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NOTE BY THE TECHNICAL SECRETARIAT

NEEDS ASSESSMENT AND BEST PRACTICES: CHEMICAL SAFETY AND SECURITY MANAGEMENT

1. At its Sixteenth Session, the Conference of the States Parties (the Conference) adopted decision C-16/DEC.10 (dated 1 December 2011) on the components of an agreed framework for the full implementation of Article XI of the Chemical Weapons Convention. In accordance with operative paragraph 2 of that decision, States Parties and the Technical Secretariat (the Secretariat) should “conduct, based on input from National Authorities and relevant stakeholders, a needs assessment on tools and guidance that would be helpful for promoting chemical safety and security.”¹ The Conference further recommended that States Parties and the Secretariat “organise workshops and training courses involving ... relevant governmental institutions, National Authorities, chemical industry and academic representatives, to promote the exchange of best practices, including on the improvement of chemical plant safety and safe transportation of toxic chemicals”.
2. Since 2009, the Secretariat has organised more than 120 events and training programmes to promote chemical safety and security management. Participants have been provided with updated knowledge on, inter alia, current practices, modern safety strategies, chemical site security management, and process safety culture. They have also shared best practices in the chemical industry with regard to chemical safety and security. The Secretariat’s role in this area was recognised by the Third Special Session of the Conference of the States Parties to Review the Operation of the Chemical Weapons Convention, which “[e]ncouraged the States Parties and the Secretariat to promote the OPCW’s role as a platform for voluntary consultation and cooperation among States Parties in the areas of chemical safety and security, including through the exchanges of information and best practices” (subparagraph 9.131(k) of RC-3/3*, dated 19 April 2013).

¹ “Chemical safety” refers to measures to prevent non-deliberate releases of toxic chemicals into the environment and to mitigate the impact if such events occur. Chemical safety comprises disciplines such as occupational safety, public safety, process safety, environmental safety, consumer safety, and transport safety. Many of these are also dealt with by other international conventions and by several other international bodies and lead agencies.

“Chemical security” refers to measures to prevent deliberate releases of toxic chemicals and to mitigate the impact if such events occur. In a wider context, it also includes policies to prevent attempts to acquire toxic chemicals or chemical weapons precursors (S/1129/2013, dated 30 September 2013).



3. In order to follow up on Conference decision C-16/DEC.10 and to systematically gather and make available the knowledge and practices shared by States Parties at OPCW training courses, the Secretariat invites States Parties, on a voluntary basis, to inform it of their specific needs in chemical safety and security management, as well as to provide information on their existing tools, guidance, and best practices in this area, including those related to the chemical industry, and addressing, inter alia, the transportation of hazardous chemicals by road.
4. This call follows eight previous invitations of this kind,² further to which States Parties voluntarily submitted the relevant information. Based on the information received subsequent to the first invitation (S/1362/2016, dated 7 March 2016), a report on the needs and best practices of States Parties in chemical safety and security management was published and circulated to the States Parties.³
5. In consideration of evolving trends in chemical safety and security management and the differing nature of each region, the Secretariat has revised the questionnaire in order to accurately capture the States Parties' needs in capacity building. The compilation of best practices may also be used as a reference for the ongoing work to develop indicative guidelines for the transportation of hazardous chemicals by road, as well as other initiatives in the chemical safety and security tools development programme.
6. The States Parties are strongly encouraged to submit information on their needs and best practices in chemical safety and security management using the questionnaire in the following link (<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/Assessment24>).
7. The result of the needs assessment based on the completed questionnaires will help the Secretariat to prioritise and streamline its activities and to formulate tailor-made capacity-building programmes to meet the needs of States Parties in the field of chemical safety and security management.
8. The online questionnaire should be completed **no later than 25 October 2024**.
9. Queries on completing the questionnaire may be addressed to Mr Taeon Kim, Programme Officer, who can be reached by telephone (+31 (0)70 416 3469) or by email (taeon.kim@opcw.org).
10. The Secretariat would be most grateful to the States Parties for their attention to this matter and their collaboration in this exercise.

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² The most recent Note regarding needs assessment and best practices in chemical safety and security management was published under the symbol S/2188/2023 (dated 6 July 2023).

³ Non-paper by the Secretariat: "Needs and Best Practices on Chemical Safety and Security Management" (dated 25 November 2016). Available at: https://www.opcw.org/sites/default/files/documents/ICA/ICB/OPCW_Report_on_Needs_and_Best_Practices_on_Chemical_Safety_and_Security_ManagementV3-2_1.2.pdf.