Pursuant to RACVIAC 2013 Programme, Cooperative and Security Environment with Focus on Arms Control Pillar organized and carried out the Seminar “Chemical Weapons Convention” (CSE-02-S) in the period from 18 - 21 Mar 2013. The Seminar, tenth so far, was co-organized with the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) as a follow up to the last year’s Seminar on the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), which was held in RACVIAC in 2012.

The purpose of this Seminar was to discuss relevant issues related to the CWC. Its objectives were:

- To provide an overview of the CWC, including major achievements and challenges;
- To update the participants on the OPCW activities in the field of assistance and protection against chemical weapons and toxic industrial chemicals in accordance with Article X of the CWC;
- To emphasize the importance of capacity building in the field of protection against a possible use of chemical weapons and toxic industrial chemicals, through projects on national and regional levels;
- To provide information about the evaluation and impact of the OPCW capability building training courses, CWC assistance / protection centres and regional networking as well as the Technical Secretariat preparedness for assistance and protection;
- To present information and lessons learned related to the OPCW 2012 IAU Exercise, which was held in Serbia in 2012;
- To provide an update on the issues related to the OPCW verification activities, inspection activities and procedures.

The participants who attended the Seminar came from the following countries: Albania (3), Bosnia and Herzegovina (3), Croatia (7) - including 3 students and 1 professor, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (2), Montenegro (2) and Serbia (1). They were both senior and junior military and civilian recommendation makers dealing with the CWC issues, responsible for escorting inspections from the Secretariat of the OPCW.

Seminar Participants
The Seminar was conducted with the assistance of three (3) lecturers from the OPCW: Mr Andrew Van Veen, Mr Justo Quintero Mendez and Mr Nuno Goncalves and a lecturer from the University of Applied Sciences Velika Gorica - Zvonko Orehovec, PhD.

It was carried out as a combination of lectures and presentations followed by discussions and a tabletop exercise scenario on the third day. This Seminar was designed with the aim of sharing expertise, opinions and lessons learned, identifying problems and finding possible solutions, as well as exploring the way ahead. The Seminar also provided a favourable environment and atmosphere for valuable and focused discussions.

The Execution

The CWC Seminar was opened on 19 March 2013 with a welcome address by RACVIAC Deputy Director Brigadier General Zdravko JAKOP, followed by a short overview of the Australian Group given by H.E. Ms Susan Cox, which was followed by opening remarks by Special Advisor on International Cooperation and Assistance, Mr Andrew Van VEEN.

During the first working day (Tuesday, 19 March) the following topics were presented:

- **The recent events - activities of Australia Group and the effort in harmonizing export controls on Chemical Weapons** by H.E. Ms Susan COX, Ambassador, Embassy of Australia to the Republic of Croatia. The Ambassador gave a brief overview of the Australia Group formed in 1985 with the aim of harmonizing both export controls on chemical weapons precursor chemicals and chemical production equipment-technologies which might be misused for CW purposes. Special emphasis was put on AG’s concerns regarding the ongoing CW threats.

- **Chemical Weapons Convention and OPCW** by Justo Quintero MENDEZ, Senior Assistance and Protection Officer. This presentation was an overview of the CWC with an emphasis on Article X, including major achievements and challenges. It also covered the structure of the organization and its activities.

- **Implementation of Article X of the CWC and assistance and protection capacity building** by Mr Justo Quintero MENDEZ, OPCW. The two presentations informed the participants about rights and obligations of State Parties as well as about national, regional and international assistance/protection capacity building courses organized by the OPCW.

- **Contingency operations and 2012 IAU Exercise** by Mr Andrew Van VEEN, Special Advisor on International Cooperation and Assistance OPCW. The first presentation provided information on the roles and capabilities of the OPCW under Article X of the CWC such as operational phases and mission structure of IAU. The second presentation dealt with 2012 IAU Exercise with Live Agent held in Serbia, in October 2012. The presentation followed the steps of
the exercise, providing detailed information about each step.

During the second day (Wednesday, 20 March) the following topics were presented:

- **OPCW verification procedures** by Nuno GONCALVES, Inspector (Chemical Production Technologist), OPCW. The presentation included aims and procedures of OPCW inspections.

  - Attentive participants

- **Overview of chemical agents, toxic chemicals and industrial chemicals with dual use** by Nuno GONCALVES. Main types of chemical warfare agents and toxic industrial chemicals were presented as well as the analysis of modern threats related to the possible use of these agents and chemicals as chemical weapons.

- **Military, technical and defence-security standards on industrial facilities protection in case of terrorism and military attack** by Zvonko OREHOVEC, PhD, Faculty of Applied Sciences Velika Gorica. The presentation provided a comprehensive overview of preparation procedures on local, national and international level in case of attacks.

- The end of the second day was devoted to the national representatives’ presentations and their respective national points of view on practical issues regarding controlling and declaring chemicals.

- The third day (Thursday, 21 March) was reserved for the topic on the exercise for typical Schedule 2 and OPCW inspections, elaborated by Nuno GONCALVES. Under the CWC, Schedule 2 contains chemicals which are considered to pose a significant risk to the object and purpose of the Convention, but which also have legitimate commercial uses in quantities in excess of one tone per year.

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

**Conclusion**

Thanks to the cooperation between RACVIAC and the OPCW the presence of high-level lecturers was ensured. Their professionalism and experience, as well as their presentations, were highly appreciated by the participants. According to the participants’ evaluation 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 dealing with chemical weapons in their countries and they considered it valuable for their future work.

The participants were highly motivated during the Seminar and they showed deep interest in the subject matter. They expressed various ideas regarding the topics for possible future activities, which may prove to be a valuable source of needs assessment. In particular, they reinforced the need to introduce an additional practical
phase of the Seminar and shorten the theoretical part, as it had already been covered during the previous seminars. The following topics were singled out as interesting for future seminars:

- Crisis Management Exercise (for example, exercise on terrorist or military attacks on industrial facilities);
- More detailed information on Article X, and more elaborate information on Schedule 2 inspection exercise;
- Updated information about terrorism issues related to chemical, biological or radiological (CBR) substances and security measures;
- Report on the activities of the OPCW from real missions and inspections, as well as the exchange of experiences and information.

These recommendations will certainly be taken into consideration by the co-organizers in the course of preparations for the next year’s activity.

This event proved to be a good example of a strong cooperation between RACVIAC and the OPCW. As CWC is a universal, non-discriminatory, verifiable and enforceable model for multilateral undertakings to build global consensus on security through arms control, creating confidence and deterring treaty violations, RACVIAC will continue to promote the CWC in all appropriate international and regional forums, as well as in its bilateral communications.

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