

The Pugwash CBW Working Group & the CWC

Mina Rozei
3 October 2025

Presentation Overview

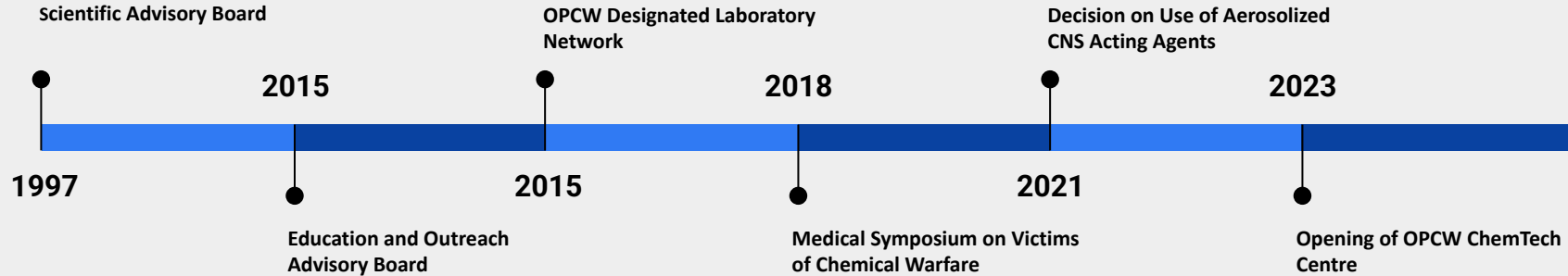
1. CWC at a Glance
2. Selected timeline of OPCW collaborations with scientists
3. Status of CW threats today
4. Current paradigms
5. Challenges
6. Recommendations for the Working Group
7. Discussion

The Chemical Weapons Convention at a Glance

- A comprehensive disarmament treaty
- Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) is the implementing body
- 193 member states
- Entered into force in 1997
- All declared CW stockpiles destroyed as of 2023

Convinced that the complete and effective prohibition of the development, production, acquisition, stockpiling, retention, transfer and use of chemical weapons, and their destruction, represent a necessary step towards the achievement of these common objectives,

Selected Timeline of OPCW Collaborations with and Scientific Experts



What is the status of CW threats today?



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Post-Assad Syria faces critical test over eliminating chemical weapons

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Commentary | 9 May 2024



The alleged use of chemical weapons in Ukraine: How the international community can investigate



Ahmet Üzümcü | Former Director-General of the OPCW, Former Permanent Representative of Turkey to NATO

Current Paradigms

1. Preventing reemergence

Relates to: Verification, Inspections, Compliance, Transparency, Capacity Building, National Implementation, Emerging Technologies, Dual Use, Non-State Actors, Education



2. Promoting peaceful uses of chemistry

Relates to: Youth Outreach, National Implementation, Capacity Building, Norm Strengthening, S&T Developments, Science Diplomacy, Preventing Misuse



3. Addressing past CW events

Relates to: Public Health, Capacity Building, Preparedness and Emergency Response, Education, Accountability, Justice

The Pugwash CBW Working Group can address challenges in all three areas.

1: Preventing CW Reemergence

Challenges



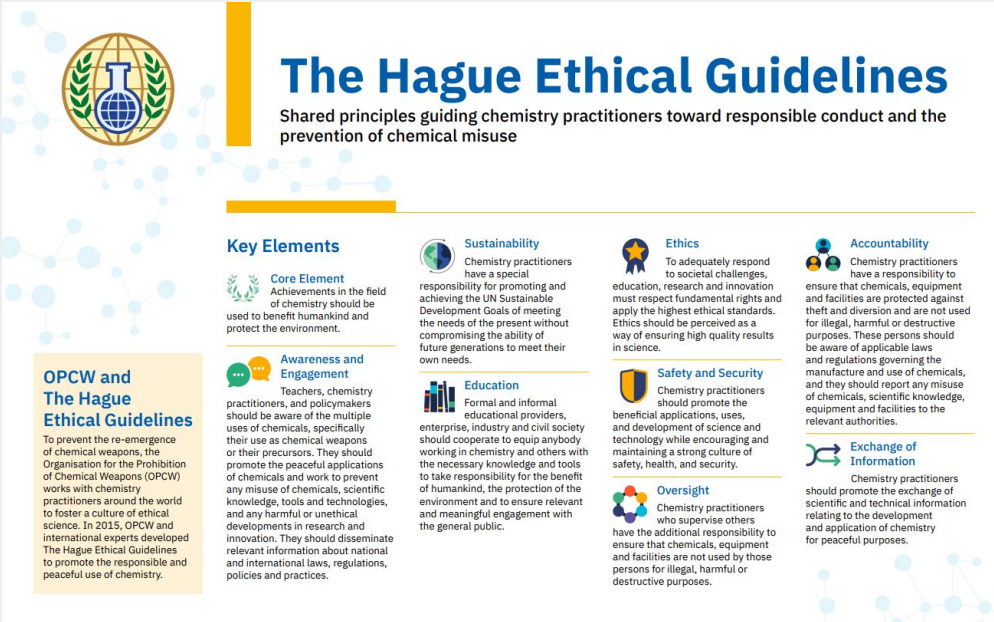
1. Verification, inspections, and compliance
2. Advancements in science and technology
3. Acquisition by non-state actors
4. Need to increase youth awareness of CW

Source: OPCW website

2: Promoting Peaceful Uses of Chemistry

Challenges

1. How to disseminate knowledge effectively
2. How to prevent misuse of chemistry
3. Keeping up with advancements in science and technology



The Hague Ethical Guidelines
Shared principles guiding chemistry practitioners toward responsible conduct and the prevention of chemical misuse

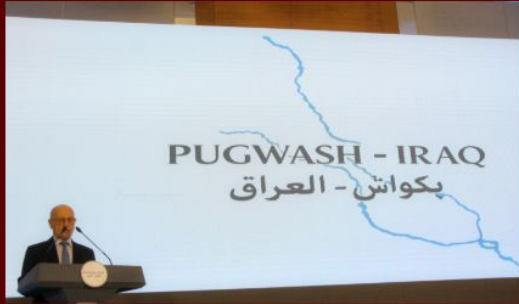
OPCW and The Hague Ethical Guidelines
To prevent the re-emergence of chemical weapons, the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) works with chemistry practitioners around the world to foster a culture of ethical science. In 2015, OPCW and international experts developed The Hague Ethical Guidelines to promote the responsible and peaceful use of chemistry.

Key Elements

- Core Element**
Achievements in the field of chemistry should be used to benefit humankind and protect the environment.
- Awareness and Engagement**
Teachers, chemistry practitioners, and policymakers should be aware of the multiple uses of chemicals, specifically their use as chemical weapons or their precursors. They should promote the peaceful applications of chemicals and work to prevent any misuse of chemicals, scientific knowledge, tools and technologies, and any harmful or unethical developments in research and innovation. They should disseminate relevant information about national and international laws, regulations, policies and practices.
- Sustainability**
Chemistry practitioners have a special responsibility for promoting and achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals of meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.
- Education**
Formal and informal educational providers, enterprise, industry and civil society should cooperate to equip anybody working in chemistry and others with the necessary knowledge and tools to take responsibility for the benefit of humankind, the protection of the environment and to ensure relevant and meaningful engagement with the general public.
- Ethics**
To adequately respond to societal challenges, education, research and innovation must respect fundamental rights and apply the highest ethical standards. Ethics should be perceived as a way of ensuring high quality results in science.
- Safety and Security**
Chemistry practitioners should promote the beneficial applications, uses, and development of science and technology while encouraging and maintaining a strong culture of safety, health, and security.
- Oversight**
Chemistry practitioners who supervise others have the additional responsibility to ensure that chemicals, equipment and facilities are not used by those persons for illegal, harmful or destructive purposes.
- Accountability**
Chemistry practitioners have a responsibility to ensure that chemicals, equipment and facilities are protected against theft and diversion and are not used for illegal, harmful or destructive purposes. These persons should be aware of applicable laws and regulations governing the manufacture and use of chemicals, and they should report any misuse of chemicals, scientific knowledge, equipment and facilities to the relevant authorities.
- Exchange of Information**
Chemistry practitioners should promote the exchange of scientific and technical information relating to the development and application of chemistry for peaceful purposes.

Source: OPCW website

3: Addressing Past CW Events



Sulaymaniya conference on chemical weapons

On 19 April 2025 the Iraq Pugwash Group organized a conference in Sulaymaniya to commemorate the use of chemical weapons ...

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#biological weapons, #chemical weapons, #Iraq, #WMDfZ

Challenges

Old, abandoned, and sea-dumped weapons:

1. Cooperation between member states
2. Resources needed for safe clean up

Human health:

1. Questions of attribution and justice
2. Coordination of medical equipment, aid, and further research

Source: Pugwash website

From *International Symposium on Medical Treatment of Chemical Warfare Victims:
Challenges and Hopes*

OPCW Headquarters, The Hague, 28-29 June 2018

Recommendations for Scientific Collaboration:

The Symposium participants recognised the benefits of close collaboration between the OPCW and other international organisations, as well as the broader international medical community, in supporting victims of chemical weapons.

The Symposium participants recommend that the **OPCW Network** be used as a means to create a platform for building an international network for scientific collaboration.

The Symposium participants recommend that the **OPCW Network** be used, *inter alia*, to:

- Identify priorities for victims' assistance projects and future scientific research in this field;
- Promote international scientific collaboration to expand knowledge of the long-term effects and improve outcomes for victims of chemical weapons; and
- Develop a road map for future research on treatment of long-term health effects caused by exposure to chemical weapons.

In the course of this Symposium, participants identified the following priority areas for scientific collaboration to enable:

Recommendations for the Working Group

01

Preventing CW reemergence

- Identify most pressing issues related to intersection of verification and S&T
- Support regional disarmament efforts

02

Promoting peaceful uses of chemistry

- Develop a comprehensive chemistry curriculum that includes knowledge of the CWC, Hague Ethical Guidelines, science diplomacy, and misuse of chemistry
- Develop an outreach plan to engage with youth

03

Addressing past CW events

- Revitalize the Symposium on Medical Treatment of Chemical Warfare Victims and develop it further
- Create a network of scientists working on abandoned and sea dumped munitions for knowledge sharing and capacity building

Discussion