



CENTRE FOR SECURITY COOPERATION

Training & Verification Division

Chemical Weapons Convention Seminar

Zagreb 4 - 8 February 2008

In cooperation with the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons

Introduction

According to the RACVIAC programme 2009 Training & Verification Division organized and executed the Seminar "Chemical Weapons Convention", T-01 in the period of 16th – 20th February 2009. The Seminar was organized together with the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) for sixth time and it was the follow up of the last Seminar on CWC, which was held in RACVIAC in 2008. The Seminar was carried out in English language.

The purpose of this seminar was to discuss relevant issues related to CWC.

Its objectives were:

- To clarify any uncertainties in the submissions of the Member States to the OPCW in accordance with the Convention;
- To provide an update on issues relating to industrial (Article VI) declarations under the CWC including a review of Verification Information System (VIS);
- To execute training in preparation and completion of electronic declarations using the Electronic Declaration tool for National Authorities (EDNA).

Twenty-two participants attended the Seminar, namely from: Albania (2), Bosnia and Herzegovina (2), Croatia (5), Czech

Republic (2), the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia* (2), Hungary (1), Moldova (2), Montenegro (1), Serbia (2), Slovenia (2) and Turkey (1), both senior and junior military and civilian recommendation makers, who are dealing with CWC issues and are responsible for escorting inspections from the Secretariat of OPCW. The content of this seminar was of particular interest for members of National Authorities dealing with declarations.



Seminar participants

The seminar was conducted with the assistance of two lecturers from OPCW: Ms. Sally Elford and Mr. Sandor Laza.



Ms. Sally Elford & Mr. Sandor Laza (OPCW)

The seminar was conducted as a combination of lectures/presentations

followed by discussions, and a tabletop exercise at the end. This seminar was designed with the aim to share expertise, opinions, lessons learned, identify problems and find possible solutions as well as to explore the way ahead. The seminar also provided a valuable environment and atmosphere to encourage focused discussions.

The Execution

Seminar was opened by welcoming remarks from Colonel Tomislav Vibovec, Deputy Director and COS of RACVIAC and by introductory presentation of Mr. Željko Jerkić, Coordination, Planning and Evaluation Adviser ICA/OPCW representing OPCW.



Mr. Željko Jerkić (OPCW)

During the 1st day (Tuesday, 17 February) the following topics were presented by Mr. Sandor Laza:

- *Overview of the Chemical Weapons Convention.* The presentation covered the history of chemical disarmament and the steps that led to the signature of the CWC, establishing the OPCW. It also covered the structure of the organization and its activities.
- *Declarations' Requirements under Article VI of the CWC.* The presentation summarized the requirements given under Article VI of the CWC covering activities not prohibited by the CWC. It also provided a summary of the relevant decisions of policy-making bodies

providing additional information to the arrangements set in the Convention.

- *Declarations' Requirements related to Export and Import.* The presentation summarized the requirements under Article VI of the CWC, as well as additional decisions of policy-making bodies related to the export and import activities. It also provided a summary of the relevant decisions of policy-making organs providing further information to the ones set in the Convention.
- *Practical Aspects of Controlling Trade.* The presentation provided detailed information on the practical problems that practitioners will face during the implementation of export/import provision of the CWC. It also gave potential solutions and guidelines on these solutions.
- *Declarations Handbook and Other Databases.* The presentation provided information on various databases available for National Authorities, in order to facilitate their work on identifying declarable activities and submitting declarations.



Attending the seminar

The 2nd day (Wednesday, 18 February) included a tabletop exercise on Electronic Declaration for National Authorities (EDNA). Moderator was Ms. Sally Elford. The aim of the exercise was to provide practical insight into submission techniques to the National Representatives who are responsible to fill and submit declarations.

The 3rd day was allocated to the National Representatives in order to allow them to

present their National point of view on practical issues regarding controlling and declaring chemicals.

The final part of seminar was devoted to the evaluation of the seminar and the Closing Ceremony.

Conclusion

The presentations provided the participants with useful information. The practical part proved to be particularly useful, not only for the participants, but also for the lecturers. Since this kind of training was conducted for the first time outside Netherlands, the lecturers gained feedback by running this exercise in “real” circumstances.

According to the participants` assessments provided at the end of the event, the seminar was successful, very interesting and well organized. Most of the participants were members of the national authorities that are dealing with the chemical weapons in their countries and they considered it valuable for their continuing work.

The participants were interested and highly motivated during the Seminar. They expressed various opinions regarding the topics of the possible future activities, which may prove to be a valuable source of needs assessment. In particular, following topics were considered as interesting for future seminars:

- Advanced training on Electronic Declaration tool for National Authorities (EDNA).
- Discussion on control/proliferation of chemical substances` trade with the participation of the appropriate personnel apart from the State Parties` representatives. (I.e. customs personnel).
- Report on activities of OPCW and State Parties during 2009, with special focus on SEE region. Exchange of experiences and information.

Certainly, co-organizers will take these recommendations into consideration when they start preparation for next year`s activity.

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* *Turkey recognizes the Republic of Macedonia with its constitutional name*