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Sustainable development

Cooperative measures to assess and increase awareness of environmental effects related to waste originating from chemical munitions dumped at sea

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

Pursuant to General Assembly resolution [74/213](#), the present report conveys the views of Member States and relevant regional and international organizations on cooperative measures to assess and increase awareness of the environmental effects related to waste originating from chemical munitions dumped at sea, with a view to exploring the possibility of establishing a database and options for the most appropriate institutional framework for such a database, as well as identifying the appropriate intergovernmental bodies within the United Nations system for further consideration and implementation, as appropriate, of the cooperative measures envisaged in that resolution. The information was drawn from responses of Member States and relevant regional and international organizations to the questionnaire circulated by the Secretariat on those topics.

* [A/78/150](#).



I. Introduction

1. At its seventy-fourth session, the General Assembly adopted resolution [74/213](#), in which it invited the Secretary-General to continue to seek the views of Member States and relevant regional and international organizations on cooperative measures to assess and increase awareness of the environmental effects related to waste originating from chemical munitions dumped at sea, also with a view to exploring the possibility of establishing a database and options for the most appropriate institutional framework for such a database, as well as identifying the appropriate intergovernmental bodies within the United Nations system for further consideration and implementation, as appropriate, of the cooperative measures envisaged in that resolution, building on and without duplicating existing activities, and with a view to achieving efficiency and synergies, taking into account the mandates and capacities of relevant international and regional organizations.
2. The General Assembly, in the same resolution, also requested the Secretary-General to submit to the Assembly at its seventy-eighth session a report on the implementation of the resolution, prepared using responses of Member States and relevant regional and international organizations, as well as other available information.
3. On 3 May 2023, and again on 5 June 2023, a questionnaire was circulated by the Secretariat to all Member States, the United Nations system and other organizations, seeking their views on the topics mentioned above. Responses were received from four Member States, namely Argentina, Latvia, Spain and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.
4. Responses were also received from the following entities of the United Nations system: the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs; the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO); the International Maritime Organization (IMO); the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE); and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR). Contributions were also received from the OSPAR Commission for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic (OSPAR Commission) and the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW).
5. In accordance with General Assembly resolution [74/213](#), the present report was prepared by drawing on responses to the questionnaire and other available information.

II. Cooperative measures at the national, regional and global levels

A. Assessment and monitoring

6. Some recent activities to strengthen the assessment and monitoring of environmental effects related to waste originating from chemical munitions dumped at sea at the national, regional and global levels have been highlighted in the received responses. Those activities would contribute to the collective understanding of the issues related to waste originating from chemical munitions dumped at sea and to the cooperative measures envisaged in General Assembly resolution [74/213](#).

1. Activities undertaken by Member States

7. The United Kingdom stated in its response that it had recently taken several proactive measures to monitor and address the issue of waste originating from

chemical munitions dumped at sea. A significant step was that of establishing a system that allowed fishers and other maritime and coastal users to report encounters with both conventional and chemical munitions to a designated authority. Those reports were subsequently relayed to the secretariat for the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic and made available through the OSPAR Commission data portal. In addition, the United Kingdom was in the process of securing funding for a mission to locate and identify wrecks in the Rockall Trough dating from the Second World War that had been used for surplus chemical munitions disposal as part of Operation Sandcastle from 1955 to 1956. Should those wrecks be found, plans included collecting sediment samples to assess the extent of contamination from the munitions. Technological advancements were also being pursued, with efforts under way to develop an arsenic sensor at the National Oceanography Centre. The sensor could be utilized on autonomous underwater vehicles to detect arsenic near chemical munitions dumpsites. Furthermore, the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory of the Ministry of Defence had conducted desk-based environmental risk assessments to understand the environmental impact of chemical weapons dumped in the North Atlantic during Operation Sandcastle and to locate and identify the content of hulks used for the disposal of the Second World War chemical munitions stockpile of the United Kingdom. Those comprehensive efforts demonstrated the ongoing commitment of the United Kingdom to monitor and mitigate the impacts of waste originating from chemical munitions dumped at sea.

8. The United Kingdom recognized that it was unclear whether the level of long-lived climate pollutants would be increased by remediation attempts. It was therefore the policy position of the United Kingdom to leave sea-dumped chemical weapons undisturbed. That decision had been taken on the basis of current scientific advice from the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory, which had stated that the position carried less risk to human health and the environment than if the weapons were to be disturbed.

9. Argentina stated that it recognized that the extensive presence of chemical weapons, such as bombs and ammunition containing substances like mustard gas, which had been dumped in the sea primarily following the First and Second World Wars, presented significant environmental and health risks. Argentina furthermore warned that those munitions, which degraded slowly, released toxic substances into the water, threatening human health through food contamination and direct contact hazards, while also damaging marine ecosystems, biodiversity and local economies reliant on fishing, natural resource extraction and renewable energy generation. Argentina underscored the global scope of the issue, with potential short-term and long-term transboundary effects extending beyond the largest concentration of such weapons in the Baltic Sea, and it called for more research on the matter.

2. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

10. As the custodian of the Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage of 2001, UNESCO mentioned its role in preserving underwater heritage, supporting the efforts of 72 States that had ratified the Convention as of June 2023. Recognizing the potential threats posed by waste originating from chemical munitions dumped at sea, UNESCO had initiated a range of actions to address the issue. It had created a platform for dialogue and consensus-building among experts and government representatives through the meetings of the Scientific and Technical Advisory Body to the Meeting of States Parties to the Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage in 2022 and 2023, as well as the ninth Meeting of States Parties to the Convention in June 2023. Those platforms were aimed at raising awareness and enhancing strategies to protect underwater cultural heritage.

Furthermore, UNESCO was supporting archaeological inventory initiatives in several countries, including Belgium, France, Germany, Japan, Micronesia (Federated States of) and the United States of America. Those initiatives involved monitoring the state of conservation of sites emitting toxic substances, such as shipwreck metal hulls. Future plans included the release of a book, provisionally titled *Threats to Our Ocean Heritage: Potentially Polluting Wrecks*, anticipated to be launched in 2025 at the United Nations Conference to Support the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development, in Nice, France. That project was a collaboration between UNESCO, the Ocean Foundation and the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) International Committee on the Underwater Cultural Heritage, aimed at providing deeper insight into the issue of ocean pollution from sunken wrecks.

3. International Maritime Organization

11. IMO stated that it had undertaken several steps in recent years to monitor the issue of waste originating from chemical munitions dumped at sea. Stemming from the Convention on the Prevention of Marine Pollution by Dumping of Wastes and Other Matter, 1972 (London Convention) and the 1996 Protocol to the Convention (London Protocol), both of which prohibited the dumping of materials produced for biological and chemical warfare, IMO had endorsed a policy of leaving previously dumped munitions in place. That policy, first agreed upon by the parties to the Convention on the Protection of the Marine Environment of the Baltic Sea Area in the 1980s and 1990s, was regarding chemical warfare munitions dumped in the Baltic Sea after the World Wars. Parties to the London Convention and London Protocol had since focused on identifying the locations of historical sites of obsolete munitions, sharing location information and guidance on handling such munitions with fishers and mariners in all States parties. Maps identifying known dump sites had been published for various areas and countries, such as Australia, New Zealand, the United Kingdom and the United States, as well as the Mediterranean Sea, among others. The International Hydrographic Organization also included those sites in its charts.

12. The issue of dumped obsolete ammunition had been on the agenda of the London Convention and London Protocol for over two decades. The contracting parties had actively discussed the matter since 2014, and the secretariat had provided regular updates, while parties had shared information during the annual meetings of the governing bodies and scientific groups of the Convention and Protocol. As reported by IMO, in October 2022 and March 2023, Sweden had informed the governing bodies and scientific groups about its investigations into stockpiles of conventional and chemical munitions sunk in waters near Sweden, including in the Baltic Sea and the Skagerrak, following the Second World War. IMO continued to monitor progress and was prepared to take further action as necessary, awaiting further guidance from the General Assembly.

4. Economic Commission for Europe

13. ECE stated that it administered two legal instruments accessible to all States Members of the United Nations, both of which related indirectly to the issue of waste originating from chemical munitions dumped at sea: the Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-Making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (Aarhus Convention) and its Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers. The Aarhus Convention guaranteed public rights regarding access to information, participation in decision-making and access to justice in environmental matters. That necessitated that the public was given inclusive and effective access to information and justice and the opportunity to participate in

decision-making related to the environmental impacts of waste originating from chemical munitions dumped at sea. Moreover, in accordance with article 3 (7) of the Convention, the parties should promote its principles in international decision-making processes that dealt with the environmental effects of waste originating from chemical munitions dumped at sea. While there had been no activities directly focusing on that specific subject, those obligations remained relevant, and the parties were strongly encouraged to promote and apply them. ECE did not detail any specific future actions related to waste originating from chemical munitions dumped at sea, but the principles of transparency, public involvement and justice that it promoted were intended to inform actions related to such issues.

5. OSPAR Commission for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic

14. The OSPAR Commission stated that it collected data annually on encounters with chemical and conventional munitions and published them on its data and information management system online portal.¹ Recommendation 2010/20 of the OSPAR Commission provided the basis for annual reporting. The recommendation was expected to be updated in 2023 and would include a new commitment to promote information-sharing on munitions in general, especially on the environmental risk assessment of conventional and chemical munitions within the maritime area covered by the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic, with the aim of developing a shared approach. That updated recommendation would take into account output from several projects funded by the European Union, such as Dumpsites of munitions: integrated science approach to risk and management (DISARM), and projects carried out in other regions, including the Baltic region, such as the Interreg North Sea Wrecks project and Decision Aid for Marine Munitions (DAIMON), which aimed to provide a framework for the risk assessment of conventional and chemical munitions in dumping sites and shipwrecks.

6. Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons

15. OPCW indicated that it had undertaken a variety of actions to monitor the issue of waste originating from chemical munitions dumped at sea. Four States parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention had declared recovered chemical weapons from sea or coastal waters, dumped before 1985, with several verification events conducted in accordance with part IV (A) of the Annex on Implementation and Verification of the Chemical Weapons Convention. Noting General Assembly resolution 65/149 on cooperative measures to assess and increase awareness of environmental effects related to waste originating from chemical munitions dumped at sea, the Third Special Session of the Conference of the States Parties to Review the Operation of the Chemical Weapons Convention had encouraged States to support the voluntary sharing of information, raising awareness on the issue. The note issued by the OPCW Technical Secretariat in 2015 entitled “The OPCW in 2025: ensuring a world free of chemical weapons” included action on sea-dumped chemical weapons among potential activities leading up to 2025. The Scientific Advisory Board had also acknowledged the ongoing need to identify and dispose of such weapons, recommending that scientific advancements in that area should be monitored. In response to the report of the Board, the Director-General of OPCW had concurred with maintaining knowledge on sea-dumped chemical weapons. Furthermore, the Board periodically engaged with scientists studying the detection and analysis of sea-dumped chemical weapons. The OPCW Technical Secretariat continued to verify chemical weapon declarations, monitor international and regional developments, enhance knowledge of such weapons and provide consultation, cooperation and

¹ <https://odims.ospar.org/en/>.

advice to States parties as requested. Staff members also stayed abreast of related developments by participating in relevant international engagements. States parties to the Convention were obliged to declare and destroy any chemical weapons dumped at sea from 1985 onward. They had discretion on whether to declare chemical weapons dumped prior to 1985. However, if such weapons were accidentally recovered, or if a State party voluntarily decided to recover pre-1985 sea-dumped chemical weapons, they were expected to comply with the Convention's relevant provisions. The Convention expressly prohibited the dumping of chemical weapons in any body of water as a method of destruction.

B. Awareness-raising, information-sharing and capacity-building

16. The United Kingdom stated that it had presented the environmental desk-based assessment of the Operation Sandcastle wrecks at the Chemical Weapons Demilitarisation Conference in London, while recognizing that its own capacity for monitoring waste originating from chemical munitions dumped at sea and its effects on the marine environment and ecosystem needed to be further developed.

17. Argentina warned that, despite ongoing international efforts to detect environmental harm and enhance cooperative measures for environmental impact assessment and awareness-raising, comprehensive information regarding the volume, nature and location of dumped chemical munitions remained insufficient, owing to poor documentation and inadequate research. Supporting its arguments with key data and information, Argentina stressed the need to raise awareness about the deaths and potential or actual illnesses caused by the presence of chemical weapons and the pollution and contamination of air, water and underwater soil.

18. Latvia stated that it was involved in the Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission expert group on environmental risks of hazardous submerged objects. Information-sharing was performed within the framework of the Commission under the Convention on the Protection of the Marine Environment of the Baltic Sea Area. Latvia highlighted the need for capacity development in areas related to waste originating from chemical munitions dumped at sea, such as conducting research.

19. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs indicated that it was not specifically involved in monitoring waste originating from chemical munitions dumped at sea. If, however, such waste caused an emergency and corresponding humanitarian need that overwhelmed the response capacity of a concerned State, the Office could be called upon to mobilize and coordinate international emergency assistance. The Office noted that, when there was an emergency involving such waste, a needs assessment was required to determine a holistic understanding of the situation and needs of the people affected by the emergency. The Office could offer such support through the services of the United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination Team.

20. UNESCO stated that it had undertaken various outreach activities to raise awareness and share information on waste originating from chemical munitions dumped at sea, in particular among the general public and members of relevant industries. Such activities included organizing scientific conferences in Brussels in 2012 and in Bruges, Belgium in 2014, at which threats to underwater cultural heritage had been discussed, including those posed by wrecks from the Second World War. In addition, UNESCO had launched numerous exhibitions and social media campaigns and had published resources focusing on the preservation of underwater cultural heritage. Notably, publications on underwater cultural heritage in Oceania and a study on the laws in Micronesia (Federated States of) had drawn attention to waste originating from chemical munitions dumped at sea. UNESCO was also engaged in

capacity-building related to risk assessment, monitoring, information-gathering, risk prevention and incident response for waste originating from chemical munitions dumped at sea. It offered assistance in underwater cultural heritage protection, inventorying and emergency cultural preservation, and it had hosted regional meetings and capacity-building events, such as a major training initiative held in Chanthaburi, Thailand in 2012. That event was deemed to be the largest training initiative for the Asia-Pacific region on the matter. Specific events had also been organized within the framework of the upcoming 2024 international conference on small island developing States. UNESCO also noted the value of good practices and information-sharing related to available technologies for the treatment, conservation or safe destruction of waste originating from chemical munitions dumped at sea. In particular, UNESCO highlighted that some of the best technologies and expertise for addressing threats posed by waste originating from chemical munitions dumped at sea could be found within underwater archaeology units of national authorities, universities and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), with a focus on metal conservation and evaluation.

21. IMO indicated that, under the auspices of the London Convention and London Protocol, it had conducted numerous outreach and capacity-building initiatives to raise awareness and share information on waste originating from chemical munitions dumped at sea. Those initiatives included the development and publication of information for fishers and mariners about known dump sites and guidance on handling munitions discovered in nets. Furthermore, both formal and informal discussions had been held with relevant Member States and organizations, such as Lithuania, the Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission and OPCW. In addition, IMO had been mandated to continue its outreach and dialogue with regional bodies, OPCW and other stakeholders, as well as the General Assembly.

22. With regard to capacity-building assistance related to risk assessment, monitoring, information-gathering, risk prevention and incident response for waste originating from chemical munitions dumped at sea, a generic risk assessment procedure for underwater munitions and their environmental effects, to be followed by States parties to the London Convention and London Protocol, was being developed and would be made available globally, following review by the governing bodies of Convention and Protocol. The secretariat of the Convention and Protocol at IMO had also participated in some specific outreach efforts, including:

- A colloquium on the challenges of unexploded munitions, organized by the European Commission in February 2019
- An international conference on maritime security and the blue economy, with the theme “The unexploded munitions and chemical residues in the sea – in the search for lasting and economically viable solutions”, organized by the European Parliament in November 2021.

23. With regard to capacity development, there was a need for a comprehensive global database of locations and hazards associated with waste originating from chemical munitions dumped at sea and potential mitigation strategies. Such a database would assist parties in managing such sites more effectively in the future. A global forum for sharing information and experience among Member States, stakeholders and organizations could also provide significant benefits.

24. OPCW indicated that staff members of its Technical Secretariat had participated in workshops and discussions aimed at highlighting the associated risks of waste originating from chemical munitions dumped at sea and possible mitigative measures. OPCW also noted that greater technical and practical expertise were needed on the skills and safety measures associated with recovering and disposing of chemical weapons dumped at sea or waste originating from chemical munitions dumped at sea.

Lastly, OPCW stressed that the Technical Secretariat stood ready to share common health and safety awareness information related to chemical weapons dumped at sea or waste originating from chemical munitions dumped at sea.

C. Partnership and cooperation

25. With regard to strengthening existing efforts within regional seas conventions and other international, regional and subregional arrangements related to waste originating from chemical munitions dumped at sea, the United Kingdom highlighted the Joint Programming Initiative Healthy and Productive Seas and Oceans. Specifically, it highlighted the Knowledge Hub on Munition in the Sea, which had been established through the Joint Programming Initiative and was aimed at enhancing awareness of underwater munitions, mapping and researching the scale of the matter.

26. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs highlighted its ongoing partnership with the Joint Environment Unit of the United Nations Environment Programme to facilitate the provision of technical support through rapid environmental assessments, on-site sampling and analysis and technical expert deployments to Member States affected by an emergency caused by waste originating from chemical munitions dumped at sea.

27. As for partnerships aimed at raising awareness about, reporting on and monitoring waste originating from chemical munitions dumped at sea, UNESCO stated that it worked with a broad network of organizations and entities. That network included an intergovernmental scientific and technical advisory body, 19 NGOs, a university network, three university chairs in Lisbon, in Alexandria, Egypt and in the Provence Region of France, and the International Centre for Underwater Archaeology in Zadar, Croatia. UNESCO also had a network of field offices, permanent delegations of States to UNESCO and a network of national commissions. Notably, UNESCO had recently entered into a partnership with the World Underwater Federation to raise awareness among its 5 million federated leisure divers. Although UNESCO primarily focused on the cultural value of submerged historic sites, it nevertheless obtained information on waste originating from chemical munitions dumped at sea. With regard to strengthening existing efforts within regional seas conventions and other international, subregional and regional arrangements related to waste originating from chemical munitions dumped at sea, UNESCO stood ready to engage in international initiatives with relevant organizations. Such engagement would be carried out through its culture sector and the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission and would primarily be aimed at identifying and treating waste originating from chemical munitions dumped at sea, especially for the protection of cultural values and sites.

28. IMO stated that the secretariat of the London Convention and London Protocol actively fostered cooperation with Governments, academia, NGOs and relevant industries on issues within the scope of the Convention and Protocol and related international instruments. All those stakeholders were represented in meetings of contracting parties, which served as a global forum for sharing experience. The secretariat maintained an ongoing dialogue with regional bodies, such as the Mediterranean Action Plan Coordinating Unit, the Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission and the OSPAR Commission, and was open to collaboration with other stakeholders as appropriate. Notably, the contracting parties had collaborated with Italy since 2009, providing it with details about dumping activities associated with waste originating from chemical munitions dumped at sea, including the nature of the material, its location and any conducted monitoring. Furthermore, in relation to munitions containing radiological material, IMO worked with the

International Atomic Energy Agency to identify “accidental” losses and historical disposal sites.

III. Way forward

A. Views on the possibility of establishing a database and its institutional framework

29. In its resolution [74/213](#), the General Assembly invited the Secretary-General to seek the views of Member States and relevant regional and international organizations with a view to exploring the possibility of establishing a database and options for the most appropriate institutional framework for such a database.

30. The United Kingdom stated that it had no objections in theory to a database on waste originating from chemical munitions dumped at sea but warned that clarity on funding and organizational design was paramount in order to further explore the possibility. In addition, given that it was not only chemical munitions that posed a threat – as energetic compounds (explosives) could potentially be leaking from both chemical and conventional munitions – studies supporting the database should be broad enough to consider both chemical weapons and conventional munitions, considering the acute risks associated with intervention, versus the perceived risks associated with leaving them undisturbed.

31. Argentina did not provide views regarding a database. However, it instead highlighted a series of proposed measures, many of which could be deemed necessary for developing or informing such a database:

- Identify the risks associated with waste derived from chemical munitions in the sea (emissions, impact on coastal and maritime resources, impact on marine biodiversity and impact on human health).
- Recognize varying obstacles hindering the extraction of munitions (technological, political, military and economic obstacles) and work towards overcoming those obstacles by generating resources – if lacking – or adapting existing ones, such as underwater robotics.
- Plan, organize and eventually conduct evacuations of risk areas.
- Strengthen channels of information exchange between governmental and non-governmental agencies.
- Map the seabed in search of toxic waste or chemical weapons through the observation and collection of oceanographic data, sediment sampling and chemical analysis to determine the presence and concentration of toxic agents.
- Encourage countries that may have used chemical weapons to continue providing information about the volumes and locations of those weapons, generating greater awareness in those areas about the complexity of the problem.
- Educate, within the framework of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, about measures to raise awareness of the negative effects of chemical weapons on underwater soil as a way to protect the planet.
- Convey the importance of reclaiming areas with a presence of chemical weapons so that they can be used again for economic, sporting or tourism purposes.
- Develop guidelines for emergency response in relation to environmental disasters at sea involving chemical weapons.

- Promote the research and development of new techniques for underwater chemical detection and decontamination to enhance environmental safety for those involved in response operations.
 - Utilize specialized software for analysing and using data on chemical munitions and their effects.
 - Conduct case studies on the basis of the experiences of various agencies that have worked in the Baltic Sea.
32. Spain expressed support for the establishment of a database.
33. Latvia stressed that the establishment of a database should be coordinated with the Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission expert group on environmental risks of hazardous submerged objects within the framework of the Commission.
34. UNESCO encouraged the inventorying of historic sunken sites by national authorities in underwater cultural heritage databases.
35. IMO noted that there were already regional databases that could be built on or used as examples, such as the one managed by the OSPAR Commission, and that there were also global databases for Governments to submit information in relation to global treaties on other related issues. As an example, IMO had established an online system for reporting issues related to shipping – as well as a module on the mandatory annual reporting of dumping of waste at sea, allowing, among other things, geographical entries and maps or links to reports. That system, known as the IMO Global Integrated Shipping Information System, was accessible to IMO member States and, to a limited extent, to the public.² That model could possibly be explored as an option for the proposed database. A new interface would need to be developed to allow for the public extraction of data on relevant chemical munition dumping sites. Such development would require resources, which at present were not available within IMO but could be linked to the ongoing review and upgrade of the London Convention and London Protocol reporting system.
36. ECE highlighted the Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers, which required the parties to the Protocol to collect and disseminate data on releases of pollutants that were a result of any kind of human activity, whether deliberate or accidental, routine or non-routine, including dumping. Disposal operations, such as release into seas or oceans, including seabed insertion, were specifically listed in annex III to the Protocol. Under article 7 (1) (iii), parties were required in that context to transfer off-site hazardous waste exceeding 2 tons per year or other waste exceeding 2,000 tons per year, in cases where the party had opted for waste-specific reporting of transfers pursuant to paragraph 5 (d). The definition of hazardous waste was in accordance with the provisions of national law. While the pollutant release and transfer registers were not currently used to report, collect and make available information on chemical munitions dumped at sea, ECE stressed that pollutant release and transfer register infrastructure, including georeferenced data and map-based search functions, might indeed be useful for Governments that were interested in exploring synergies by using existing pollutant release and transfer register databases and adding, for example, a module for chemical munitions dumped at sea to their existing pollutant release and transfer register system.

² <https://gis.imo.org/>.

37. The OSPAR Commission indicated that it collected data annually on encounters with chemical and conventional munitions and published them on the OSPAR data and information management system online portal.³

38. OPCW stated that establishing a database for waste originating from chemical munitions dumped at sea would provide a platform for data-sharing and collaboration at the expert level.

B. Views on the appropriate intergovernmental bodies for further consideration and implementation of the cooperative measures envisioned in General Assembly resolution 74/213

39. The United Kingdom noted that there were several existing intergovernmental bodies that could oversee the topic, such as the OSPAR Commission, the Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission, the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission or the International Seabed Authority.

40. Argentina stressed the need to establish an integrated approach among agencies involved in work on the subject at the regional and international levels, emphasizing that approaches to the issue should be coordinated and should be based on mutual cooperation, agreements and collaboration protocols to exchange information and share best practices. No specific intergovernmental body was highlighted. Argentina also underscored the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and OPCW as key entities for overseeing and managing efforts related to the topic.

41. UNESCO stated that it could not assume the function of managing chemical waste from historic sites but offered its cooperation in all heritage-related aspects.

42. IMO noted that a global coordination mechanism or forum could be beneficial for dialogue and the exchange of experience regarding waste originating from chemical munitions dumped at sea. An ideal intergovernmental body to undertake the task would be one with an existing legal mandate pertaining to the issue. Given the role of the London Convention and London Protocol as the main global regulatory mechanisms for the dumping of wastes and other matter at sea, IMO considered it appropriate that such a cooperative measure fall under the remit of the secretariat of the Convention and Protocol, not least since that body already had the representation of Member States, the regional conventions and the United Nations system as a whole and was open to other observers as needed. A potential joint initiative or cooperation with such bodies as OPCW could also be a viable option to consider for the effective implementation of cooperative measures envisioned in General Assembly resolution 74/213.

³ <https://odims.ospar.org/en/>.