ORGANISATION FOR THE PROHIBITION OF CHEMICAL WEAPONS

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ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

STRENGTHENING INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION TO PREVENT THE RE-EMERGENCE OF CHEMICAL WEAPONS

Simulation: Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons

Welcome to Global Model UN Singapore 2026,

We are very pleased to introduce you to the most authentic simulation of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons in the world; and hope to contribute to your understanding of the organisation, its mandate, and its critical role in global affairs.

Through a series of pre-conference webinars that will be offered and documents – like this resource guide – we aim to educate you not only about the global issues on the UN agenda, but also about the ways and means through which those topics are discussed, debated and negotiated by real UN diplomats.

This resource guide will provide you with a head start in doing research to gain a deeper understanding of the global issue that you will be discussing and the actions that the government you have been assigned recommends that the international community should take to address this issue. To make the research process a bit easier, the resource guide has been divided into sections and sub-sections to assist you in researching these two components. We strongly recommend you to give a careful look through the sources listed below so that the interaction with your peers is as exciting as possible.

We wish you all the very best in this journey of learning!

TOPIC DESCRIPTION

Chemical Weapons have been used in modern warfare since World War I inflicting excruciating pain – indiscriminately on both combatants and civilians as evidenced by the million casualties globally, and leaving behind causing generational environmental damage that persists for generations. Such weapons basically included well-known commercial chemicals put into standard munitions such as Chlorine, phosgene and mustard gas. Following the horrendous mass-scale devastation of the 20th century, the international community finally demonstrated strong resolve in adopting the chemical weapon convention in 1993, with its Article VIII ultimately allowing the establishment of the Organization of Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) in 1997 – thus completing the materialization of a robust and comprehensive regime that prohibits the development, production, stockpiling, transfer and use of chemical weapons.

The Convention has come a long way: all declared chemical weapons stockpiles have been irreversibly destroyed, with 193 States Parties[1] having ratified the legally binding text. However, despite all these milestones, the threat still looms with incidents happening as recently as in the last decade – an assassination attempt with military grade nerve agent "Novichok" in August 2020; an attempted assassination of Sergei and Yulia Skripal in UK in 2018, which resulted in death of one British citizen; assassination of Kim Jeung-Nam in Malaysia in 2017; Douma (Syria) in 2018, and Ltamenah (Syria) in March 2017 – potentially signaling a threat to international peace and security norms. Both non-state actors and terrorists, and even state actors have attempted to produce, acquire, and employ these weapons in serious contravention of international humanitarian law and disarmament law – emphasizing therefore on the persistent possibility of re-emergence and thus the need for prioritizing the agenda by OPCW and its member-states.

While the declared stockpiles have been confirmed to be destroyed, the core task of the foregoing agenda goes beyond just that – it demands a more multi-faceted, systemic and proactive policy response to prevent a re-surge coming out of any party whatsoever. First, the verification regimes need to be maintained and enhanced to impel compliance and transparency. Second, states need to be supported through capacity building to bolster the law and its enforcement mechanisms against chemical-related crimes. Third, new age scientific innovations may be potentially exploited with malicious intent, therefore requiring stringent scientific control. Fourth, there needs to be awareness about the need for non-proliferation, and outreach and education activities could be explored in that regard. And finally, victims need to be safeguarded and best practices shared to reinforce the taboo associated with the weapons and highlight global solidarity respectively.

TOPIC DESCRIPTION

Thus, prevention of re-emergence of chemical weapons necessitates sustained political will, effective resourcing of OPCW, and close collaboration among member states. As the international security landscape evolves, so should our collective willingness and capacity to counter such emerging threats. The world needs to be unanimous in its determination that chemical weapons will never again resurface – either in war or in terrorism. The vision needs to be of a chemical weapons-free world – yesterday, today and forever – that saves succeeding generations from the scourge of this unimaginable human tragedy.

1 The following UN Member States have not yet ratified the CWC: Egypt, Israel, North Korea, and South Sudan.

Key Points and Main Issues

Here are the key points and main issues students need to understand when negotiating a resolution on "Strengthening International Cooperation to Prevent the Re-Emergence of Chemical Weapons" at the OPCW:

A. State of Chemical Weapons Disarmament

Achievements under the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC)

- The CWC bans the development, production, stockpiling, transfer, and use of chemical weapons.
- All declared chemical weapon stockpiles have been destroyed under OPCW supervision, marking one of the greatest disarmament successes in history.
- The OPCW's inspection system continues to verify compliance and builds trust among Member States.

Remaining Challenges

- There are ongoing concerns about possible undeclared stockpiles and the use of banned chemicals in recent incidents in Syria, the United Kingdom, and Malaysia.
- These events show that some actors still possess or seek to use chemical weapons, threatening both international peace and humanitarian norms.

Universal Membership

- A small number of countries have not yet joined the CWC.
- Achieving full membership is important to close legal loopholes and ensure the global ban applies everywhere.

B. Preventing Re-Emergence and New Threats

Verification and Compliance

- Strong verification is the backbone of the CWC.
- OPCW inspections help confirm that countries and industries are following the rules.
- States should continue to modernize inspection tools, share information, and fund verification teams to maintain trust and transparency.

Non-State Actors and Terrorism

- Terrorist groups and criminal networks could try to create or steal toxic chemicals for attacks.
- Countries need strict **export controls**, **border checks**, and **national laws** to stop these materials from being misused.
- Cooperation between intelligence, law enforcement, and the OPCW is key to prevention.

Key Points and Main Issues (cont.)

Science, Technology, and Artificial Intelligence (AI)

- Advances in AI can make it easier to discover and design new toxic chemicals faster than ever before. While AI may be able to facilitate the identification of chemical weapons, the main fear is still that terrorists could use the technology to create new chemical weapons.
- AI could also help create "smart" chemical processes that hide illegal activity or bypass existing safety checks.
- It is important to find ways to monitor emerging technologies and update OPCW guidelines to prevent scientific progress from being misused.
- Dialogue between scientists, policymakers, and the OPCW can help balance innovation with safety.

Accountability and Investigations

- The **OPCW Investigation and Identification Team (IIT)** investigates who is responsible when chemical weapons are used.
- The OPCW works with the **UN Security Council** to ensure that those responsible face consequences.
- Member States should agree on stronger measures to enforce accountability and prevent impunity.

C. International Cooperation and Assistance

Capacity Building and Support

- Many developing countries need help implementing the CWC, building laboratories, and training enforcement officers.
- The OPCW provides training for police, customs officers, and first responders to handle chemical incidents safely.
- Strengthening these national systems helps prevent illegal production and supports emergency preparedness.

Information Sharing and Transparency

- Countries should share information about their chemical industries and safety standards.
- Regular reporting to the OPCW Secretariat builds trust and reduces the risk of misunderstandings.
- Confidence-building measures, such as voluntary data exchanges, can prevent suspicion among Member States.

Education, Outreach, and Victim Assistance

- Educating the public and young scientists about the dangers of chemical weapons reinforces global norms against their use.
- Survivors of chemical attacks should receive medical, psychological, and social support.
- Sharing best practices on victim care shows solidarity and strengthens public trust in the Convention.

Key Points and Main Issues (cont.)

D. Governance, Political Will, and Multilateralism

Strengthening Global Cooperation

- The OPCW must continue to cooperate closely with the United Nations and other international organizations to respond to new challenges.
- Sustained funding and political backing are needed to keep the OPCW independent and effective.

Building Consensus and Trust

- Political divisions between states weaken the OPCW's ability to act.
- Delegates must prioritize unity and reaffirm that **chemical weapons are unacceptable under any circumstances**.
- A strong, united stance ensures that the world remains committed to a chemical-weapons-free future.

OFFICIAL UN RESOURCES ON THE TOPIC

OPCW releases landmark report on AI and the Chemical Weapons Convention — 2026

Summary: The report highlights opportunities offered by the implementation of AI processes in OPCW, such as accelerating chemical research, strengthening verification through data analysis, and improving detection capabilities.

Preventing the Re-Emergence of Chemical Weapons — 2025

Summary: This webpage on the OPCW portal provides an overview of its work to prevent the re-emergence of chemical weapons. It does this by verifying that countries follow the Chemical Weapons Convention, which bans the development, production, and use of these weapons. Countries must declare all relevant chemicals and allow inspections to confirm they are used only for peaceful purposes. The OPCW also regulates international trade in certain dangerous chemicals, ensuring they are transferred safely and only between member states. If there are suspicions of illegal activity, any country can request a challenge inspection, and the inspected country cannot refuse it.
To prevent chemical terrorism, the OPCW helps countries create laws and systems that control access to toxic chemicals and prosecute anyone who tries to use them as weapons. It also works with scientists and educators to raise awareness about chemical safety and ethics through initiatives like the Hague Ethical Guidelines. Together, these efforts help maintain global security and protect future generations from the threat of chemical weapons.

OPCW and Syria — 2025

Summary: This website section is a comprehensive official repository on the crucial Syria chemical weapons file. Sub-sections on the three active mandates, and previous international mechanisms/missions are important for perusal. Further, the website covers a host of documents on the issue - of notable importance for the simulation is the 24 June 2025 Progress Report, and the 30 November 2023 Decision.

OFFICIAL UN RESOURCES ON THE TOPIC

Latin America and the Carribbean 2025

Summary: The OPCW portal with articles on the work it is doing in Latin America and Caribbean countries along with articles Member States in this region are doing to implement the Chemical Weapons Convention, expand chemical emergency skills of first responders and more.

UN hails new era of cooperation over Syria's Chemical Weapons stockpile - but concerns persist 2025

Summary: Status update by UN news on recent inspections by OPCW experts regarding Syria's chemical weapons. The update highlights the transparent cooperation extended by the new Syrian authorities, while also emphasizing on the challenges that remain to be resolved.

OPCW strengthens chemical emergency response in francophone Africa 2025

Summary: The OPCW ran a training course in Jacqueville, Côte d'Ivoire in April 2025 for French-speaking African member states to strengthen their ability to respond to chemical emergencies. The course taught first responders how to investigate incidents using real-life practices like documenting the scene, collecting samples, and detecting toxic chemicals or warfare agents.

Fifteen participants from seven countries (Algeria, Burundi, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Morocco, Senegal, and Togo) attended. This is the first training of its kind in the region focused on investigating chemical incidents. The event is part of the OPCW Africa Programme, which supports African states in building technical, legal, and emergency response capacity under the Chemical Weapons Convention.

By funding and hosting these courses, OPCW helps ensure countries can act quickly and accurately when chemical threats arise, strengthening regional safety and cooperation.

OPCW Work related to Ukraine 2024 – 2025

Summary: This section highlights the ongoing work of the OPCW Technical Secretariat on the situation in Ukraine within the scope of the Chemical Weapons Convention. Of notable importance are three important documents on the OPCW Technical Assistance Visit to Ukraine, upon its request, that provides a status update on relevant chemical industrial facilities and the alleged use of toxic chemicals as weapons in three incidents in the country.

UN Disarmament Yearbook -- Chapter 2: Biological and chemical weapons 2024

Summary: In 2024, the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) continued its mission to make sure chemical weapons are never used again. After the declared stockpiles were destroyed in 2023, its focus shifted to preventing the re-emergence of chemical weapons. The OPCW carried out 200 inspections, improved training for inspectors, and used its new Centre for Chemistry and Technology (ChemTech Centre) to strengthen research, capacity building, and emergency preparedness.

The organization also kept up its verification work, especially in Syria, where it investigated past chemical weapon use and worked with the new transitional government to secure any remaining materials. It also verified the destruction of old and abandoned weapons in China and monitored compliance in Ukraine.

A key priority was keeping up with new technologies like artificial intelligence, which could pose new risks or help improve chemical safety. Through education, outreach, and international partnerships, the organization worked to ensure that chemical weapons never reappear and that chemistry remains a force for peace and safety.

OPCW CSP Decision on Addressing the Threat from Chemical Weapons Use and the Threat of Future Use

2023

Summary: This decision adopted by the 28th Session of the Conference of the State Parties reaffirms the Chemical Weapons Convention and recognises that the threat of chemical weapons persists even after all stockpiles have been destroyed. The decision calls for enhanced national and international measures, and deeper collaboration between industry-academia-law enforcement to deter misuse and prevent potential re-emergence of Chemical Weapons.

The Programme to Strengthen Cooperation with Africa on the Chemical Weapons Convention

2023

Summary: This OPCW Executive Council Note details the organisation's initiatives in national capacity building and legal implementation, and promotion of regional support mechanisms for CWC compliance in Africa. It emphasizes oversight over chemical industries, and mutual assistance & cooperation to reinforce Article X of the Convention and prevent any re-emergence of Chemical weapons on the continent.

Addressing Chemical and Biological Weapons Challenges through the ME WMDFZ

2023

Summary: This workshop report explores how the Middle East Weapons of Mass Destruction Free Zone may contribute to addressing chemical and biological weapons challenges. The report highlights gaps in verification mechanisms of the existing CWC & BWC regimes, especially in relation to dual-use agents. The publication then suggests region-specific mechanisms to supplement international ones, including tailored compliance tools. It also emphasizes technical limitations and political mistrust as key hurdles. For delegates of this simulation, the section on "Key Takeaways" and "Chemical Weapons" is a must read; while reading the other section on "Biological Weapons" is also highly encouraged considering the increasing convergence of both the fields.

25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CHEMICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION: All Stakeholders Have a Role to Play in Ridding the World of Chemical Weapons

2022

Summary: The UN Chronicle article explains that eliminating chemical weapons is not only the job of governments—it requires the active involvement of everyone. It highlights that scientists, industries, civil society groups, the media, educators, and ordinary citizens all have an important part to play. Scientists and universities must make sure their research is not used to develop chemical weapons. Companies should adopt strict safety standards and stay transparent about how chemicals are produced and stored. Civil society and the media can help hold those who use chemical weapons accountable and support victims. Educators and young people can help raise awareness about the dangers of chemical weapons and the need for disarmament. The article concludes that when all sectors of society work together, they build trust, close enforcement gaps, and strengthen the shared goal of a world free from chemical weapons.

Latin American and Caribbean experts strengthen prevention of chemical accidents and misuse

2022

Summary: In July 2022, experts from Latin American and Caribbean countries met in Panama City to strengthen regional cooperation for preventing chemical weapons use. The event brought together government officials, scientists, and OPCW representatives. They discussed training needs, lab capacities, chemical security, inspection best practices, and building stronger national mechanisms to enforce the Chemical Weapons Convention.
The meeting emphasized that coordinating laboratory networks, sharing technical resources, and harmonizing standards across countries can help detect and prevent misuse of chemicals. The participants also agreed on promoting joint training programs and regional toolkits to help smaller states build capacity. The initiative underscores how regional cooperation complements global efforts to prevent re-emergence of chemical weapons.

National Authorities from OPCW's Eastern Europe region strengthen cooperation — 2021

Summary: The article discusses how, even after the declared chemical weapons stockpiles were destroyed, the OPCW continues to face major tasks. Its current mission involves preventing re-emergence, overseeing industry inspections, and investigating cases of chemical weapon use. A big part of this effort is the new Centre for Chemistry and Technology (ChemTech Centre), which strengthens the OPCW's ability to train experts, analyze chemicals, and respond to threats.
The article also explores challenges: political tensions among states, the growing complexity of chemicals and technology (which can be misused), and maintaining resources and expertise. It argues that to preserve the global ban on chemical weapons, the OPCW needs ongoing support, strong verification systems, and cooperation from all members.

How does the OPCW prevent the re-emergence of chemical weapons? — 2020

Summary: Watch this YouTube video to learn what OPCW Member States are doing to prevent the re-emergence of chemical weapons and reduce the threat of chemical terrorism.

Compliance Management under the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) — 2019

Summary: This UNIDIR report provides the legal-procedural framework that provides a robust system for managing compliance with the Chemical Weapons Convention. It explains the tools of compliance and other mechanisms, including possible referral to the UN Security Council. The paper argues that since chemical weapons were used in Syria and Salisbury, the CWC's systems for proving violations and enforcing compliance have been under serious strain, and the political divisions within OPCW governing bodies have been exposed.

[Note: Records of national statements are reported by the OPCW on their website. You can look up different sessions of the Conference of States Parties, Sessions of the Executive Council and Special Sessions of the Conference of States Parties to review statements made by all OPCW Member States. This is one of the best resources for understanding the position of the country you have been assigned. We have provided links to recent sessions of each type of meeting but you can research other years in the recent past by modifying the session number.]

National Statements to the Twenty-Ninth Session of the Conference of States Parties - Documents 2024

Summary: The Twenty-Ninth Session of the Conference of States Parties (CSP-29) to the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) focused on preventing the use of chemical weapons by non-state actors and achieving universality of the CWC. Key outcomes included the adoption of resolutions on issues like using AI and blockchain technology, enhancing information sharing, border controls, capacity building, and addressing maritime security for chemical security. Additionally, the session highlighted civil society engagement and included statements condemning Russia's alleged use of chemical weapons in Ukraine and calling for cooperation with the Technical Secretariat.

National Statements to the One Hundred and Seventh Session of the Executive Council 2024

Summary: The 107th session of the Executive Council (EC-107) of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) convened from October 8 to 11, 2024, in The Hague. The session covered persistent issues such as the Syrian chemical weapons program and the destruction of abandoned weapons, while also addressing emerging technologies like artificial intelligence.

National Statements to Fifth Review Conference/Special Session of Conference of States Parties

2023

Summary: This sub-section of the website includes national statements by State Parties during the Fifth Review Conference on several sub-areas related to the simulation's agenda. Representatives from 193 states assessed the implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), but for the second consecutive time, failed to reach a consensus on a final outcome document. Please note that certain statements are "joint statements" made by one State party on behalf of a group of state parties. In addition, you can find multiple other documents including Working Papers, Reports, NGO Statements and more.

Japan - Possible Ways of Prevention of Re-Emergence of Chemical Weapons

2023

Summary: This working paper outlines the efforts and cooperation required by the international community to prevent the re-emergence of chemical weapons. Some of the key issues it stresses on are ensuring universality, strengthening capacity building, enhancing national implementation legislation, optimisation of verification measures, supports challenge inspections and mechanisms of identifying perpetrators, calls for effective provision of assistance and protection in chemical emergencies, and emphasizes on the need to streamline structure and management of the Secretariat, along with effective financial resource utilisation.

Adapting to Current and Future Challenges: OPCW Feature Article — 2025

Summary: The article explains how the OPCW is changing to meet new risks now that almost all declared chemical weapons have been destroyed. It reports that, by 2023, over 98% of declared stockpiles were destroyed under OPCW oversight.
Because the job of destroying stockpiles is ending, the OPCW must shift its focus to preventing re-emergence of chemical weapons—whether by state actors or terrorists. To do this, it is building a new Centre for Chemistry and Technology (ChemTech Centre). This center will increase the OPCW's ability to analyze chemicals, train staff, and support cooperation projects.
The ChemTech Centre has a budget of €33.5 million, and almost all of it has already been pledged by 45 countries, including major support from the Global Partnership and the European Union. This new facility and the skills it brings will help the OPCW stay relevant and effective in a changing security landscape.

European Union Statement delivered at Fifth Review Conference of CWC — 2023

Summary: This statement focuses on the agenda by stressing on key points related to universalization, verification, capacity-building and non-proliferation.

Preventing the re-emergence of chemical weapons: the evolution of chemical weapon use since 1990 — 2019

Summary: This EUISS brief reviews historical use and resurgence of toxic agents, noting recent state and non-state CW deployments despite the global ban. It explores gaps in the Chemical Weapons Convention's scope—especially with dual-use chemicals like chlorine—and stresses that preserving the CW taboo requires evolving norms, better national legislation, export controls, legal accountability, and international education/outreach. The author argues that preventing a future re-emergence hinges on closing verification gaps, strengthening domestic and regional chemical safety regimes, and sustaining political will and scientific responsibility across states, industry, and academia.

NON-OFFICIAL RESOURCES

Erosion of the norms of using chemical weapons 2025

Summary: The article warns that the global rule against chemical weapons is weakening. In past decades, using chemical weapons was seen as beyond the pale—an act everyone condemned. But recently, several high-profile attacks have challenged that norm, making it harder for the world to enforce the ban.
The author argues that part of the problem is inconsistent responses: some states punish offenders strongly, others ignore abuses for political reasons. This inconsistency gives rising actors room to act with impunity. Also, new chemical technologies and tools make it easier to develop deadly agents secretly.
To protect the ban on chemical weapons, the article says states need to respond swiftly and together when violations happen. They should strengthen verification mechanisms, invest in enforcement, and keep the moral clarity that use of chemical weapons is unacceptable. If the norm weakens further, the world risks sliding into a more dangerous era.

BBC Repository on Chemical Weapons 2025

Summary: A repository of news coverage from around the world on the topic of chemical weapons.

The Future of the Chemical Weapons Convention 2025

Summary: This report identifies remaining challenges to the CWC regime post-destruction of all declared stockpiles, including achieving universality, strengthening compliance and national implementation, enhancing verification and inspections, and keeping pace with scientific and technological change such as AI-driven risks. The report presents policy recommendations developed through civil-society-led workshops, focusing on what the OPCW and States Parties must do over the next five years to uphold the CW ban in an evolving security and scientific environment.

THE CHEMICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION AFTER ITS FIFTH REVIEW CONFERENCE: KEY ISSUES FOR THE EUROPEAN UNION

2024

Summary: his report examines how the European Union (EU) can strengthen the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) after the 2023 Fifth Review Conference, which ended without agreement on a final document due to political divisions. It highlights the EU's long-term support for the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) and identifies five key areas where the EU can make a difference:

1. Upholding the global ban on chemical weapons use, including pushing for accountability in cases like Syria and Russia.
2. Improving verification systems to adapt to new technologies and ensure compliance.
3. Building national capacity, especially in developing countries, to prevent chemical attacks and strengthen implementation.
4. Enhancing OPCW governance, promoting gender balance, expertise, and better management.
5. Expanding engagement with industry, civil society, and international partners.

The report concludes that the EU must take a more active leadership role—using diplomacy, funding, and partnerships—to counter polarization, prevent re-emergence of chemical weapons, and ensure the OPCW remains effective in a changing security environment.

Emerging Trends in Chemical Weapons Usage in the Middle East

2024

Summary: This analytical report from a US-based think-tank highlights how the long-standing norms against use of chemical weapons in the Middle East has significantly eroded, while ringing the warning bells on the possibility of a gradual escalation of chemical attacks by states. It also outlines how perpetrators may evade responsibility in an increasingly fragmented multipolar world, and concludes with recommendations for the United States and its allies.

Strengthening the Chemical Weapons Convention in Africa: The role of civil society and global south participation

2024

Summary: The article argues that civil society organizations (CSOs) in Africa must play a larger, stronger role in supporting the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC). These groups bring local perspectives, help push for CWC ratification, and assist national governments with implementation.

In Africa, CSOs like the African Center for Science and International Security (AFRICSIS) and the Institute for Security Studies have led advocacy, awareness, and technical assistance to encourage nations to join and follow the Convention. But many CSOs face funding shortages and limited opportunities to participate fully in OPCW processes. The OPCW often selects NGOs to engage through closed or opaque procedures, which marginalizes some voices from the Global South.

The article calls for the OPCW and States Parties to build stronger and more open partnerships with civil society. It suggests creating fair committee selection processes, funding programs dedicated to NGO participation from the Global South, and continuous dialogue structures so civil society can help shape chemical security policy across Africa.

The Australia Group and the prevention of the re-emergence of chemical and biological weapons – Ongoing challenges 2024

Summary: The report explains how the Australia Group (AG) was formed in 1985 after the confirmed use of chemical weapons during the Iran–Iraq War. Governments realized that dangerous chemicals and biological materials were being traded too freely and could be turned into weapons. To stop this, countries with similar security concerns began meeting to coordinate export controls—rules that prevent the sale or transfer of materials that could be used to make chemical or biological weapons.
The AG supports the goals of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC) by creating detailed control lists of restricted items, helping countries fulfill their treaty commitments. However, because it is an informal and voluntary group, its decisions are not legally binding. The report raises the question of whether this structure is still effective given new scientific and technological advances in biotechnology and chemistry. It examines the AG's strengths, challenges, and possible reforms to keep it effective in preventing the spread of chemical and biological weapons.

The OPCW's never-ending fight to eliminate chemical weapons 2023

Summary: The C&EN article explains that even after declared stockpiles were destroyed, the OPCW's work is not over. The organization now focuses on stopping chemical weapons from coming back—by inspecting industry, investigating alleged use, helping countries build laws and response skills, and tracking new science that could be misused. A major upgrade is the new Centre for Chemistry and Technology, which boosts training, lab work, and readiness for future threats. The piece also notes political strains and recent incidents that test the global ban, showing why steady funding, strong verification, and broad cooperation remain essential to protect the norm against chemical weapons.

The Chemical Weapons Convention at 25 — 2023

Summary: This article analyses the transition of CWC and OPCW in its first twenty five years - from focusing on verifying destruction of declared stockpiles to increasing salience over attribution norms in the past few years. The article identifies the chemical weapons use in Syria and the resultant creation of a new attribution norm under the CWC as a critical juncture in the regime's evolution. The article also outlines next steps incorporating the work of the Investigation and Identification (IIT) Team.

Chemical Weapons in The Asia-Pacific: History, Science, and Future Prospect — 2022

Summary: The article reviews how chemical weapons have affected the Asia-Pacific region from past to present, and warns of new threats on the horizon. It begins by recounting horror stories: Japanese imperial forces used chemical agents in China, the Japanese cult Aum Shinrikyo carried out a Tokyo gas attack in 1995, and the region hosted Cold War stockpiles and disposal operations. Some countries are still removing leftover munitions from past conflicts.

Today, the risk is more hidden. Many chemicals with peaceful uses can be repurposed for harm (these are called dual-use). New chemical developments—like precision medicines—expand the ways a chemical attack might occur, making old rules less clear. The article points out that Asia-Pacific hosts many of the top chemical industries and tech research centers, which increases both innovation and risk.

The authors also highlight the potential danger of chemical terrorism: non-state actors could target factories, release toxic substances through cyber means, or exploit weak regulations. They argue that existing frameworks, such as the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), were designed in earlier eras and must adapt to modern science and threat methods.

In conclusion, the article calls on Asia-Pacific states to strengthen cooperation, invest in science and monitoring, and update policies so that the region can better prevent a reemergence of chemical weapons.

NON-OFFICIAL RESOURCES (CONT.)

Keynote Speech by the OPCW Director-General, Ambassador Fernando Arias, at Subregional Forum on the Chemical Weapons Convention: Enhancing National Implementation and Regional Cooperation in the Pacific Region

2022

Summary: In his address, the Director-General reminded participants that, although nearly all declared chemical weapon stockpiles have been destroyed, the threat of chemical weapons is not over. He emphasized that the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) must be fully implemented by all States Parties, especially in the Asia-Pacific region, to prevent re-emergence.

He noted that many states still lack complete national laws that enforce the CWC, and urged them to pass legislation so customs, police, first responders, and others can act effectively. He also announced the upcoming ChemTech Centre in The Hague, which will strengthen the OPCW's technical and verification capabilities, training, and support for states.

The Director-General highlighted that States must cooperate more on trade controls, chemical safety, and capacity building to manage dual-use chemicals and emerging risks. He ended by reaffirming OPCW's readiness to help states with these tasks and encouraged regional collaboration to make the CWC stronger.

Five Decades of Global Chemical Terror Attacks

2020

Summary: The study provides a comprehensive review of global chemical terrorist incidents from 1970 through 2017, showing a clear upward trend in frequency, especially driven by conflicts in Iraq and Syria where non-state actors increasingly used choking agents (e.g. chlorine) and vesicants (e.g. mustard gas), while nerve and blood agents became less common. It emphasizes that chemical attacks remain relatively accessible for small groups and often target civilians and soft infrastructure. The authors recommend emergency preparedness, training, and resource allocation prioritize response capability for choking agents, vesicants, and caustics, especially in educational institutions and other vulnerable settings.

Strengthening Global Regimes: Addressing the threat posed by Chemical Weapons 2020

Summary: This policy paper by Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) outlines the changing nature of conflict - with use of chemical weapons on the battlefield, by terrorist actors, and for political assassinations - and the associated need for the CWC to adapt, followed by possible solutions for the same. It draws attention to the 2018 Special Session of the Conference of State Parties, and the several tasks it created for OPCW such as those with regards to the verification mechanism, and expanding capacity to investigate violations by both state and non-state actors. The report highlights the work of OPCW in strengthening accountability, and recommends future actions to address the threat posed by chemical weapons.

Chemical Weapons use in Syria: Atrocities, Attribution and Accountability 2020

Summary: This article reviews recent efforts to attribute chemical weapons attacks in Syria, describes the incidents to be investigated, summarises information on the suspected perpetrators, discusses expectations for the next phase of the attribution process, and offers insights into how the international community can move beyond attribution to accountability - which is necessary to provide justice for victims and prevent any future incidents.