



# GAS!

**THE INFLUENCE OF  
CHEMICAL WARFARE AGENTS.  
PAST AND PRESENT**

**APRIL 23-24 2026**  
**ROYAL MILITARY ACADEMY**  
AVENUE DE LA RENAISSANCE 30, 1000 BRUSSELS



## PROGRAMMA

### DAY 1 - THURSDAY 23 APRIL

8h30 – 9h00 : Registration

9h00 – 9h10: Welcome and introduction – dr. P. Carpreau

9h10 – 10h30: Session 1 - Historical aspects of chemical warfare (1) - Moderator D. Warnier

N. Larsson – Chemical warfare: Legal fictions and deadly realities - The evolution and limits of chemical weapons law, 1899 – Today

Prof. dr. T. Simoens – Gas warfare experience in the Belgian Armed Forces in the Great War

A. Piernas – The involvement and the role of the French military engineering branch in the fight to gas and the ambient air control

10h30 – 10u55: BREAK

11h00 – 12h10: Session 1 - Historical aspects of chemical warfare (2) - Moderator D. Warnier

K. Gony & dr. M. Duran – An Ancient Weapon for Modern Warfare

W. Van Opstal & R. Acke – The high-risk enterprise of moving chemical warfare agents from Antwerp to the South of France in May 1940

Dr. M. Posch – Unconventional Weapons for an Unconventional War: Chemical Research at SOE Station IX and Czechoslovak Contributions

12h10 – 13h10: LUNCH





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**11h00 – 12h10: Session 1 - Historical aspects of chemical warfare (3) - Moderator D. Warnier**

F. De Craemer – Syria's Chemical Weapons Program: Strategic Origins, International Responses, and Insights from the Declaration Assessment Process

Q&A

**14h00 – 14h50: Session 2 - Gas and collections (1) – Moderator Prof. dr. B. De Wever**

C. A. Wanecq – From mining to the trenches: gas masks in unbreathable atmospheres (1910s-1920s)

S. Smets – A war of the senses. Perception and transcription of the use of combat gases in First World War pictorial works and veteran narratives

**14h50 – 15h10: BREAK**

**15h20 – 16h00: Session 2 - Gas and collections (2) – Moderator Prof. dr. B. De Wever**

Z.-J. Vangansewinkel – Warfare in the museum: how museum objects related to gas are conserved in the War Heritage Institute

Q&A





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**War  
Heritage  
Institute**  
BELGIUM, BATTLEFIELD OF EUROPE

## **DAY 2 - FRIDAY 24 APRIL**

**8h30 – 9h00: Registration**

**9h00 – 9h10: Welcome and introduction**

**9h10 – 10h00: Session 3 - Technical aspects of chemical warfare (1) –  
Moderator Prof. dr. B. Simoens**

Dr. L. F. Velasco – TeChBioT: Advancing Field Detection of Low-Volatility CWAs and Biological Threats

Prof. dr. R. Haelterman – Revealing the Invisible: Detecting Chemical Warfare Agents Through Hyperspectral Imaging

S. Volckaert & W. Verhaeghe – OCW discovered in dismantled World War I ammunition in Belgium and the evolution of toxic munitions during the war

**10h20 – 10h40: BREAK**

**10h50 – 12h20: Session 3 - Technical aspects of chemical warfare (2) –  
Moderator Prof. dr. B. Simoens**

E. Marnef – CBRNe MUG

Dr. P. Francois – The Paardenmarkt, a remainder of the First World War on the Belgian coast

O. Lion – 1939-1940 : Chemical Warfare and the Western Front

Q & A





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**12h20 – 13h20: LUNCH**

**13h20 – 15h00: Part 4 - nonmaterial aspects of chemical warfare – Moderator Prof. dr. S. Dewulf**

W. Kowalski – Compellence at the End of War: Chemical Weapons & Strategic Psychology of Collapse

Dr. A. van der Meer – Chemical warfare as a strategic use of norm transgression

E. Kalajzic – Colin Powell's legacy at the United Nations Security Council and the use of gas in Syria

Dr. J. Van Bladel – Russia's CBRN Modernisation and the Battlefield Use of Chemical Agents in Ukraine (2014–2025)

Q&A

**15h00 – 15h20: Closing arguments**

**15h20 – 16h20: Reception and networking moment**

