



## THE FIFTY-SIXTH ANNUAL NORTH AMERICAN INVITATIONAL MODEL UNITED NATIONS

Dear Delegates and Moderators,

Welcome to NAIMUN LVI and more specifically welcome to the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons. The staff of NAIMUN LVI has been working day and night to make this the most rewarding and educational experience yet, and we are excited to welcome you all to DC in February!

This document is the topic abstract for the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons. It contains three key elements to allow you all to prepare well in advance for the committee: topics, structure, and research avenues. The goal of this abstract is to give you a better understanding of the content in the committee. As well, it is meant to be a launch point for further research about the content of this committee. By reading and understanding the topic abstract, you will more fully get a sense of how this committee will be run at NAIMUN and what specific issues the NAIMUN staff want you to focus on.

We hope to be of assistance to you in your preparation for NAIMUN LVI. If you have any questions, comments, or concerns, please feel free to contact the Secretary-General or Director-General. We look forward to welcoming you to the NAIMUN family!

Best,  
Chase and Charlotte

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## Topic Abstract: OPCW

### Introduction

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The Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) is the implementing body of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), the main international legal document governing the use, disposal, and construction of chemical weapons. The goal of the organization is to eliminate them completely, creating a world free from the threat of chemical weapons. The CWC has been in force since 1997, and the OPCW has successfully worked to shrink the global stockpile of chemical weapons, respond to uses of them in conflicts, and educate the world about their dangers. In recognition of their work in disarming the world and following the organization's in-depth work in Syria, the OPCW was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2013.

The OPCW is made up of a Council, Secretariat, and Conference of the States Parties. The Council is the executive branch of the organization, overseeing implementation on a day-to-day basis of the CWC. The Secretariat carries out verifications of the various stipulations of the CWC with member states and oversees negotiations. The Conference of the States Parties is the most important section of the OPCW; this group of all the member states meets to decide on implementation strategies and policies of the CWC. Specifically, the Conference of the States Parties has the ability to take actions against member states in violation of the treaty, an important distinction from other member bodies like this.

### Topic A: Regulation and Destruction of Current Stockpiles

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Many countries with chemical weapon arsenals have undertaken the arduous and lengthy process of destroying their stockpiles of chemical weapons. However, some



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countries still have known stockpiles, such as the US, and many countries are suspected of having unknown stockpiles of unknown materials. It is the job of the OPCW to oversee and ensure the destruction of these stockpiles, as they pose a threat to international security as long as they exist. The United States, for example, has failed to meet its scheduled date of total destruction, raising concerns that the government does not wish to relinquish control. This poses a risk because rivals that have already destroyed their stockpiles could re-arm themselves to counterbalance this threat.

Re-arming and re-creation of stockpiles is another concern of the OPCW. Countries may be chemical weapons-free for now, but this is not a guarantee for the future. The OPCW must continuously and tirelessly monitor the world to ensure that countries are in compliance and understand the consequences of violating the CWC. Another threat to this process is the presence of non-member states, namely the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea). Experts believe North Korea possesses a large, undisclosed quantity of chemical weapons and could use them. This poses another risk of re-arming, especially for South Korea and Japan.

### Topic B: Prevention of Use in Modern Conflicts

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The use of chemical weapons in warfare is braided into the fabric of modern warfare. World Wars I and II, the Vietnam War, and the Iran-Iraq War all saw the use of chemical weapons. The destruction power of these weapons witnessed by the world was something that most never want to see again. However, despite the presence of the CWC and OPCW, chemical weapons are still used today, even by member states. The Syrian conflict is a perfect example of this; the government declared it had a stockpile after it was found to have used them on civilians. After this declared stockpile was destroyed, reports of use continued, demonstrating that more work was necessary. The OPCW must take more concrete steps to combatting the usage of chemical weapons and make penalties greater for member states to discourage their use in the future.



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## Resources for Further Research

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1. The Chemical Weapons Convention  
OPCW. "Download the Full Text of the Chemical Weapons Convention." *The Chemical Weapons Convention*, [www.opcw.org/chemical-weapons-convention/download-the-cwc/](http://www.opcw.org/chemical-weapons-convention/download-the-cwc/).
2. About the Committee of the States Parties  
OPCW. "About the Conference of the States Parties." *About the Conference of the States Parties*, OPCW, [www.opcw.org/about-opcw/conference-of-the-states-parties/about-the-conference-of-the-states-parties/](http://www.opcw.org/about-opcw/conference-of-the-states-parties/about-the-conference-of-the-states-parties/).
3. History of the CWC  
OPCW. "Genesis and Historical Development." *Genesis and Historical Development*, OPCW, [www.opcw.org/chemical-weapons-convention/genesis-and-historical-development/](http://www.opcw.org/chemical-weapons-convention/genesis-and-historical-development/).
4. Information at a Glance  
Kimball, Daryl. "Fact Sheets & Briefs." *Chemical and Biological Weapons Status at a Glance*, Arms Control Association, 27 Mar. 2018, [www.armscontrol.org/factsheets/cbwprolif](http://www.armscontrol.org/factsheets/cbwprolif).
5. Citation for the Nobel Peace Prize, 2013  
"Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) - Facts". *Nobelprize.org*. Nobel Media AB 2014. Web. 8 Jun 2018., [http://www.nobelprize.org/nobel\\_prizes/peace/laureates/2013/opcw-facts.html](http://www.nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/peace/laureates/2013/opcw-facts.html)
6. Frequently Asked Questions  
Wey, Eric. "Fact Sheets & Briefs." *Arms Control Association*, Arms Control Association, 27 Mar. 2018, [www.armscontrol.org/factsheets/Chemical-Weapons-Frequently-Asked-Questions#V](http://www.armscontrol.org/factsheets/Chemical-Weapons-Frequently-Asked-Questions#V).
7. How To  
Justo, Patrick Di. "How to Destroy a Stockpile of Chemical Weapons." *The New Yorker*, The New Yorker, 19 June 2017, [www.newyorker.com/tech/elements/how-to-destroy-a-stockpile-of-chemical-weapons](http://www.newyorker.com/tech/elements/how-to-destroy-a-stockpile-of-chemical-weapons).