



VERIFIN

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Professor Paula Vanninen is the director of Finnish Institute for Verification of the Chemical Weapons Convention (VERIFIN), which works under guidance of the Finnish Ministry of Foreign Affairs. VERIFIN have developed analytical methods for chemical warfare agents (CWAs) from environmental samples during the several decades. The OPCW (Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons) has a worldwide network of designated laboratories, VERIFIN being part of that network, for environmental, material and biomedical sample analysis. Internationally developed and tested Recommended Operating Procedures (ROPs) for analysis, were published in 2011 and 2017 coordinated by Vanninen. These ROPs are the basis for accreditation and analysis of CWAs.

Prof. Vanninen has been working in the Scientific Advisory Board of the OPCW (2010-2016) and its temporary working groups (2005-). The Nobel Peace Prize was nominated for the OPCW in 2013. She completed her degrees of M.Sc. and Ph. D. in the University of Oulu. Her doctoral thesis in 1992 was concerned with organic mass spectrometry, which provided a good basis for developing her expertise in analytics of CWAs. Prof. Vanninen has focused on research of sea dumped chemical weapons to explore the environmental and marine biota effects of CWAs leaking in the Baltic Sea. In last years, the questions raised around the attacks in Syria and elsewhere include the identity of the threat chemicals, the responsible actor (terrorists or state party), and whether any new tools exist for investigating these crimes.

Prof. Vanninen holds an honorary Ph.D. degree in National Defence University of Finland. In 2013, she was named the alumna of the year in University of Oulu.