

FINAL REPORT.

XV ANNUAL REGIONAL MEETING OF NATIONAL AUTHORITIES OF THE STATES PARTIES OF LATIN AMERICA AND CARIBBEAN

Santiago, Chile

29-31 July, 2014

- I. The XV Annual Regional Meeting of National Authorities of the States Parties of Latin America and the Caribbean, was organized by the Government of Chile in conjunction with the Technical Secretariat of the OPCW. It was held in Santiago, Chile, on July 29-31, 2014. Representatives from National Authorities of 26 States Parties of the region (Argentina, Bahamas, Belize, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Suriname, Uruguay, Venezuela, and Chile), one representative from CARICOM and personnel from the OPCW Technical Secretariat attended the meeting. The Director General of the Chilean National Authority opened the ceremony and it was chaired by the Undersecretary for the Armed Forces, Ministry of National Defence.
- II. The objective of the meeting was to review the status of implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) in the region and, at the same time, to provide a forum for the sharing of information and experiences in relation with the compliance of obligations under the Convention. Likewise, countries had the opportunity to discuss relevant topics on bilateral meetings with Technical Secretariat representatives and other State Parties.
- III. During the meeting, several aspects related to the implementation of the Convention were analyzed and revised, beginning with the objectives and topics to be discussed. The Technical Secretariat made introductory presentations in order to inform participants about the recent and future developments of the International Cooperation and Assistance Division in the region, like those considered in the future in the Assistance and Protection area.
- IV. Representatives of the National Authorities agreed on the following points:
 - A. The Technical Secretariat is required to inform about courses, workshops and meetings with enough time for candidate appointments to be made.

- B. English-Spanish simultaneous interpretation is required in the various activities due to the bilingual nature of the region.
 - C. Nominees to activities organized by the Technical Secretariat must be formally endorsed by the relevant National Authority.
STS is requested to submit the acceptance letter of the candidate to the National Authority.
 - D. To keep a good coordination at the national and regional levels for the provision of assistance and protection cooperation.
 - E. National Authorities coordinating an event should prepare a report to be sent to the regional coordinator for distribution among the regional national authorities. When an event is held in another region, the coordinator should agree distribution of the report with one of the participating countries.
 - F. To continue working in the organization of assistance and protection courses in a coordinated manner, in order to build emergency response capacities.
- V. Ecuador as a coordinator of the previous GRULAC meeting presented its final report (annexed).
- VI. Argentina presented the results of the First Regional Meeting on Education in the Responsible Application of Knowledge of Dual-Use Chemicals. This workshop was a result of the need to disseminate the topics and issues contained in the Convention among professionals of the chemical, industrial, academic area, and society in general. In this respect, States Parties agreed:
- A. The need to continue the OPCW awareness raising efforts in relation to the misuse of Chemistry for prohibited purposes under the CWC.
 - B. The need of mutual collaboration between OPCW and the National Authorities in the effective implementation of the Convention.
 - C. For the TS, to provide stronger cooperation and support in education and outreach of the objectives and obligations of the CWC. In some countries, the obligations under the CWC are considered an obstacle by the scientific community, due to lack information about this treaty and its objectives. So this supports the importance of education and outreach.
- VII. Grenada and Uruguay have recently adopted their national implementation legislation.
- VIII. Cuba, Costa Rica, Guyana, Haiti, Ecuador and Grenada National Authorities made presentations to share their last year experiences.

- IX. In the break-out groups the topics of Article VI and VII were discussed.
- A. GROUP A.- Aspects related to the ART.VII. - Application and National effective Legislation.
 - B. GROUP B.- Aspects related to the ART.VI.- Declarations.
- X. The report with the conclusions thought by the respective group they were the following ones:
- A. Group A:
 - 1. Identification of difficulties:
 - a. Drafting of legislation is a difficult process.
 - b. Lack of political will.
 - c. Different national interests.
 - d. Legislative proceedings are slow.
 - e. Lack of information about the Convention.
 - f. Lack of effective follow-up.
 - 2. Solutions proposed to solve the problems:
 - a. Expert assistance to draft legislation.
 - b. Outreach and awareness-raising.
 - c. Follow-up strategies.
 - 3. Recommendations and final considerations:
 - a. The process of legislation drafting and the political aspect should be together. Without political will, there can be no successful legislative process.
 - b. All key national actors at the highest level should be involved.
 - c. Empowerment process must be present from the very beginning of initiatives until their final result.
 - d. Regional or subregional organizations should be contacted in order to raise awareness among decision-makers and legislators about the importance of adopting CWC implementations measures. In this sense, it is convenient to join efforts to identify those organizations that may create relationships that will enhance the national implementation of the Convention.

B. Group B: It worked taking as guide three questions:

1. How do we gather data and identify declarable facilities and transfers under article VI?
 - a. There should be a National Authority to control all activities.
 - b. All parties should participate in the identification of all declarable activities (private industries and governments).
 - c. Forms have to be developed and included in the national legislation.
 - d. Some industrial association should be contacted in order to identify all declarable facilities.
 - e. Establish a legally binding mechanism to approve all CWC-related activities.
 - f. In all CWC-related activities, Customs should be involved. This organization should report all transfers of Scheduled chemicals under the Convention (usually by agreement between the OPCW and the WCO through its Harmonized System using the same code for all substances).

2. How can you ensure that all declarable facilities are declarable to the Secretariat?
 - a. With an appropriate regulatory framework including punitive measures to be enforced by the National Authority.
 - b. To have a registry of facilities and their activities.

3. How can the TS assist SP to solve transfer discrepancies?
 - a. Establishing a secure communication and information mechanism between SP and the TS and among the SP themselves to cross-check information.
 - b. Defining a procedure to control year-over transfers.
 - c. Proposing SP to voluntarily include the date of transfers that take place between December and January.
 - d. For the ST, to follow each discrepancy until its final solution, sending a report to each SP involved.
 - e. Organizing regional seminar for training on SIX thus facilitating information exchange among SP and relevant institutions.

- XI. By consensus, National Authorities consider important to keep annual regional meetings of National Authorities of States Parties of Latin America and the Caribbean.
- XII. Agreements and recommendations for Regional Actions 2014-2015.
 - A. National Authorities undertake to inform the host country and TS in advance about the topics that should be included in the next meeting.
 - B. The host National Authority will use the recommendations included in the Guidelines and Procedures document and the Model Program in the preparation of GRULAC NAMs, which were distributed for information and approval by all countries.
 - C. Considering the concerns presented by the states, the TS will propose the inclusion of topics and support options to achieve the complete CWC national implementation.
 - D. National Authorities should keep an updated network of focal points to discuss topics, points and tasks in the period between national meetings periods.
 - E. Effective coordination through the coordinating country and TS, to adjust NA support programs in different areas to current realities and emerging needs.
 - F. Consolidating the Pilot Project for regional and subregional assistance and protection was considered to be important.
 - G. In relation to education and outreach National Authorities expressed their support to regional initiatives considering the decisions made at the NA Meeting in The Hague in 2013, in the States Parties Conference in 2013 and most specifically, in the regional meeting on Education and Outreach held in Buenos Aires in April 2014.