The Chemical Weapons Ban: Facts and Figures

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Available languages

This is the English version of the publication Facts and Figures. This document is also available in العربية (Arabic), 中文 (Chinese), français (French), русский (Russian) and español (Spanish).

Foreword

With the entry into force of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction (the “Chemical Weapons Convention” or “CWC”), the international community has acquired an instrument that will eliminate the possibility of the development, production, use, stockpiling or transfer of these dreadful weapons forever.

Our mission is to implement the provisions of the Chemical Weapons Convention in order to achieve the OPCW’s vision of a world free of chemical weapons, and a world in which cooperation in the peaceful uses of chemistry is fostered. In doing this, our ultimate aim is to contribute to international security and stability, general and complete disarmament, and global economic development.

This very brief overview of the CWC, and of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, which implements it, will provide an understanding of how the States Parties to this disarmament treaty are transforming their solemn pledge to renounce chemical weapons into a verifiable reality.

About 98% of the world’s population lives within territories where this Convention has become the law of the land. It is our fervent hope that soon everyone will share the same protection.

Our Mission

The Chemical Weapons Convention is an international treaty which bans the development, production, stockpiling, transfer and use of chemical weapons, and also stipulates their timely destruction. The Convention entered into force in 1997 and mandated the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) to eliminate the
scourge of chemical weapons forever and to verify the destruction of the declared chemical weapons stockpiles within stipulated deadlines.

The OPCW's inspectors monitor and verify the inactivation, and later destruction or conversion, of all declared chemical weapons production facilities, as well as the continuing destruction of declared chemical weapons stockpiles. At the same time, OPCW inspectors verify the consistency of industrial chemical declarations and, together with the States Parties, monitor the nondiversion of chemicals for activities prohibited under the Chemical Weapons Convention.

States Parties undertake to provide protection and assistance through the OPCW, if chemical weapons have been used against a State Party, or if such weapons threaten a State Party.

The Chemical Weapons Convention calls for international cooperation in the peaceful use of chemistry.

### A Global Convention to Ban Chemical Weapons

From 13-15 January 1993, 130 states signed the CWC at a ceremony in Paris presided over by former French President François Mitterrand (standing) and attended by former UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali (center-left). The CWC entered into force on 29 April 1997.

In 1997, a new kind of disarmament treaty entered into force. The purpose of this novel international effort—the Chemical Weapons Convention—is to eliminate chemical weapons forever by destroying the existing stockpiles and preventing the production of new chemical weapons. An ever-expanding community of nations is dedicated to achieving this disarmament goal. Collectively, these countries, or Member States, form the OPCW.

The 6 States Parties which have declared chemical weapons must destroy over eight million items, including munitions and containers—in total, over seventy thousand metric tonnes of extremely toxic chemical agents. By comparison, a tiny drop of a nerve agent, no larger than the head of a pin, can kill an adult human being within minutes after exposure.

The OPCW verifies that the destruction process is irreversible. At the same time, States Parties in the process of destroying chemical weapons are requested to place the highest priority on the safety of people and on protecting the environment.

### Structure of the OPCW

The Conference of the States Parties is the main policy-making organ of the OPCW. It is composed of all member countries, and meets annually, as well as in special session when necessary. Read more...
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The world's chemical industry manufactures the compounds we depend on in our daily lives. Some very common chemicals can, if misused, be employed directly, or through further synthesis with other substances, as chemical weapons.

Together with governments, and with the support of the global chemical industry, OPCW Member States prevent the spread of chemical weapons.

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Making the Convention Work

Every Member State must implement the provisions under the Chemical Weapons Convention at the national level. This includes enacting penal legislation with respect to prohibited activities. Each Member State is obliged to provide other Member States with its fullest cooperation so as to expedite prosecution.

Every country is urged to accede to, or ratify, the Convention so that the development, production, stockpiling, transfer and use of chemical weapons is illegal everywhere. Such “universality” is a key priority of the OPCW.

To make sure that the Convention is implemented effectively, Member States are obliged to designate or establish a “National Authority”.

This body participates in, and coordinates, OPCW inspections of relevant industrial or military sites; submits initial and annual declarations; assists and protects those Member States which are threatened by, or have suffered, a chemical attack; and fosters the peaceful uses of chemistry. In addition, the National Authority acts as the focal point in the State Party's interaction with other States Parties and the Technical Secretariat of the OPCW.

The Secretariat has established a coordinated mechanism to support Member States in their national implementation of the Convention. The focus of this work is to provide advice and assistance to the staff of National Authorities, in order to help them enhance their skills and expertise to facilitate effective, autonomous, national implementation.

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Chemical Weapons Destruction Under Way
100% of the declared chemical weapons production facilities have been inactivated. All are subjected to a verification regime of unprecedented stringency. 30% of the 8.6 million chemical munitions and containers covered by the Convention have been verifiably destroyed. 23% of the world's declared stockpile of approximately 71,000 metric tonnes of chemical agent have been verifiably destroyed.

### CHEMICAL AGENT AND MUNITIONS/CONTAINERS DECLARED AND DESTROYED. CWPFS DECLARED, DESTROYED AND CONVERTED.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Chemical agent (metric tonnes)</th>
<th>Munitions/containers (million items)</th>
<th>Chemical Weapons Production Facilities (CWPFs)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Declared</td>
<td>71,330</td>
<td>8.67</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Destroyed</td>
<td>16,604</td>
<td>2.64</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Converted for peaceful purposes</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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### Declarations and Inspections

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>States Parties which have declared Facilities</th>
<th>Declared Sites or Facilities</th>
<th>Inspections Conducted**</th>
<th>Sites Inspected</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHEMICAL DEMILITARISATION</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chemical Weapons Production Facilities (CWPFs)*</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>373</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chemical Weapon Destruction Facilities (CWDFs)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>786</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chemical Weapons Storage Facilities (CWSFs)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>341</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abandoned Chemical Weapons (ACW)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Old Chemical Weapons (OCW)</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **INDUSTRY VERIFICATION**                     |                             |                         |                 |
| Schedule 1                                     | 21                          | 27                      | 171             | 35              |
| Schedule 2                                     | 37                          | 471                     | 363             | 223             |
| Schedule 3                                     | 34                          | 504                     | 189             | 179             |
| Other Chemicals Production Facilities, including DOC/PSF | 77                          | 5,142                   | 403             | 375             |
| TOTALS                                         | n/a                         | 6,347                   | 2,731           | 999             |

*States Parties that have declared Chemical Weapons Production Facilities (CWPFs) include Bosnia and Herzegovina, China, France, India, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Japan, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, the Russian Federation, Serbia, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United States of America, and another State Party. Of the 65 declared CWPFs, 57 have been certified as destroyed or converted for peaceful purposes.

**A total of 76 States Parties have been inspected since Entry into Force (29 April 1997).

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### Helping Each Other

While the CWC seeks to ban chemical weapons, it also provides for international cooperation among States Parties in the pursuit of chemistry for peaceful purposes.
International cooperation is promoted in many areas: from sponsoring chemical research to guaranteeing legal assistance; from developing and improving laboratory capacity to specialised internships and training in CWC implementation and safe chemical management.

The provisions of the CWC have to be effectively and stringently implemented to ensure that a global chemical weapons ban is achieved. Support programmes, funded by the Member States, enhance the Organisation's ability to hinder prohibited activity and to extend the benefits of peaceful uses of chemistry to all.

The OPCW Associate and Internship Support programmes provide specialised training in modern industrial practices and skills development to chemists and engineers from Member States whose economies are either developing or are in transition. Industrial internships and project work provide insight into best-practice methodology in the safe management of chemicals and in the implementation of the Convention.

The Technical Secretariat coordinates and hosts regular meetings of the National Authorities from around the world. CD-ROM and website information packages on CWC implementation are available.

Legal experts have formed regional networks to facilitate the adoption of national legislation that bans and criminalises the misuse of chemicals as weapons.

The OPCW has developed an internationally unique, peer-reviewed, and certified analytical database, containing information on over 1,500 chemical weapons-related compounds. This database is essential for on-site verification activities of OPCW inspection teams, and is also available to Member States.

Official Proficiency Tests for Member State laboratories are conducted to select, certify, and train Member State laboratories for the analysis of chemical weapons-related compounds in the event of off-site analysis of authentic samples.

The Secretariat supports the exchange of scientific and technical information among Member States to promote the peaceful uses of chemistry. A variety of research projects in developing countries are also funded in part by the OPCW. Research in any of the following areas may be considered for financial support: environmentally sound technologies for the destruction of hazardous chemicals, analytical detection systems for toxic chemicals, safer alternatives to Scheduled chemicals, medical treatment for accidental exposure to hazardous chemicals, and practical applications for natural products in agriculture and medicine.

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International Cooperation in the Peaceful Uses of Chemistry

Over 5,600 participants have benefited from 500 activities organised or sponsored by the OPCW Technical Secretariat since Entry into Force of the Chemical Weapons Convention in 1997.

| INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION PROGRAMMES: DESCRIPTION AND BENEFICIARIES |
|-------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Programme                                      | Description                      | Beneficiaries                   |
| Associate Programme                            | Established in 2000, it facilitates capacity building, industry-related national implementation of the CWC and promotes good practice in chemical manufacturing and safety. More... | Associates from Africa (46), Asia (38), Latin America (24) and Eastern Europe (22) have been benefited. |
| Analytical Skills Development Course           | Established in 2004, it assists qualified analytical chemists in acquiring further experience and practical knowledge in the analysis of chemicals related to the national implementation of the CWC. More... | This course has benefited chemists from Africa (34), Asia (15), Latin America (17) and Eastern Europe (12). |
| Conference Support Programme                   | Established in 1997, it facilitates the exchange of scientific and technical information, provides financial support for the organisation of conferences, workshops and seminars on special topics relevant to the CWC and facilitates participation in such events. More... | 332 African, 261 Asian, 294 Eastern European and 169 Latin American participants have benefited from these events. In addition, the Organisation sponsored events in Africa (23), Asia (22), Eastern Europe (22) and Latin America (8). |
| Research Projects Programme                    | Established in 1997, it assists small-scale research projects in targeted countries for the development of scientific and technical knowledge in the field of chemistry for industrial, agricultural, research, medical and other peaceful purposes relevant to the CWC. More... | Projects in Africa (90), Asia (70), Eastern Europe (1) and Latin America (98) have benefited from this programme. |
|                                                | Provides support to scientists and engineers from Interns from Africa (21), Asia (13), | |
Protecting Each Other

Chemical weapons are frightening and dreadful weapons. They inflict excruciating and long-term suffering on a mass scale. Some Member States have the capacity to protect their populations against chemical weapons, while others do not. All Member States have pledged to provide assistance and protection to fellow Member States which are threatened with the use of chemical weapons or have indeed suffered a chemical attack.

Resources from a Voluntary Fund for Assistance, as well as individual offers of equipment and trained personnel, are available, should the need arise. A network of protection experts consults regularly on the means to improve the ability of Member States to respond to the use of chemical weapons and to protect civilian populations. If a Member State requests assistance, the Technical Secretariat is responsible for the effective coordination of the assistance and protection measures provided by Member States.

These capabilities can include expertise in predicting hazards, in detecting and decontaminating chemical agents, in medical relief, and in on-site coordination with humanitarian and disaster response agencies.

The OPCW Technical Secretariat organises courses aimed at providing training to first responders, government experts and emergency response units in building/developing national and regional capabilities and emergency response systems against chemical weapons. Participants from Africa (260), Asia (440), Latin America (297) and Eastern Europe (543) have benefited.

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Status of the Participation in the Chemical Weapons Convention

The OPCW Member States already represent about 98% of the global population and landmass, as well as 98% of the worldwide chemical industry. The OPCW provides all States not Party to the CWC support in preparing to join the CWC and to effectively implement the global ban on chemical weapons. It is the fastest growing international disarmament organisation in history. The United Nations has called upon all States to join the CWC and to rid the world of the threat chemical weapons pose to international
In only 10 years since its entry into force in 1997, the CWC has already attracted 181 Member States. An additional 6 countries (Signatory States) have signed the CWC, thus rendering political support to the objectives and principles of the Convention and committing themselves to not undermining the Convention’s objectives. Only 8 States (Non-Signatory States) worldwide have not taken any action on the Convention. It is of paramount importance that the countries that remain outside the jurisdiction of the CWC join as a matter of urgency in order to ensure a global chemical weapons ban and to benefit from the security and economic advantages that OPCW membership grants.

The OPCW Success Story

- 181 nations, representing about 98% of the global population, have joined the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons.
- 100% of the declared chemical weapons production facilities have been inactivated. All are subject to a verification regime of unprecedented stringency.
- 100% of the declared chemical weapons stockpiles have been inventoried and verified.
- 57 of the 65 chemical weapons production facilities declared to the Organisation by 12 States Parties have been either destroyed or converted for peaceful purposes.
- 30% of the 8.6 million chemical munitions and containers covered by the Convention have also been verifiably destroyed.
- 23% of the world’s declared stockpile of approximately 71,000 metric tonnes of chemical agent have been verifiably destroyed.
- 2,500 inspections have taken place at nearly 200 chemical weapon-related and at over 700 industrial sites on the territory of 76 States Parties since April 1997.
- Worldwide, nearly 6,000 industrial facilities are liable to inspection.

More Figures

- 165 Initial Declarations received
- 172 National Authorities have been established
- 114 States Parties have informed the Organization of the legislative and administrative measures taken to implement the Chemical Weapons Convention
- 75 States Parties have legislation covering all key areas
- 19 Laboratories have been designated
- 73 Member States have pledged assistance under paragraph 7 of Article X
- 109 Member States have provided information on national programmes related to protective purposes, paragraph 4 of Article X
- 40 States have contributed to the Voluntary Fund for Assistance
- Balance of the Voluntary Fund for Assistance: EUR 1,268,565
- 2007 Budget: EUR 75,025,751

Author: Media and Public Affairs Branch, Technical Secretariat, OPCW <media@opcw.org>

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