

File No. M-21020/3/2024-TECH
Government of India
Cabinet Secretariat
National Authority Chemical Weapons Convention

1st Floor, Chanakya Bhawan, Chanakyapuri,
New Delhi, dated March, 2024.

OFFICE MEMORANDUM

Subject: Workshop on Knowledge Sharing of Verification Practices at Chemical Weapons Production Facilities (CWPFs) – regarding.

India is a signatory to the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) since 1993. To fulfill the obligations under CWC, India destroyed its Chemical Weapons stockpiles in the year of 2009 and Defence Research & Development Organisation (DRDO) played key role in the destruction of the Chemical Weapons.

2. In this regard, please find enclosed herewith a copy of the Note Verbale No. NV/VER/CDB/128/24 dated 15 March 2024, received from Technical Secretariat (TS) of the OPCW, seeking nomination of a national expert on the above-mentioned subject workshop.

3. The aim of the workshop is to fulfil OPCW mandate to remain the global repository of knowledge and expertise relevant to the implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention, and with a view to potential future challenges relating to the accession of new States Parties, the Secretariat continuously strives to maintain its knowledge of past verification practices at chemical weapons-related facilities, in particular those related to chemical weapons production facilities (hereinafter “CWPFs”), specifically large-scale production and filling facilities.

4. In line with above, nomination of suitable, qualified and experienced candidate of suiting the requirements of the workshop, along with the curriculum vitae of the nominated expert and topics on which he or she could present during the workshop may be sent to this office **latest by 27 March 2024** for further forwarding to OPCW.

5. This issues with the approval of Competent Authority.

Saimi
21/03/2024

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To,
The Secretary,
Department of Defence R&D and Chairman, DRDO,
DRDO Bhawan, Rajaji Marg, New Delhi – 110011.



NV/VER/CDB/128/24

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The Technical Secretariat (hereinafter “the Secretariat”) of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons presents its compliments to the National Authority of the Republic of India and has the honour to extend an invitation to relevant national experts to participate in a three-day “Workshop on Knowledge Sharing of Verification Practices at Chemical Weapons Production Facilities (CWPFs)” planned to take place in mid-September 2024 (tentatively 10-12 September) at OPCW in The Hague, The Netherlands.

The Workshop was initially planned to be conducted in 2020 but was postponed due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The Secretariat is now restoring the plans to host this important event.

To fulfil its mandate to remain the global repository of knowledge and expertise relevant to the implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention, and with a view to potential future challenges relating to the accession of new States Parties, the Secretariat continuously strives to maintain its knowledge of past verification practices at chemical weapons-related facilities, in particular those related to chemical weapons production facilities (hereinafter “CWPFs”), specifically large-scale production and filling facilities.

This initiative is an important part of that process. The Secretariat has identified a need to gather and record first-hand knowledge related to implementation and verification practices at CWPFs to complement the written information it holds in its files. To that end, the Secretariat is inviting to the workshop individuals from States Parties having declared CWPFs in the past and who have direct knowledge of any of the following areas of expertise:

National Authority for the Chemical Weapons Convention
Chanakya Bhavan, Chanakyapuri 1st floor, 110021, New Delhi
Republic of India

Copy:

Permanent Representation of the Republic of India to the OPCW
Buitenrustweg 2, 2517KD The Hague
The Netherlands

- a) declarations related to CWPFs, accountability of the process of destruction/conversion of such facilities and verification practices used in the course of destruction/conversion processes, and
- b) negotiation of elimination provisions, and corresponding verification measures, with respect to States that adhered to the Convention after 2007.

Participation in the planned workshop will also include experienced current and former Secretariat staff who have been involved in planning and carrying out verification activities related to CWPFs. A more detailed concept note is attached.

The Secretariat would therefore be grateful for the assistance of the National Authority in identifying, by 1 April 2024, one national expert who has direct knowledge or experience on the above-mentioned subjects and who would be able to attend the workshop. The Secretariat would be grateful to receive the curriculum vitae of the nominated expert and topics on which he or she could present during the workshop. The workshop will be conducted in English.

The Secretariat point of contact for this event is Mr. Anton Utkin (anton.utkin@opcw.org) from the Chemical Demilitarisation Branch of the Verification Division.

The Secretariat of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the National Authority of the Republic of India the assurances of its highest consideration.

The Hague, 15 March 2024



Attachment: Workshop Concept Note

Attachment:

**Workshop on Knowledge Sharing of Verification Practices
at Chemical Weapons Production Facilities
(Concept Note)**

BACKGROUND

1. The Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) assigns a number of verification responsibilities to the Technical Secretariat (TS) in relation to the destruction or conversion of declared Chemical Weapons Production Facilities (CWPFs). Carrying out those responsibilities formed a significant part of the TS's work in the initial phases of CWC implementation, but has largely ceased in recent years. This, coupled with the TS's tenure policy for professional staff, means that the TS is currently lacking certain specialist first-hand knowledge related to such facilities.
2. In order to fulfil its mandate to remain the global repository of knowledge and expertise on the implementation of the CWC, and with a view to future challenges linked to the possibility that an acceding State Party may declare one or more CWPFs, the TS has identified a need to reach out to experienced former staff members and representatives of relevant States Parties as part of its efforts to document and conserve essential knowledge related to the treaty implementation and verification activities associated with such facilities.
3. The TS therefore plans to convene a workshop comprising former and current staff members with appropriate experience and expertise, together with experts from relevant States Parties that declared CWPFs in the past.

THE ISSUE

4. A CWPF, as defined in article II of the CWC, means:
 - (a) *any equipment, as well as any building housing such equipment, that was designed, constructed or used at any time since 1 January 1946:*
 - (i) *As part of the stage in the production of chemicals ("final technological stage") where the material flows would contain, when the equipment is in operation:*
 - (1) *Any chemical listed in Schedule 1 in the Annex on Chemicals;*
or
 - (2) *Any other chemical that has no use, above 1 tonne per year on the territory of a State Party or in any other place under the jurisdiction or control of a State Party, for purposes not prohibited under this Convention, but can be used for chemical weapons purposes;*
 - or*
 - (ii) *For filling chemical weapons, including, inter alia, the filling of chemicals listed in Schedule 1 into munitions, devices or bulk storage containers; the filling of*

chemicals into containers that form part of assembled binary munitions and devices or into chemical submunitions that form part of assembled unitary munitions and devices, and the loading of the containers and chemical submunitions into the respective munitions and devices.

5. Since the Convention entered into force, 14 States Parties have declared a total of 97 CWPFs. All declared CWPFs have now been destroyed or converted. Inspections and additional verification measures at converted CWPFs have taken place in recent years, but CWPF-specific verification measures ceased either 15 or 18 years after the certification of conversion¹.
6. Should a State with a chemical-weapons programme decide to accede to the CWC, the TS must be prepared for the range of verification activities, and challenges, that may be associated with the declaration of such a programme. Such a programme may include specialised and standard buildings with specialised and standard equipment, agent and precursor production lines, filling stations, and testing facilities.
7. In terms of the chemical production process and the complexity of the specialised/standard equipment and buildings, CWPFs are different from Chemical Weapons Storage Facilities (CWSFs) and Chemical Weapons Destruction Facilities (CWDFs). The availability of practical experience and knowledge in the field of CWPF demilitarisation and verification practices at the OPCW is diminishing due to the completion of the destruction or conversion of all declared CWPFs more than ten years ago. It is essential, not only for the preparedness of future new accessions but also in the broader framework of knowledge management, for the TS to remain the repository of specialist knowledge pertinent to CWC implementation, as mandated by the policy-making organs.
8. Within this mandate, it is important to identify and document relevant components of the OPCW's past verification practices at CWPFs - including those not included in formal documentation - and record lessons learned during such missions.

THE WORKSHOP

9. A "Workshop on Knowledge Sharing of Verification Practices at CWPFs" is planned for the above-mentioned purposes on the premises of OPCW in mid-September 2024 (tentatively planned from 10 to 12 September).
10. Twelve to fifteen experts from interested States Parties (mainly from States Parties having declared CWPFs), and former experienced TS staff members will be invited. Selected in-house inspectors and other relevant members of the TS will also be invited to attend the discussions of the workshop.
11. The workshop is planned to be organised in five different sessions focusing on the following subjects: declarations, initial inspections, subsequent inspections, conversions, and monitoring with on-site instruments. A detailed list of questions will

¹ Paragraph 85 of Part V of the Verification Annex provides that inspections at converted CWPFs shall continue 10 years after the certification of their conversion, with the EC to decide on the nature of continued verification measures. The EC decided in 2012 (EC-67/DEC.7, dated 16 February 2012) that, depending on its status, each converted facility may be subject to continued verification measures for a further 5 or 8 years.

be included in the draft agenda, to be circulated to workshop participants in due course.

THE OUTCOME

12. A workshop report will be prepared to summarise the proceedings of the workshop.
13. The report will serve in part to document the knowledge of past verification practices at destroyed and converted CWPFs. It will also be used to support the preparation of a verification plan for the possible future accession of a chemical-weapons possessor State to the CWC and as the technical briefing or inspection reference materials for conducting future CWPF inspections.