  
<sup>9</sup> ABEO-1/1.

## **5. KEY TARGET AUDIENCES**

### **Policymakers**

5.1 Policymakers are individuals who are able to make or influence policy at the national, regional, and international levels. They may be government ministers, ministry officials, diplomats, or parliamentarians. In view of their respective capacities and responsibilities, they can affect the implementation of the Convention in many settings. Key priorities for engaging with policymakers include:

- (a) increasing awareness of the Convention, including the role of National Authorities in preventing chemical weapons and chemical terrorism, and the importance of preventing the re-emergence of chemical weapons;
- (b) establishing partnerships with educational boards and providing updated information to ministries to ensure nationwide adoption of chemical safety education, monitoring the implementation and assessing the impact thereof;
- (c) providing academic advice on specialised training programmes for emergency responders, law enforcement, and health care professionals, upon the request of the ICA, States Parties, or National Authorities;
- (d) conducting regional workshops, tailor-made webinars, and simulations to enhance practical skills, upon the request of States Parties; and
- (e) promoting knowledge sharing and best practices in education and outreach strategies.

### **Academia and the scientific community**

5.2 Academia includes all persons involved in an institution of higher learning (such as universities and colleges, including doctoral and post-doctoral audiences) across fields ranging from science and technology to law, international relations, social sciences, humanities, business, and others. Educators in secondary and even primary schools are also potential audiences. Academia is highly respected in society and is very often an opinion maker. Key priorities for engaging with academia include:

- (a) raising awareness of the Convention and the role and relevance of The Hague Ethical Guidelines to promote a culture of responsible conduct in the chemical sciences and guard against the misuse of chemistry;
- (b) engaging with academia on using digital learning modules for inclusion in teaching;
- (c) identifying champions to support ChemTech Centre programmes or to serve as goodwill ambassadors for the Centre;
- (d) contributing academic advice and/or peer review for the development of standardised educational modules on chemical safety for schools and universities;

- (e) collaborating with educational institutions to integrate these modules into existing science curricula;
- (f) advocating for the inclusion of chemical safety as a core competency across disciplines, emphasising responsible chemical handling, risk assessment, and emergency response; and
- (g) engaging with scientific publications and journals.

### **Industry**

5.3 Industry is defined broadly to cover all players along the value chain (including scientists and engineers working in industry), from the manufacture, use, transportation, and storage of chemicals, to the trade of chemicals with potential applications as weapons, or that present significant risks to industrial safety. It also incorporates micro-, mini-, medium-, and large-scale operations. Key priorities for engaging with industry include:

- (a) raising awareness of chemical safety and security, and ethical guidelines, and the OPCW mandate; and
- (b) recruiting champions (relevant professionals from the chemical industry, institutions, think tanks, among others) to support ChemTech Centre programmes or serve as ambassadors for the Centre.

### **Civil society**

5.4 The OPCW has developed relationships with various civil society organisations, particularly through the Chemical Weapons Convention Coalition, an umbrella grouping of national and international NGOs established in 2009. Other NGOs in the fields of disarmament, security, and the environment are also potential targets for engagement in preventing the re-emergence of chemical weapons. Key priorities for engaging with civil society include:

- (a) supporting civil society including NGOs in their role in raising awareness of issues related to chemical weapons among their respective stakeholders (particularly the protection of environment and the peaceful uses of chemistry); and
- (b) organising chemical safety art contests: encourage creative expression through art, music, or writing related to chemical safety and disarmament education.

### **The general public**

5.5 The general public—or more accurately general publics—can have a strong impact; it can influence policy and other stakeholders, and perceptions of what the general public thinks about a topic can have a far-reaching influence. It should be noted, however, that often the perceptions of public attitudes are not always aligned with the actual attitudes as a result of inherent biases of the media and social media in reporting public sentiment and behaviours. Key priorities for engaging with the general public include:

- (a) increasing awareness of the OPCW and the Convention, framed around how they are keeping the public safe from chemical weapons and chemical terrorism;

- (b) organising public awareness campaigns: creating engaging multimedia content (videos, infographics, and social media posts) explaining the risks of chemical weapons and the importance of disarmament in line with the provisions of the Convention, for broad dissemination across online platforms;
- (c) collaborating with media outlets, influencers, and NGOs to amplify awareness campaigns, and organising workshops for journalists on accurate reporting related to chemical incidents; and
- (d) cultivating a global culture of chemical safety consciousness in which citizens actively participate in prevention efforts and report suspicious activities.

### **Youth and future generations**

5.6 Today's youth and future generations need to be understood not only as a subset of the general public, but also of many other key audiences; they often relate to and use different media and information channels and have different influencers than traditional audiences. They are also often more conscious of gender and other equity issues. They can also often be a more active segment on the global issues that they see affecting their future. The particular information needs of this audience should be better understood in order to reach them more effectively. Key priorities for engaging with today's youth and future generations include:

- (a) increasing engagement with the Convention, particularly by increasing knowledge of chemical weapons, how they have been used through history, and how the Convention prevents their use today—especially in terms of environmental protection and peaceful uses of chemistry;
- (b) addressing gender equity issues in chemistry and its applications; and
- (c) raising awareness of relevant career opportunities in all regions.

## **6. STRATEGIES**

6.1 The ABEO has categorised its current goals as follows:

- (a) Short-term goals (under 2 years): this might include enhancing communication channels, organising workshops, or continuing to develop educational materials (digital learning resources);
- (b) Mid-term goals (2–4 years): establishing partnerships with educational institutions and communities, conducting awareness campaigns, or continuing to expand the implementation of training programmes; and
- (c) Long-term goals (4 years and beyond): these involve systemic changes, such as integrating chemical safety education into national curricula, fostering international collaboration, or promoting research in chemical security.

6.2 Each goal (strategy) will be assigned a champion within the Board to ensure efficient implementation.



- 6.3 Every goal (strategy) will be reviewed periodically.
- 6.4 A specific analysis of AI and its impact on education and outreach will be made before identifying the best strategies.
- 6.5 The list of activities is to be prioritised according to whether they:
- (a) are of high priority;
  - (b) can realistically be achieved;
  - (c) have a champion to drive them;
  - (d) can be undertaken with existing resources or attracted resources; and
  - (e) are aligned with a stated goal or objective.
- 6.6 In discussing the merits of each proposed strategy activity, those that cannot meet the requirements listed above should be shelved (though possibly revisited at a later time).

## **7. EVALUATION**

- 7.1 Each activity undertaken should include an evaluation to analyse its success. The evaluation and assessment of ABEO activities will be conducted regularly during ABEO sessions.
- 7.2 In order to deliver effective, impactful results it is vital to be able to modify and fine tune the activities based on this evaluation in a continuous cycle of improvement.

<p><b>Aligned with the OPCW's Short-, Mid-, or Long-Term Priorities via a Stated Goal or Objective?</b></p>	<p><b>Audiences</b></p>	<p><b>Priorities</b></p>
<p>1.1 Yes</p>	<p>Academia Chemical industry Civil society Policy makers National Authorities OPCW</p>	<p><b>1. Provide advice on the development/maintenance of strategic partnerships</b></p> <p>1.1 Identify a coordinated strategy for providing advice on the development or maintenance of formal and informal networks with academic institutions, international organisations, and individuals. This strategy should include an active role played by National Authorities in terms of engaging think tanks, universities, and other entities, and should tap into synergies with other international organisations.</p> <p>1.2. Connect with the global community through presentations, workshops, and panel discussions by partnering with event organisers.</p> <p>1.3. Create a forum for the exchange of ideas and feedback for participants in learning and training activities organised by the OPCW.</p> <p><b>Short-term goal:</b> Identify strategic partners</p> <p><b>Medium-term goal:</b> Facilitate network conversations about ideas and areas where the OPCW could bring added value</p> <p><b>Long-term goal:</b> Generate new research publications; formalise collaboration.</p>
<p>1.2 Yes</p>		
<p>1.3 Only if an ABEO champion is identified</p>		

Priorities	Audiences	Aligned with the OPCW's Short-, Mid-, or Long-Term Priorities via a Stated Goal or Objective?
<p><b>2. Improve the reach of the OPCW's digital learning activities</b></p> <p>2.1. Develop a promotional plan for digital learning activities to wider audiences, broken down by category and geographical area.</p> <p>2.2. Continue investing in a sustainable and predictable digital learning infrastructure, including a digital learning strategy.</p> <p>2.3. Develop a multilingual learning management system and website links.</p> <p>2.4. Develop a digital strategy for the ChemTech Centre.</p> <p><b>Short-term goal:</b> Review digital learning activities and successes, as well as ongoing challenges, to identify the most valuable opportunities. Compile a list of digital learning tools already available, or that are in the pipeline. Organise workshops and continue developing educational materials. Provide advice on training in interactive digital learning for States Parties.</p> <p><b>Medium-term goal:</b> Complete outstanding TWG recommendations, select best tools for different stakeholders, establish partnerships with educational institutions and communities, conduct awareness campaigns, and/or continue or expand the implementation of training programmes by identifying new regions and actors. Invite renowned professors and experts to deliver e-lectures on chemical safety, disarmament, and non-proliferation for inclusion in the resources.</p> <p><b>Long-term goal:</b> Expand cooperation, offer selected OPCW tools, integrate chemical safety education into national curricula, foster international collaboration, and promote research on chemical security resources. Evaluate efforts and leverage existing projects to secure momentum for additional projects.</p>	<p>Academia</p> <p>Chemical industry</p> <p>Civil society</p> <p>Policymakers</p> <p>National Authorities</p> <p>Youth</p> <p>General Public</p>	<p>2.1 Yes</p> <p>2.2 Implemented by the Secretariat</p> <p>2.3 Implemented by the Secretariat</p> <p>2.4 Only if an ABEO champion is identified</p>

Priorities	Audiences	Aligned with the OPCW's Short-, Mid-, or Long-Term Priorities via a Stated Goal or Objective?
<p><b>3. Chemical safety and security and ethics: Curriculum integration</b></p> <p>3.1 Provide advice on the development of standardised educational modules on chemical safety for schools and universities.</p> <p>3.2 Identify educational activities that can be undertaken with the ChemTech Centre.</p> <p>3.3 Identify schools and academic institutions that might be interested in curriculum integration (in cooperation with States Parties).</p> <p><b>Short-term goal:</b> Collaborate with educational institutions to integrate these modules into existing science curricula</p> <p><b>Mid-term goal:</b> Establish partnerships with educational boards and ministries to ensure nationwide adoption of chemical safety education. Partner with universities to conduct research on emerging chemical threats and aspects of assistance and protection. Organise digital learning competitions in which students propose innovative solutions for chemical safety challenges.</p> <p><b>Long-term goal:</b> Advocate for the inclusion of chemical safety as a core competency across disciplines, emphasising responsible chemical handling, risk assessment, and emergency response.</p>	Academia (including schools)	Yes (linked with 5.4)

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Priorities</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Audiences</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Aligned with the OPCW's Short-, Mid-, or Long-Term Priorities via a Stated Goal or Objective?</b></p>
<p><b>4. Provide advice on the update of the “blue book” of relevant experts and institutions</b></p>		
<p>4.1 Provide advice on the update of the repository of experts and institutions to support the ChemTech Centre (profiles of experts, academics, industry professionals, and diplomats willing to contribute to capacity building). Input should be sought from National Authorities and other relevant agencies.</p>	<p>Academia Chemical industry Civil society</p>	<p>4.1 Yes</p>
<p>4.2 Develop an Ambassador Programme of influential figures (such as Nobel laureates and eminent scientists) to serve as ambassadors to promote ChemTech Centre programmes.</p> <p><b>Short-term goal:</b> Develop and obtain support for the blue book and first-draft content with supporting system requirements.</p> <p><b>Mid-term goal:</b> Identify and establish relationships with champions to encourage inclusion in the blue book. Build and expand a robust network of experts.</p> <p><b>Long-term goal:</b> Facilitate knowledge sharing and information exchange among experts and institutions.</p>		<p>4.2 Yes</p>

<p><b>Aligned with the OPCW's Short-, Mid-, or Long-Term Priorities via a Stated Goal or Objective?</b></p>	<p><b>Audiences</b></p>	<p><b>Priorities</b></p>
<p>5.1 Yes</p> <p>5.2 Yes</p> <p>5.3 Only if an ABEO champion is identified</p> <p>5.4 Yes</p> <p>5.5 Yes</p>	<p>General Public</p> <p>Youth</p>	<p><b>5. Public awareness campaigns</b></p> <p>5.1 Provide advice and support for the creation of engaging multimedia content (videos, infographics, social media posts) when requested by the Public Affairs Branch or divisions of the Secretariat. Conduct policy influence and public awareness campaigns.</p> <p>5.2 Provide expert advice on awareness campaigns organised by National Authorities, upon request.</p> <p>5.3 Foster creative expression through art, music, or writing contests related to chemical safety.</p> <p>5.4 Identify educational and outreach activities that can be implemented with the ChemTech Centre.</p> <p>5.5 Identify international organisations that have public awareness campaigns published on their websites, cross-link online resources and create a website that generally and simply describes rules for chemical protection and the risks posed by chemical weapons.</p> <p><b>Short-term goal:</b> Collaborate with media outlets, influencers, and NGOs to amplify awareness campaigns. Involve young leaders in policy discussions and decision-making processes.</p> <p><b>Mid-term goals:</b> Create and disseminate content for the public through online platforms. Organise youth forums, hackathons, and innovation challenges related to chemical safety. Encourage young minds to propose creative solutions.</p> <p><b>Long-term goal:</b> Cultivate a global culture of chemical safety consciousness, where citizens actively participate in prevention efforts and report suspicious activities. Use AI to counter misinformation and disinformation. Foster a new generation of chemical safety advocates who drive research, technology development, and policy reforms.</p>

Priorities	Audiences	Aligned with the OPCW's Short-, Mid-, or Long-Term Priorities via a Stated Goal or Objective?
<p><b>6. Provide academic advice on capacity-building activities upon the request of States Parties or the ICA</b></p> <p>6.1 Provide advice on specialised training programmes for emergency responders, law enforcement, and healthcare professionals, upon the request of the Assistance and Protection Branch.</p> <p><b>Short-term goal:</b> Provide academic advice on the delivery of educational trainings related to assistance and protection against chemical weapons and chemical response, upon request of the ICA or its Assistance and Protection Branch.</p> <p><b>Mid-term goal:</b> Support regional workshops and simulations to enhance practical skills, upon the Secretariat's request.</p> <p><b>Long-term goal:</b> Provide advice on collaboration with international organisations to create a global pool of chemical emergency responders to promote and expand knowledge sharing and best practices, upon the request of the ICA and/or its Assistance and Protection Branch.</p>	<p>First responders</p>	<p>6.1 Yes</p>
<p><b>7. Youth engagement and innovation</b></p> <p>7.1 Engage youth in innovative ways that are relevant to them, such as youth forums and hackathons involving targeted influencers.</p> <p>7.2 Run a model Convention simulation exercise and include targeted young social media influencers.</p> <p>7.3 Raise awareness of relevant career opportunities, addressing gender equity issues.</p> <p>7.4 Organise webinars for students, emphasising responsible chemistry and the role of young professionals</p> <p><b>Short-term goal:</b> Identify innovation challenges related to chemical safety. Encourage youth to propose creative solutions.</p> <p><b>Mid-term goal:</b> Provide advice on the advantages of a youth advisory board within the OPCW. Involve young leaders in policy discussions and decision-making processes.</p> <p><b>Long-term goal:</b> Foster a new generation of chemical safety advocates who drive research, technology development, and policy reforms.</p>	<p>Youth Academia</p>	<p>7.1 Only if an ABEO champion is identified</p> <p>7.2 Yes</p> <p>7.3 Yes, following a strategy and implementing it in coordination with OPCW Secretariat</p> <p>7.4 Only if an ABEO champion is identified</p>

Priorities	Audiences	Aligned with the OPCW's Short-, Mid-, or Long-Term Priorities via a Stated Goal or Objective?
<p><b>8. Provide advice on translation of tools and materials into OPCW official languages</b></p> <p>8.1 Increase the capacity-building efforts of States Parties by identifying resources that need to be accessible in multiple languages, identifying webinars on chemical safety that would need to be translated into official OPCW languages, and technical guidelines and digital learning modules to be localised, that is, tailored to specific linguistic regions.</p> <p><b>Short-term goal:</b> Identify key resources that need to be translated and seek resources to cover translation costs.</p> <p><b>Mid-term goal:</b> Broaden resources needing translation.</p> <p><b>Long-term goal:</b> Have all relevant resources translated.</p>	<p>Academia</p> <p>Chemical industry</p> <p>Civil society</p> <p>Policy makers</p> <p>General public</p> <p>Youth</p>	<p>8.1 Yes</p>
<p><b>9. Enhance the knowledge, expertise, and skills of States Parties</b></p> <p>9.1 Provide academic advice on adapting and using existing digital learning modules to ensure their relevance to and effectiveness for States Parties.</p> <p>9.2 Review OPCW tools, including digital learning resources, used in in-person courses for inspectors, upon request.</p> <p>9.3 Provide advice on the creation of online forums where States Parties can exchange experiences and learn from each other.</p> <p><b>Short-term goal:</b> Work with existing OPCW programmes to engage States Parties.</p> <p><b>Mid-term goal:</b> Provide education and outreach activities to States Parties upon their request.</p> <p><b>Long-term goal:</b> Continue working with States Parties and adapting materials as needed.</p>	<p>States Parties and National Authorities</p> <p>Policy makers</p> <p>OPCW</p>	<p>9.1 Yes</p> <p>9.2 Yes</p> <p>9.3 If requested by States Parties or the Secretariat</p>