

Chemical and Biological News

Fall in official Ebola numbers appears to be good news, but it's not that simple

BBC, 6th June 2026

The latest Ebola figures from the Democratic Republic of Congo appear to offer some hope after the number of cases was dramatically scaled back. At one point, the authorities were talking of more than 1,000 suspected cases and nearly 250 suspected deaths. They are now reporting around 380 confirmed cases in DR Congo, including 60 deaths, plus another 15 confirmed cases and one death in neighbouring Uganda.

However, the key difference is that the authorities are now talking about confirmed, rather than suspected, cases as before. So it would be a mistake to assume that the fall in numbers means the outbreak is suddenly less dangerous. The decline reflects better data, as laboratories were able to rule out many patients who had fever but were suffering from other conditions, such as malaria, which is common in DR Congo.

<https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/coq2q4y09elo>

Faith, fear and trust: Inside DR Congo's fight against Ebola

UN News, 5th June 2026

The family carried out the burial themselves – potentially exposing dozens more people to the virus.

The incident offers a stark illustration of one of the biggest obstacles facing efforts to contain the latest deadly epidemic, which has infected 381 people and claimed 64 lives in DRC as of 3 June.

For Marie Roseline Belizaire, the World Health Organization's (WHO) Emergency Preparedness and Response Director for Africa, the most challenging part is not always the virus itself – it can be sitting with families who believe the disease is caused by witchcraft, persuading traditional healers to work alongside health teams or health teams returning to communities that threatened them – only days earlier.

“We are not trying to overcome their culture,” she said. “We're trying to involve the science in their own belief.”

<https://news.un.org/en/story/2026/06/1167667>

WHO Director-General's opening remarks at the launch of the joint Bundibugyo Ebola virus continental strategic preparedness and response plan – 5 June 2026

World Health Organisation, 5th June 2026

“The objective is straightforward: we need to stop the outbreak where it is, support countries that are responding today, and ensure that neighbouring countries are ready to detect and act quickly if cases appear. There are several important features of this plan. First, it's a shared plan. The only way to beat this outbreak is through close partnership, working together under the leadership of the affected countries in one coordinated effort, guided by a simple principle: one plan, one budget, one team. Second, this is a practical plan. It sets out what we need to do now, together, to contain the current outbreak and reduce the risk of further spread. Third, it's a time-bound plan, covering June to November this year. And fourth, it's a costed plan, at US\$ 518 million. That figure represents the combined

effort of WHO, Africa CDC and key partners including UNICEF, UNHCR, WFP, the IFRC and FIND. Africa CDC and WHO are also establishing a joint financial tracking mechanism to monitor funding needs, commitments and gaps. The plan focuses on core areas: emergency coordination, surveillance, laboratory testing, infection prevention and control, clinical care, and community engagement. It also provides for research, logistics, and the continuity of essential health services, which are often disrupted during outbreaks.

Experience shows that success depends on how well these elements function together.”

<https://www.who.int/news-room/speeches/item/who-director-general-s-opening-remarks-at-the-launch-of-joint-bundibugyo-ebola-virus-continental-strategic-preparedness-and-response-plan-5-june-2026>

‘World-first’ vaccine designed by artificial intelligence

BBC, 5th June, 2026

Artificial intelligence has been used to develop a “fundamentally new” type of vaccine that could protect against large swathes of viruses and prevent pandemics, say researchers.

The team at the University of Cambridge say it is the first time a vaccine’s key component has been designed entirely by AI and then trialled in people. The vaccine was engineered to work on all coronaviruses, which would include all COVID variants, as well as viruses that currently infect animals, yet have the potential to start the next pandemic. The work is still in the early stages, but the team is already developing separate vaccines that could tackle the flu and Ebola. Vaccines teach our bodies how to

spot an infection to increase our chances of fighting it off.

But some viruses are adept at changing their appearance – or mutating – so vaccines can quickly go out of date. It’s why COVID and winter flu vaccines need to be regularly updated.

“We’re always behind,” said Prof Jonathan Heeney, from the University of Cambridge, adding, “what we’re trying to do is get ahead of the curve”, and so far ahead that they could protect against new outbreaks or pandemics.

<https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/crrpggegewe00>

Japanese nationals injured during the disposal of abandoned chemical weapons in China

Anadolu Agency, 4 June 2026

Two Japanese nationals were injured and hospitalized while handling chemical weapons abandoned by the Imperial Japanese Army in northeastern China during disposal operations involving wartime munitions left behind in the country.

Mao Ning, a spokesperson for China’s Foreign Ministry, said on Thursday that two Japanese personnel accidentally had their arms contaminated with toxic agents on May 26 when chemical weapon shells ruptured during operations involving Japan’s abandoned chemical weapons in Jilin province.

She said the Chinese side immediately provided first aid at the scene and rushed them to the hospital. After receiving treatment, the two workers were sent back to Japan on May 29.

Japan's Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshimasa Hayashi confirmed that the two workers were involved in disposal operations for wartime chemical weapons left behind in China and had been taken to hospital.

He said their injuries were not life-threatening and that the Japanese government would continue working to ensure the safe disposal of the abandoned munitions, according to Japanese public broadcaster NHK.

<https://www.aa.com.tr/en/asia-pacific/japanese-nationals-injured-during-disposal-of-abandoned-chemical-weapons-in-china/3956645>

The United Kingdom remains steadfast in its commitment to the complete elimination of chemical weapons in Syria: UK statement at the UN Security Council

Government of the United Kingdom, 4 June 2026

The United Kingdom remains steadfast in its commitment to the complete, verified elimination of chemical weapons in Syria. Ridding Syria of Assad's chemical weapons is a complex task.

The former regime denied, concealed and lied about its chemical weapons programme. Despite this opaque and challenging context, Syria is achieving tangible results and accelerating the operation to identify and ultimately destroy the legacy of Assad's chemical weapons programme. Syria's significant operational support to the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons' deployment in early May allowed access to priority sites, enabling the identification of dozens of chemical munitions such as aerial bombs and rockets.

This is an important moment – not only has this reduced the residual chemical weapons threat to the Syrian people, but it also provides further proof of Assad's attempt to actively deceive the international community.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/the-united-kingdom-remains-steadfast-in-our-commitment-to-the-complete-elimination-of-chemical-weapons-in-syria-uk-statement-at-the-un-security-council>

Top AI CEOs Call for Law Protecting Against Biological Weapons

Wall Street Journal, 3 June 2026

Top artificial-intelligence executives are joining security experts in calling for Congress to protect against biological threats posed by AI, adding to growing pressure on lawmakers to address the technology's risks. Three major chief executive officers—OpenAI's Sam Altman, Anthropic's Dario Amodei and Demis Hassabis of Google's DeepMind AI lab—are among the signatories of a letter urging Congress to require safeguards when companies order synthetic DNA and RNA, a key step in developing certain vaccines and biotech breakthroughs.

The goal is to make companies that sell the synthetic nucleic acids screen customer orders to block any combinations that could be dangerous, and make sure the customers who place the orders are legitimate.

While the concerns are longstanding in the biotech industry, AI is magnifying them by potentially giving criminals the tools to unleash new pathogens.

<https://www.wsj.com/politics/policy/top-ai-ceos-call-for-law-protecting-against-biological-weapons-88f2f99f>

A new capability to detect chemical weapons involves two existing methods

Phys.org, 3 June 2026

Alexa Carlson, Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory

In the aftermath of suspected chemical attacks, investigators from the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) step in to collect chemical, environmental, and biomedical samples. Thorough forensic laboratory analysis of these samples is essential for proving what—if any—chemical agents were used and verifying their identities.

Researchers at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory's (LLNL) Forensic Science Center (FSC) recently developed a new technique to detect pinacolyl alcohol (PA), a unique marker for the nerve agent Soman in environmental samples. The paper is published in *ACS Omega*, where it was given the Editor's Choice Award and featured in the journal's cover artwork.

<https://phys.org/news/2026-06-capability-chemical-weapons-involves-methods.html>

Ebola Response Must Cross Borders Faster Than Virus, IOM Warns

IOM UN Migration News, 2 June 2026

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) is urging governments and partners to strengthen urgently cross-border coordination to contain the ongoing Bundibugyo virus disease (Ebola) outbreak, warning that border closures alone risk driving movement underground and increasing transmission risks.

Latest World Health Organization (WHO) figures show 116 suspected cases, 321 confirmed cases, 48 deaths, and six recovered cases in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). In Uganda, there have been nine confirmed cases and one death to date.

“Viruses do not stop at borders, and neither should our response,” said Ugochi Daniels, IOM Deputy Director General for Operations. “When borders close, people often continue moving through informal routes where health screening and surveillance are limited. The most effective response is coordinated action that keeps mobility visible, safe and monitored.”

IOM warns that reactive border closures can reduce visibility of population movements, undermining health screening, surveillance, contact tracing and early detection efforts. Evidence from previous health emergencies shows that movement restrictions do not stop mobility but often redirect it towards informal and less-monitored routes.

This is the 17th Ebola outbreak recorded in the DRC and the third largest on record, highlighting both the recurring nature of the disease and the importance of sustained preparedness.

<https://www.iom.int/news/ebola-response-must-cross-borders-faster-virus-iom-warns>

Ebola outbreak: India has sent first tranche of medical supplies to Africa CDC, says MEA

The Hindu, May 29, 2026

India has sent its first tranche of medical supplies to the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC) amid

the outbreak of Ebola in parts of the continent, the Ministry of External Affairs said on Friday (May 29, 2026). On May 17, the World Health Organisation (WHO) declared the Ebola outbreak in the Democratic Republic of Congo and Uganda a Public Health Emergency of International Concern.

At his weekly media briefing, External Affairs Ministry spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal was asked if India had sent any medical aid to Africa in the wake of the outbreak. “On your question about the help that we have sent, we have sent medical supplies to CDC Africa. This was handed over by our High Commissioner in Uganda to the CDC office there. We look forward to further helping, in whatever manner we can, with the countries and with the CDC,” he said. Africa CDC is a specialised technical institution of the African Union established in 2016 to support public health initiatives of member states and strengthen the capacity of their public health institutions to detect, prevent, control and respond quickly to disease threats.

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/ebola-outbreak-india-has-sent-first-tranche-of-medical-supplies-to-africa-cdc-says-mea/article71038460.ece>

Isolated Bengaluru passenger tests negative for Ebola

The Hindu, May 28, 2026

India currently has no confirmed cases of the Ebola virus disease to date, the Union Health Ministry says, all necessary public health protocols are being followed in accordance with WHO guidelines. The test result of an individual isolated as a matter of caution in Bengaluru has returned negative for the Ebola virus disease, the Union Health Ministry confirmed on Wednesday (May 27, 2026).

India currently has no confirmed cases of the Ebola virus disease till date, the Ministry said.

“We are closely monitoring the evolving Ebola Virus Disease situation in view of recent outbreaks reported in parts of Africa and exercising abundant caution. One individual with recent travel history from Uganda, who reported mild symptoms of body ache, was placed under isolation at the State-run Epidemic Diseases Hospital in Bengaluru for observation and further evaluation,” the Ministry said.

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/uganda-national-isolated-in-bengaluru-tests-negative-for-ebola-india/article71027744.ece>

Russia claims evidence of US-funded bioweapons work in Ukraine: Report

The Indian Express, 28 May 2026

Russia’s Investigative Committee claimed that it has obtained evidence of the development of biological weapons of mass destruction funded by the United States, and involving Ukraine’s Health Ministry; the agency’s official spokesperson, Svetlana Petrenko, said, according to Sputnik.

Petrenko said that during a probe of the criminal case launched in 2022, the committee obtained data showing that the US Department of Defence financed the development of biological weapons involving personnel from Ukraine’s Health Ministry.

“During an investigation of the criminal case launched in 2022 under Article 355 of the Russian Criminal Code (the development, production and stockpiling of weapons of mass destruction), we obtained data indicating that the US Department of Defence financed the development of

biological weapons of mass destruction with the involvement of personnel from Ukraine's Health Ministry," she said at the International Security Forum.

<https://indianexpress.com/article/world/russia-claims-evidence-of-us-funded-bioweapons-work-in-ukraine-report-10712261/>

India sends emergency medical supplies for Ebola outbreak response in Congo

The Hindu, 28 May 2026

India has sent emergency pharmaceutical supplies to support efforts to contain the Ebola outbreak in Congo, the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention said on Wednesday (May 28, 2026). In a social media post, Ethiopia-headquartered Africa CDC said the consignment, donated by India, was received in Uganda by its Eastern Africa Regional Coordinating Centre. The supplies include essential diagnostics, therapeutics, infection prevention and control materials, and case management support, which will be deployed to affected communities in eastern DR Congo, it said.

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/india-sends-emergency-medical-supplies-for-ebola-outbreak-response-in-congo/article71030934.ece>

Deployment of the OPCW expert team to the Syrian Arab Republic finds chemical weapons previously undeclared to the Organisation

Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, 27 May 2026

An expert team of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) Technical Secretariat, supported by the

Syrian authorities, has discovered a significant amount of undeclared chemical weapons, related materials and documentation during its most recent deployment in the Syrian Arab Republic. These findings are being made public in the context of the monthly update report on Syria, issued by the OPCW Technical Secretariat on 26 May 2026.

OPCW Director-General, Ambassador Fernando Arias, said: "The outcome of this deployment is significant. It confirms the Secretariat's repeated assessment since 2014 that the former Syrian regime withheld information and unsuccessfully attempted to mislead the Secretariat and the international community on the extent of its chemical weapons programme."

<https://www.opcw.org/media-centre/news/2026/05/deployment-opcw-expert-team-syrian-arab-republic-finds-chemical-weapons>

CHEMEX GRULAC strengthens regional preparedness to respond to chemical incidents

Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, 27 May 2026

Under hot and humid weather conditions, civilian and military first responders in full protective gear moved carefully through simulated chemical emergency scenarios during the CHEMEX GRULAC exercise: collecting samples, carrying out decontamination procedures, and rescuing victims. Nearby, inside field medical tents, doctors, nurses, paramedics and midwives worked against the clock to assess and treat mock patients exposed to toxic chemicals.

With temperatures exceeding 30 degrees Celsius, even routine tasks became physically

demanding while wearing heavy protective suits, gloves and respiratory masks, reflecting the harsh reality of a chemical emergency. Participants trained in environments designed to mirror the conditions of a real chemical incident aftermath, where responders must operate quickly, accurately and in close coordination, under intense pressure.

<https://www.opcw.org/media-centre/news/2026/05/chemex-grulac-strengthens-regional-preparedness-respond-chemical>

India issues advisory against non-essential travel to Congo, Uganda and South Sudan amid Ebola outbreak

The Indian Express, May 24 2026

The Indian government has advised citizens to avoid non-essential travel to the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Uganda and South Sudan in view of the Ebola outbreak in parts of Africa. The Ministry of Health's advisory, issued on Saturday (May 23, 2026), follows the World Health Organisation (WHO) declaring the Ebola outbreak in central Africa a "global public health emergency".

Previously, the apex health institute declared the central Africa outbreak a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC). Officials revised the risk to "very high" nationally in the DRC and "high" regionally, though global risk remains "low". The current Bundibugyo strain lacks approved vaccines or treatments, requiring immediate public health interventions.

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/india-govt-travel-advisory-congo-south-sudan-uganda-ebola-outbreak/article71016933.ece>

Africa summit in India postponed over Ebola outbreak fears

BBC, 22 May 2026

Next week's India-Africa Forum Summit has been cancelled due to the Ebola crisis in the Democratic Republic of Congo and Uganda.

The fourth edition of the summit, which fosters diplomatic interactions between India and countries of the African continent, was set to be held in Delhi from 28-31 May after more than a decade. India and the African Union said in a joint statement that the summit was being postponed due to the "emerging public health situation on the continent" and that a new date would be announced later.

The move comes days after the World Health Organisation (WHO) declared the latest Ebola outbreak a public health emergency of international concern.

<https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cp8p1l7gp1p0>

OPCW Director-General meets Minister of Justice of the Syrian Arab Republic

Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, 20 May 2026

The Director-General of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), Ambassador Fernando Arias, met with the Minister of Justice of the Syrian Arab Republic, H.E. Dr Mazhar Al-Wais, on 7 May 2026 at the OPCW's Headquarters in The Hague.

The Minister of Justice and the Director-General exchanged views specifically on the Syrian chemical weapons programme left

behind by the Assad regime. Both sides reaffirmed the urgency of addressing this dossier and the importance of achieving a world free of chemical weapons. They agreed to continue strengthening cooperation towards these ends.

Minister Al-Wais stated: “Throughout twelve years during which chemical weapons were used against the Syrian people, the OPCW acted in a professional, balanced, and victim-centred manner. It contributed to delivering justice to victims by establishing and documenting the truth, attributing responsibility to those involved, and taking measures aimed at preventing recurrence.”

<https://www.opcw.org/media-centre/news/2026/05/opcw-director-general-meets-minister-justice-syrian-arab-republic>

An epidemic of Ebola Disease caused by Bundibugyo virus in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Uganda determined a public health emergency of international concern

World Health Organisation, 17th May 2026

Pursuant to paragraph 2 of *Article 12 - Determination of a public health emergency of international concern, including a pandemic emergency* of the International Health Regulations (2005) (IHR), the Director-General of the World Health Organization (WHO), after having consulted the States Parties where the event is known to be currently occurring, is hereby determining that the Ebola disease caused by Bundibugyo virus in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Uganda constitutes a public health emergency of international concern (PHEIC), but does not meet the criteria of pandemic emergency, as defined in the IHR.

The Director-General of WHO expresses his gratitude to the leadership of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Uganda for their commitment to take necessary and vigorous actions to bring the event under control, as well as for their frankness in assessing the risk posed by this event to other States Parties, hence allowing the global community to take necessary preparedness actions.

In his determination, the Director-General of WHO has considered, *inter alia*, information provided by the States Parties – the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Uganda – scientific principles as well as the available scientific evidence and other relevant information; and assessed the risk to human health, the risk of international spread of disease and the risk of interference with international traffic.

<https://www.who.int/news/item/17-05-2026-epidemic-of-ebola-disease-in-the-democratic-republic-of-the-congo-and-uganda-determined-a-public-health-emergency-of-international-concern>

OPCW strengthens youth engagement through education, dialogue, and multilateral simulations

Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, 13 May 2026

The Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) continues to strengthen its engagement with young people through a range of educational, dialogue-based, and multilateral simulation initiatives designed to deepen awareness of chemical weapons disarmament and the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC).

In recent months, young people from around the world have participated in these initiatives through programmes supported by the OPCW. From multilateral

negotiations in New York to engaging directly with disarmament experts in The Hague, these experiences opened new platforms for civil society to shape dialogue on global security.

<https://www.opcw.org/media-centre/news/2026/05/opcw-strengthens-youth-engagement-through-education-dialogue-and>

Two Indians aboard a cruise ship with hantavirus cases were evacuated to the Netherlands

The Indian Express, May 11 2026

Two Indian nationals aboard the Dutch vessel MV Hondius, which reported a hantavirus outbreak, were evacuated to the Netherlands and are healthy and asymptomatic, the Embassy of India in Spain said on Sunday (May 10, 2026). The luxury cruise ship, operated by Oceanwide Expeditions, began its journey on April 1 from Argentina's Ushuaia and arrived in Spain's Canary Islands on Sunday (May 10, 2026) after the virus outbreak was reported.

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/two-indians-aboard-cruise-ship-with-hantavirus-cases-evacuated-to-netherlands/article70964200.ece>

Hantavirus Cases Isolated: ICMR Says No Immediate Health Threat To India

NDTV, 8 May 2026

Amid concerns over two Indian nationals reportedly infected with the hantavirus aboard a cruise ship, Director of the ICMR's National Institute of Virology Dr Naveen Kumar on Friday said the cases appear to be isolated ones and there is no immediate public health threat to India. Kumar said there is no evidence of community spread

as of now. Hantaviruses are mainly transmitted to humans through contact with infected rodents or their excreta, such as saliva, urine and faeces, he told PTI. People usually get infected by inhaling aerosolised virus particles from rodent urine, droppings, or saliva in closed or poorly ventilated spaces such as warehouses, ships, barns and storage areas, he said.

“The reported hantavirus cases appear to be isolated ones, and there is no immediate public health threat to India,” he said.

<https://www.ndtv.com/health/hantavirus-cases-isolated-icmr-says-no-immediate-health-threat-to-india-11466683>

Andes Virus Outbreak on a Cruise Ship: Current Situation

Centre for Disease Control, May 2, 2026

CDC is responding to a deadly/ hantavirus/ outbreak on a cruise ship in the Atlantic Ocean, reported on May 2, 2026.

The type of hantavirus responsible for this outbreak is the/ Andes virus, which can lead to/ hantavirus pulmonary syndrome (HPS). HPS is a severe and potentially deadly disease that affects the lungs.

- CDC worked closely with other U.S. government agencies and international partners to bring Americans on the ship home as quickly and as safely as possible.
- CDC, in coordination with state and federal partners, repatriated 18 people who were potentially exposed to hantavirus on the M/V Hondius cruise ship in May 2026. They were flown to the Nebraska Quarantine Unit (NQU) at the University of Nebraska Medical Center for a 42-day public health

monitoring period. While thirteen people remain at the NQU, five people have returned home to complete their monitoring. All people remain symptom-free and have met the criteria established by public health officials to safely continue monitoring at home.

<https://www.cdc.gov/hantavirus/situation-summary/index.html>

OPCW Director-General calls for strengthened international efforts to end the Syrian chemical weapons dossier

Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, 9th April 2026

The Director-General of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), Ambassador Fernando Arias, provided the opening remarks at the briefing on the “Breath of Freedom Task Force”, hosted by the Permanent Representation of the Syrian Arab Republic to the OPCW. The event took place on 8 April at the OPCW Headquarters and was attended by representatives from 66 States Parties.

The Task Force is a Syrian-led coordination framework established to support efforts to identify, secure, transfer, and destroy any remaining elements of the Assad-era chemical weapons programme, under OPCW verification in accordance with the Chemical Weapons Convention. In addition to the Syrian Arab Republic, the Task Force comprises of the governments of Canada, France, Germany, Qatar, Türkiye, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

<https://www.opcw.org/media-centre/news/2026/04/opcw-director-general-calls-strengthened-international-efforts-end-syrian>

Iran’s other would-be WMD program lies in ruins following strikes by Israel and the US

Defense News, April 7

Iranian facilities affiliated with chemical and biological weapons research have been hit by the United States and Israel without much fanfare, satellite imagery and the analysis of images shared on social media show. Among the sites destroyed in recent weeks are key sites operated by the Iranian Ministry of Defense, the Iranian Revolutionary Guards Corps, and hybrid entities that straddle civilian and military applications.

In some cases, the Israeli armed forces publicized the strikes either as early warnings or after the fact; in others, they were not publicized at all and were only detected by researchers using satellite imagery and ground-truth photos trickling out of Iran.

“It almost seems like an afterthought and lower priority to the war planners,” said Jim Lamson, a former Iran analyst for the CIA of 23 years who is now a visiting fellow at the Department of War Studies with King’s College London and senior research associate at the California-based Center for Nonproliferation Studies.

<https://www.defensenews.com/global/mideast-africa/2026/04/07/irans-other-would-be-wmd-program-lies-in-ruins-following-strikes-by-israel-and-the-us/>

AI firm Anthropic seeks weapons expert to stop users from ‘misuse’

BBC, 17th March 2026

The US artificial intelligence (AI) firm Anthropic is looking to hire a chemical weapons and high-yield explosives expert to

try to prevent “catastrophic misuse” of its software.

In other words, it fears that its AI tools might tell someone how to make chemical or radioactive weapons, and wants an expert to ensure its guardrails are sufficiently robust.

In the LinkedIn recruitment post, the firm says applicants should have a minimum of five years experience in “chemical weapons and/or explosives defence” as well as knowledge of “radiological dispersal devices” – also known as dirty bombs.

The firm told the BBC the role was similar to jobs in other sensitive areas that it has already created.

Anthropic is not the only AI firm adopting this strategy.

<https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c74721xyd1wo>

OPCW releases landmark report on AI and the Chemical Weapons Convention

Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, 11 March 2026

The report of the Scientific Advisory Board’s (SAB’s) Temporary Working Group (TWG) on Artificial Intelligence (AI), released on 3 March 2026, marks a significant step in strengthening the Organisation’s preparedness in a rapidly evolving technological landscape. The report was presented at an event on the sidelines of the 111th Session of the Executive Council.

The report provides a structured, forward-looking assessment of how AI is reshaping chemical science and related disciplines, and

what this means for the implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention. It underscores that AI is no longer a peripheral development, but a cross-cutting issue with direct relevance to verification, industry practices, training, and international security.

Over the course of its mandate, the TWG examined recent advances in AI, consulted experts from academia, industry, and international organisations, and assessed how these technologies may affect both the opportunities and risks facing the Convention.

<https://www.opcw.org/media-centre/news/2026/03/opcw-releases-landmark-report-ai-and-chemical-weapons-convention>

OPCW releases 5th report to identify perpetrators of chemical weapons use in Syria

Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, 22nd January 2026

The Secretariat of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW)’s fifth report concludes there are reasonable grounds to believe that the Syrian Arab Air Forces were the perpetrators of the chemical weapons attack on 1 October 2016 in Kafr Zeita in the Syrian Arab Republic. The comprehensive investigation was conducted by the Investigation and Identification Team (IIT) from March 2024 to December 2025.

Based on the analysis and corroboration of all obtained information, the Secretariat concludes there are reasonable grounds to believe the Syrian Arab Air Force dropped at least one yellow pressurised cylinder, which hit a cave system in the Wadi al-Aanz valley in Kafr Zeita. The pressurised cylinder

impacted two ventilation openings near the Al Maghara Hospital. The cylinder then tumbled down and came to rest near the entrance of the cave system. Upon impact, the cylinder ruptured and pressurised released chlorine gas, dispersing through the Wadi al-Aanz valley, injuring 35 named individuals and affecting dozens more.

<https://www.opcw.org/media-centre/news/2026/01/opcw-releases-5th-report-identify-perpetrators-chemical-weapons-use-syria>

Syria signals renewed cooperation on chemical weapons destruction

United Nations News, 8 January 2026

Adedeji Ebo, Officer-in-Charge of the UN's Office for Disarmament Affairs (ODA), welcomed a commitment by the new authorities to cooperate with the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW).

He delivered the latest monthly briefing on engagement between Syria and the UN partner which began more than a decade ago following a Sarin nerve gas attack in the suburbs of the capital, Damascus, that killed hundreds.

In response, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 2118 (2013) which called for the speedy implementation of procedures drawn up by the OPCW “for the expeditious destruction” of Syria's verified chemical weapons programme.

<https://news.un.org/en/story/2026/01/1166724>