

OPCW(Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons):

1.Providing Protection and Assistance to Victims of Chemical Weapons

By joining the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), States Parties commit to never develop, produce, otherwise acquire, stockpile, retain or use chemical weapons under any circumstances. The threat of retaliation in kind therefore ceases to serve as a deterrent to States that may be considering using chemical weapons. To counter the vulnerability that some States Parties may feel, the Convention permits the development of national programmes for protection against chemical weapons, with the support of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW). The OPCW is also given responsibility for coordinating the provision of assistance to any State Party that is threatened by the use of chemical weapons. Such assistance may include, but is not limited to, items such as detection and alarm systems, protective equipment, decontamination equipment, medical antidotes and treatments and advice on protective measures.

2. The Complete Eradication of Chemical Weapons

The year 2017 marks the 20th anniversary of the entry into force of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction, commonly known as the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC). The Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), working to implement the CWC, has achieved many successes so far in the eradication of chemical weapons; almost the totality of countries in the world, hosting 98% of the global population, are parties to the CWC. Moreover, 95% of declared chemical weapons, which are chemical weapons that OPCW States parties have officially declared to own, are no longer in existence. OPCW's aim is to achieve the complete eradication of chemical weapons, which are defined by the CWC as "toxic chemicals and their precursors, except where intended for purposes not prohibited under this Convention" and "munitions and devices, specifically designed to cause death or other harm through the toxic properties of those toxic chemicals." The CWC specifies that the words "toxic chemicals" refer to any chemical item, however produced, that can result in the death and short or long-term harm of persons or animals. Moreover, "eradication" means not only eliminating chemical weapons, but also their production facilities and their transfer. As per the CWC, chemical weapons production facilities (CWPF) are locations where chemicals over a set amount are used to create chemical weapons. It is important to note that many chemicals are considered "dual-use," meaning they can potentially be used for peaceful applications as well as to produce chemical weapons. The CWC only allows uses of chemistry for peaceful purposes, such as industrial, agricultural, and medical purposes.