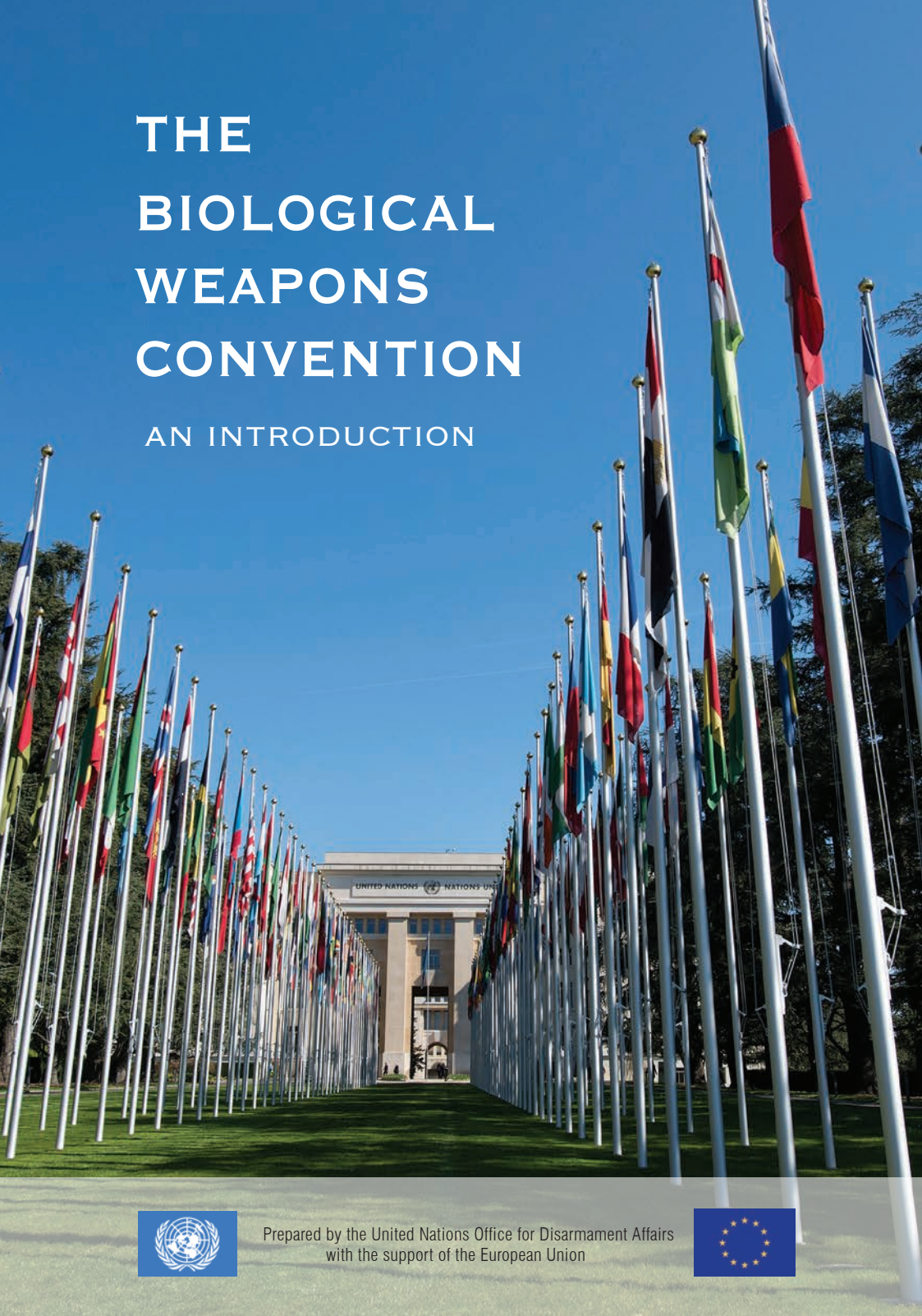


THE BIOLOGICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION

AN INTRODUCTION



Prepared by the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs
with the support of the European Union



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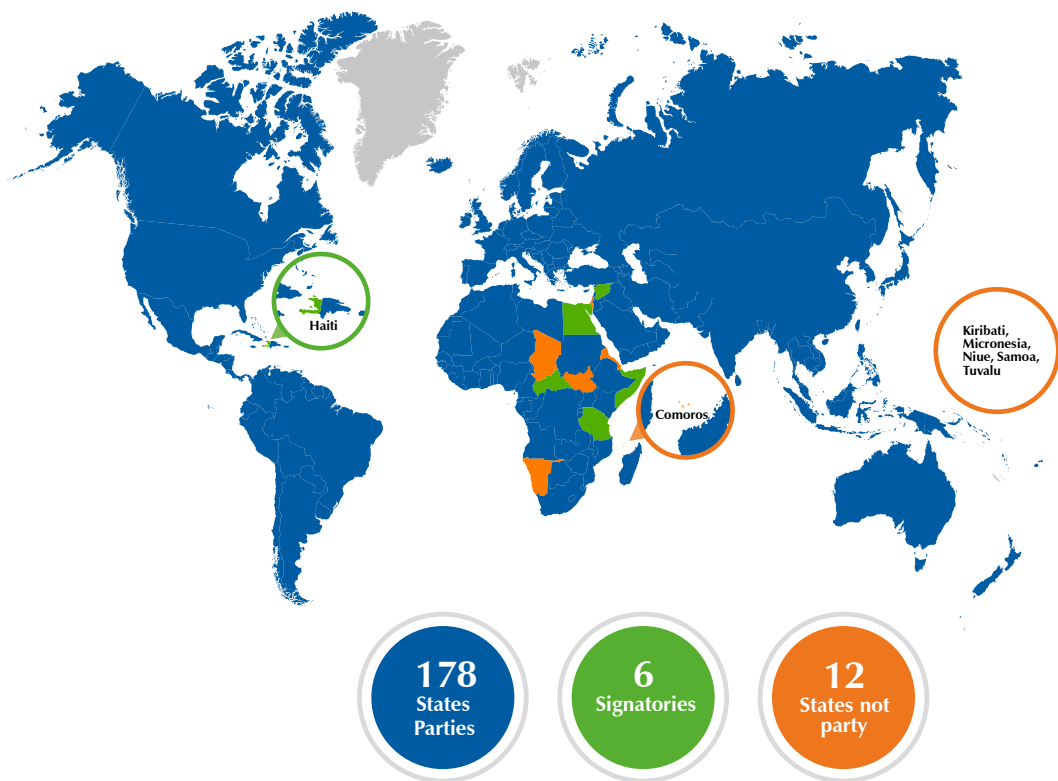
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Status of universalization of the BWC (May 2017)

The BWC at a glance

The Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) effectively prohibits the development, production, acquisition, transfer, stockpiling and use of biological and toxin weapons. It was the first multilateral disarmament treaty banning an entire category of weapons of mass destruction (WMD).

Formally known as “The Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on their Destruction”,¹ the Convention was negotiated by the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament in Geneva, Switzerland. It opened for signature on 10 April 1972 and entered into force on 26 March 1975.

The BWC is a key element in the international community’s efforts to address WMD proliferation and it has established a strong norm against biological weapons. The Convention has reached almost universal membership with 178 States Parties and six Signatory States (as of 31 May 2017). The Russian Federation, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America serve as the three Depositary Governments of the BWC. The role of the Depositary Governments is to carry out certain functions such as receiving official instruments from other Governments relating to membership of the Convention.

¹ The Convention is abbreviated as either the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) or as the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC).

What is the BWC all about?

The BWC is a cornerstone of the multilateral disarmament regime and has the objective to rid the world of biological and toxin weapons. Considered a descendant of the 1925 Geneva Protocol which banned the use of chemical and biological weapons, it was the first multilateral treaty to outlaw an entire category of weapons of mass destruction.

The Convention is comparatively short and comprises only 15 articles. The full text of the BWC can be found in the Annex.

Over the years, the Convention's provisions have been elaborated upon by a series of additional agreements and understandings reached by its States Parties at successive Review Conferences, which have been held every five years. A total of eight Review Conferences have taken place since the first one in 1980.

Key provisions of the Biological Weapons Convention include:	
Article I	Never under any circumstances to develop, produce, stockpile, acquire or retain biological weapons.
Article II	To destroy or divert to peaceful purposes biological agents, toxins, weapons, equipment and means of delivery prior to joining.
Article III	Not to transfer, or in any way assist, encourage or induce anyone else to acquire or retain biological weapons.
Article IV	To take any national measures necessary to implement the provisions of the BWC domestically.
Article V	To consult bilaterally and multilaterally and cooperate in solving any problems with the implementation of the BWC.
Article VI	To request the UN Security Council to investigate alleged breaches of the BWC and to comply with its subsequent decisions.
Article VII	To assist States which have been exposed to a danger as a result of a violation of the BWC.
Article X	To facilitate the fullest possible exchange of equipment, materials and information for peaceful purposes.

BWC Negotiations in Geneva

The Protocol for the Prohibition of the Use in War of Asphyxiating, Poisonous or other Gases, and of Bacteriological Methods of Warfare (commonly known as the Geneva Protocol), was signed in Geneva in June 1925 and entered into force in February 1928. It represented the first important milestone towards a comprehensive ban on biological weapons by prohibiting their use. However, several States ratified the Protocol with reservations, both with respect to the Protocol's applicability and also pertaining to the use of chemical or biological weapons in retaliation. These reservations effectively rendering the Geneva Protocol a no-first-use agreement only.

Disarmament talks after the Second World War originally addressed biological and chemical weapons together. However, these discussions remained inconclusive for many years. Soon after States finalized the negotiations of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) in 1968, a UK initiative helped pave the way to overcome the impasse in the discussions on chemical and biological weapons. The UK submitted a working paper to the Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament in Geneva, which proposed to separate consideration of biological weapons from chemical weapons and to concentrate first on the former.

A year later, formal negotiation of what became the Biological Weapons Convention started in Geneva based on a proposal submitted by the UK. US President Richard Nixon's decision in November 1969 to abandon the US offensive biological weapons



▲ CCD negotiations in the Council Chamber at the Palais des Nations, Geneva. (Photo credit: UNOG)

programme sent a strong supportive signal to the negotiators in Geneva.

Nevertheless, a considerable number of States initially opposed the idea of a separate convention on biological weapons. A Soviet proposal made on behalf of the seven Socialist Group countries in March 1971 for a draft convention covering only biological weapons therefore represented an important development in the negotiations. As negotiations progressed, both the USA and the Soviet Union introduced identical but separate draft conventions to the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament (CCD) in early August 1971. After further discussions, CCD members agreed to forward the draft convention to the United Nations General Assembly on 28 September 1971 and the General Assembly approved the text on 16 December 1971.

On 10 April 1972, the BWC was opened for signature at ceremonies in London, Washington, D.C. and Moscow. After the required deposit of instruments of ratification by 22 governments (including those of the three Depositaries), the Convention entered into force on 26 March 1975.



▲ US President Gerald Ford signs the US instrument of ratification of the BWC on 22 January 1975.
(Photo credit: Ford Presidential Library)

Why is the BWC important to all of us?

Biological weapons can be used not only to attack humans, but also livestock and crops. They can be deadly and highly contagious. Diseases caused by such weapons would not confine themselves to national borders and could spread rapidly around the world. Although of natural origin, the 2014/16 Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) outbreak in West Africa was widely recognized as demonstrating the lack of preparedness in the global health and humanitarian system to respond to larger scale disease outbreaks. It also sent an alarming message about the potentially dramatic consequences that could be caused through the deliberate release of biological agents or toxins by state or non-state actors. In addition to the tragic loss of lives, the economic consequences of such an event would be devastating. All states are therefore potentially at risk, and all benefit from joining the BWC.

“ Whether it occurs by a quirk of nature or at the hand of a terrorist, epidemiologists say a fast-moving airborne pathogen could kill more than 30 million people in less than a year. And they say there is a reasonable probability the world will experience such an outbreak in the next 10-15 years. ”

Bill Gates, 2017 Munich Security Conference



▲ Medical staff carry the body of a victim of Ebola during the response operation in Western Africa. (Photo credit: World Health Organization)

The twenty-first century has been called the age of biotechnology. Advances in biotechnology and life sciences are occurring at an unprecedented and accelerating pace, enhanced by the effects of globalization and ever improving information and communication technology capabilities. While such developments bring unparalleled benefits and are by and large to be welcomed, they could also be misused due to the inherent dual use nature of life sciences. Therefore, BWC States Parties pay continuing attention to these new trends in science and technology.



- ▲ Sampling and decontamination drills at a first responder exercise.
(Photo credit: Spiez Laboratory)

“ Technological barriers to acquiring and using a biological weapon have been significantly eroded since the [BWC] Seventh Review Conference. ”

*InterAcademy Panel: the global network
of science academies, 2015*

There are growing concerns that non-state actors, including terrorist groups, may obtain and use biological weapons. It is no coincidence that the 2016 World Economic Forum in Davos identified biological weapons together with autonomous weapons and cyberwar as the three technologies that will transform future warfare. At the same time, a number of experts maintain that considerable hurdles still exist, particularly for non-state actors to effectively weaponize and disseminate biological agents.

In view of the real threat posed by biological weapons, a comprehensive and multifaceted approach is required. Close cooperation between the security, scientific, public health and agricultural sectors, industry, academia and civil society is required

and needs to take place at the national, regional and international levels.

The BWC is the sole multilateral forum in which all aspects surrounding biological weapons can be discussed and addressed in a holistic manner. As such, BWC meetings bring together States Parties' experts with various expertise from across the globe and provide a platform for cooperation and information exchange in order to meet international security obligations.

Besides addressing disarmament and security issues, the BWC also supports the promotion of the peaceful uses of biological science and technology and thereby helps to prevent the global spread of diseases. Article X of the BWC requires States Parties to "facilitate, and have the right to participate in, the fullest possible exchange of equipment, materials and scientific and technological information" for the use of biological agents and toxins for peaceful purposes.

Assistance and cooperation activities take place both at the bilateral and multilateral levels under the Convention and help build capacity in less developed countries. For example, since 2006 the European Union has contributed more than EUR 6.3 million to various BWC universalization, assistance and implementation activities.

The BWC also helps to build capacity to respond to disease outbreaks and provides a multilateral framework in which States Parties can meet regularly to advise and assist each other in developing their national capacities in such areas as disease surveillance, detection and diagnosis; biosafety and biosecurity; education, training and awareness-raising; emergency response; and legal, regulatory and administrative measures.



▲ BWC National Implementation Workshop in Nepal 2014 under EU Council Decision 2012/421 (CFSP) in support of the BWC. (Photo credit: BWC ISU)

At the Eighth BWC Review Conference in 2016, States Parties agreed that “the United Nations and other international organizations could also play an important role in coordinating, mobilizing and delivering the required support and assistance, when required and upon request of the concerned State Party.” In particular, States Parties referred to the World Health Organization (WHO), the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), and the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) as organizations which could be engaged in an assistance delivery operation.

How to join the BWC?

A State can become a State Party to the BWC through three means: ratification, accession or succession. Ratification is the step to be taken by States that have already signed the Convention, known as Signatory States. Since the Convention entered into force in 1975, it is no longer possible to sign it but only to accede to it. As of May 2017, there remain six States which signed the Convention before it entered into force, but which have not yet ratified it. Accession is applicable to States that have not already signed the Convention. As of May 2017, there are 12 States which have neither signed nor ratified the BWC. Succession is relevant for newly independent States which consent to be bound by a treaty to which the predecessor State was a party.

Each State undertakes the process of ratifying, acceding or succeeding to the BWC in accordance with its own national constitutional processes, for which formal approval by the national parliament is often required. Once the domestic requirements have been satisfied, an instrument of accession, ratification or succession should be deposited with one or more of the three Depositary Governments of the Convention: the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America. For States which deposit their instruments of ratification, accession or succession subsequent to the entry into force of the Convention in 1975, it enters into force on the date of the deposit of the instruments of ratification, accession or succession.

States Parties in every region have offered to assist those in need with drafting or amending implementing legislation, establishing regulations, building administrative capacity, and other aspects of national implementation.

Administrative support and advice on all aspects of implementation is also available from the Implementation Support Unit (for further information, please see <http://www.unog.ch/bwc>).



▲ Instrument of ratification of the Soviet Union, 11 February 1975. (Photo credit: Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation)

Universal membership of the BWC will strengthen the global norm against the use of disease as a weapon, reinforcing the international community's determination that such use would be, as the preamble to the BWC states, "repugnant to the conscience of mankind".

The costs of joining the Convention are minimal. Almost two-thirds of BWC States Parties pay less than USD 1,000 per year, with many least developed countries paying less than USD 100 per year (status: 2017).

Since the Sixth Review Conference of the BWC in 2006, its membership has increased from 155 to 178 States Parties (as of 31 May 2017), which represents an increase of more than 20 percent. All of the permanent members of the Security Council are States Parties, as are all of the members of the European Union, all of the former Soviet States, all States in Europe, all States but one in Latin America and the Caribbean, and large majorities of States in Africa and the Asia-Pacific region.

As part of their mandate, the Chairs of BWC meetings actively

engage in promoting the universalization of the Convention and encourage states not yet party to join the Convention. A number of States Parties and NGOs also offer their expertise and assistance in drafting national legislation and sensitizing national policy makers on the importance of the BWC. Further information can be found on the BWC website.

“Disarmament can play an important role in ending existing conflicts and preventing the outbreak of new strife. Disarmament and arms control processes provide the breathing space for confidence to be built, stability to be strengthened and trust to be established.”

UN Secretary-General
António Guterres



(Photo credit: UN Photo/Mark Garten)

How is the BWC implemented?

In order to fully implement the BWC, States Parties are obliged to translate the commitments found in the Convention into effective national action. Article IV of the Convention requires each State Party to “take any necessary measures to prohibit and prevent the development, production, stockpiling, acquisition, or retention of the agents, toxins, weapons, equipment and means of delivery specified in Article I of the Convention, within the territory of such State, under its jurisdiction or under its control anywhere”. These necessary measures depend on the circumstances and legal systems of each State Party, and as such there can be different approaches to implementing the provisions of the Convention nationally.

National implementation of the obligations under the BWC usually requires coordination and close cooperation among a number of government departments. In order to identify relevant national structures, States should review each article of the BWC in order to link roles and responsibilities of national authorities with specific obligations. In practice, some States Parties have developed and established inter-departmental processes, structures and procedures to coordinate and review the implementation of all obligations under the Convention.

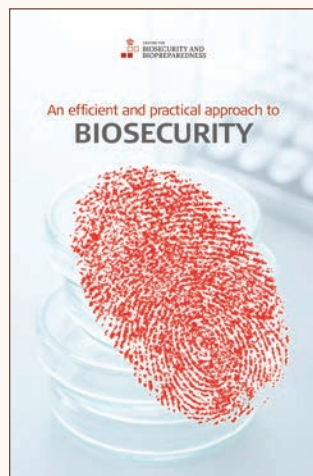
The Sixth Review Conference in 2006 decided that each State Party should designate a national focal point for:

- Coordinating the national implementation of the Convention and communicating with other States Parties and relevant international organizations;

- Preparing the submission of confidence-building measures;
- Facilitating information exchange of universalization efforts.

More than 100 States Parties have provided the BWC Implementation Support Unit with their national points of contact. Contact details are available to States Parties on the BWC website. Unlike the Chemical Weapons Convention, the BWC does not include an obligation for States Parties to establish or designate a National Authority. While BWC States Parties are therefore free to develop their own institutional arrangements taking into account national constitutional responsibilities and organizational structures, increasingly some States Parties designate a lead organization or establish a central body.

Besides measures undertaken in the national administrations, important contributions and complementary measures can be undertaken by universities, NGOs and industry. A number of universities have undertaken significant efforts to develop education programmes for life



▲ Biosecurity Guide developed by the Danish Centre for Biosecurity and Biopreparedness.
(Photo credit: CBB)

The growing attention within the BWC process to the problem of potential misuse of biological agents by terrorist or criminal groups has linked up with the development of measures to make citizens in States Parties—and more especially involved groups such as scientists—more aware of dual use problems. During BWC Meetings of Experts and Meetings of States Parties, proposals have been discussed on education, outreach and codes of conduct as methods to promote awareness of biosecurity issues.



▲ Workshop on raising awareness on dual use concerns in biotechnology, Islamabad.
(Photo credit: Zabta Khan Shinwari)

scientists on dual use research and on biosecurity. Other initiatives may include the development of a culture of responsibility among relevant professionals; and voluntary development, adoption and promulgation of codes of conduct.

In order to promote the implementation of Article X, the Seventh Review Conference also decided to establish a database to facilitate the exchange of requests for, and offers to provide, assistance and cooperation among States Parties.

At the Seventh Review Conference in 2011, States Parties decided to put in place a dedicated sponsorship programme in

order to support and increase the participation of experts from developing States Parties in BWC meetings.

States Parties agreed at the Second Review Conference in 1986 to the exchange of Confidence-Building Measures (CBMs) “in order to prevent or reduce the occurrence of ambiguities, doubts and suspicions and in order to improve international coordination in the field of peaceful biological activities”. Subsequently, States Parties decided to revise CBMs at the Third and Seventh Review Conferences in 1991 and 2011, respectively. Accordingly, CBMs

currently consist of a set of six measures (CBM D was deleted from the list at the Seventh Review Conference):

CBM A	Research centres, laboratories and biological defence research and development programmes;
CBM B	Exchange of information on outbreaks of infectious diseases and similar occurrences caused by toxins;
CBM C	Encouragement of publication of results and promotion of use of knowledge;
CBM E	Declaration of legislation, regulations and other measures;
CBM F	Declaration of past activities in offensive and/or defensive biological research and development programmes;
CBM G	Declaration of vaccine production facilities.

While there has been a slow but steady increase in the submissions made by States Parties, the overall level of participation remains low with less than half of all States Parties having regularly submitted CBMs.

Number of States Parties participating in CBMs



How does the BWC work?

The BWC does not have an international verification regime nor does it have its own separate international organization to facilitate the full and effective implementation of the Convention. Since 2002, BWC States Parties have developed intersessional work programmes between the Review Conferences that include annual Meetings of Experts and Meetings of States Parties. The Eighth Review Conference, which took place in November 2016 agreed that States Parties would continue to hold annual meetings from 2017 to 2020.

States Parties to the BWC have strived to ensure that the Convention remains relevant and effective, in view of the changes in science and technology, politics and security since it entered into force in 1975. Throughout the years, States Parties have met at five yearly intervals to review the operation of the BWC. Since the Third Review Conference in 1991, States Parties have pursued various activities and initiatives to strengthen the effectiveness and improve the implementation of the Convention between the review conferences.

During the 1990s, BWC States Parties met regularly to negotiate a legally-binding instrument to strengthen the Convention. Despite 24 sessions of an Ad-Hoc Group being convened in Geneva from 1995 until 2001, and the production of a draft protocol by the Chairman of the negotiations, Ambassador Tibor Tóth of Hungary, States Parties were eventually unable to finalize the negotiations.



▲ BWC Meeting of States Parties at the Palais des Nations, Geneva.
(Photo credit: UNOG)

States Parties decided at the Sixth BWC Review Conference in 2006, to establish the BWC Implementation Support Unit (ISU), which is hosted by the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA) in Geneva. The ISU's mandate includes the following tasks:

- to form the core of the Secretariat of BWC meetings;
- to maintain and develop the treaty's website;
- to receive and distribute information submitted by States Parties annually under the system of Confidence-Building Measures (CBMs);
- to collate details of national measures to implement all aspects of the Convention;
- to act as a clearing house for assistance;
- to interact with relevant international organizations, scientific and academic institutions, and non-governmental organizations;
- to attend relevant meetings and events to promote the BWC;
- to assist the Chair of BWC meetings in promoting universality of the Convention; and

- to maintain details of progress towards universality and reports on progress to States Parties.

The Eighth Review Conference in 2016 extended the mandate of the ISU until the Ninth Review Conference planned for 2021.



▲ United Nations Office at Geneva.
(Photo credit: UNOG)

ANNEX

CONVENTION ON THE
PROHIBITION OF THE DEVELOPMENT,
PRODUCTION AND STOCKPILING OF
BACTERIOLOGICAL (BIOLOGICAL)
AND TOXIN WEAPONS
AND ON THEIR DESTRUCTION

CONVENTION ON THE PROHIBITION OF THE DEVELOPMENT, PRODUCTION AND STOCKPILING OF BACTERIOLOGICAL (BIOLOGICAL) AND TOXIN WEAPONS AND ON THEIR DESTRUCTION

The States Parties to this Convention,

Determined to act with a view to achieving effective progress towards general and complete disarmament, including the prohibition and elimination of all types of weapons of mass destruction, and convinced that the prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons and their elimination, through effective measures, will facilitate the achievement of general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control,

Recognising the important significance of the Protocol for the Prohibition of the Use in War of Asphyxiating, Poisonous or Other Gases, and of Bacteriological Methods of Warfare, signed at Geneva on 17 June 1925, and conscious also of the contribution which the said Protocol has already made, and continues to make, to mitigating the horrors of war,

Reaffirming their adherence to the principles and objectives of that Protocol and calling upon all States to comply strictly with them,

Recalling that the General Assembly of the United Nations has repeatedly condemned all actions contrary to the principles and objectives of the Geneva Protocol of 17 June 1925,

Desiring to contribute to the strengthening of confidence between peoples and the general improvement of the international atmosphere,

Desiring also to contribute to the realisation of the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations,

Convinced of the importance and urgency of eliminating from the arsenals of States, through effective measures, such dangerous weapons of mass destruction as those using chemical or bacteriological (biological) agents,

Recognising that an agreement on the prohibition of bacteriological (biological) and toxin weapons represents a first possible step towards the achievement of agreement on effective measures also for the prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of chemical weapons, and determined to continue negotiations to that end,

Determined, for the sake of all mankind, to exclude completely the possibility of bacteriological (biological) agents and toxins being used as weapons,

Convinced that such use would be repugnant to the conscience of mankind and that no effort should be spared to minimise this risk,

Have agreed as follows:

■ ARTICLE I

Each State Party to this Convention undertakes never in any circumstances to develop, produce, stockpile or otherwise acquire or retain:

- (1) microbial or other biological agents, or toxins whatever their origin or method of production, of types and in quantities that have no justification for prophylactic, protective or other peaceful purposes;
- (2) weapons, equipment or means of delivery designed to use such agents or toxins for hostile purposes or in armed conflict.

■ ARTICLE II

Each State Party to this Convention undertakes to destroy, or to divert to peaceful purposes, as soon as possible but not later than nine months after the entry into force of the Convention, all agents, toxins, weapons, equipment and means of delivery specified in Article 1 of the Convention, which are in its possession or under its jurisdiction or

control. In implementing the provisions of this Article all necessary safety precautions shall be observed to protect populations and the environment.

■ **ARTICLE III**

Each State Party to this Convention undertakes not to transfer to any recipient whatsoever, directly or indirectly, and not in any way to assist, encourage, or induce any State, group of States or international organisations to manufacture or otherwise acquire any of the agents, toxins, weapons, equipment or means of delivery specified in Article I of the Convention.

■ **ARTICLE IV**

Each State Party to this Convention shall, in accordance with its constitutional processes, take any necessary measures to prohibit and prevent the development, production, stockpiling, acquisition or retention of the agents, toxins, weapons, equipment and means of delivery specified in Article I of the Convention, within the territory of such State, under its jurisdiction or under its control anywhere.

■ **ARTICLE V**

The States Parties to this Convention undertake to consult one another and to co-operate in solving any problems

which may arise in relation to the objective of, or in the application of the provisions of, the Convention. Consultation and co-operation pursuant to this Article may also be undertaken through appropriate international procedures within the framework of the United Nations and in accordance with its Charter.

■ ARTICLE VI

- (1) Any State Party to this Convention which finds that any other State Party is acting in breach of obligations deriving from the provisions of the Convention may lodge a complaint with the Security Council of the United Nations. Such a complaint should include all possible evidence confirming its validity, as well as a request for its consideration by the Security Council.
- (2) Each State Party to this Convention undertakes to co-operate in carrying out any investigation which the Security Council may initiate, in accordance with the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations, on the basis of the complaint received by the Council. The Security Council shall inform the States Parties to the Convention of the results of the investigation.

■ ARTICLE VII

Each State Party to this Convention undertakes to provide or support assistance, in accordance with the United Nations Charter, to any Party to the Convention which so requests, if the Security Council decides that such Party has been exposed to danger as a result of violation of the Convention.

■ ARTICLE VIII

Nothing in this Convention shall be interpreted as in any way limiting or detracting from the obligations assumed by any State under the Protocol for the Prohibition of the Use in War of Asphyxiating, Poisonous or Other Gases, and of Bacteriological Methods of Warfare, signed at Geneva on 17 June 1925.

■ ARTICLE IX

Each State Party to this Convention affirms the recognised objective of effective prohibition of chemical weapons and, to this end, undertakes to continue negotiations in good faith with a view to reaching early agreement on effective measures for the prohibition of their development, production and stockpiling and for their destruction, and on appropriate measures concerning equipment and means of delivery specifically designed for the production or use of chemical agents for weapons purposes.

■ ARTICLE X

- (1) The States Parties to this Convention undertake to facilitate, and have the right to participate in, the fullest possible exchange of equipment, materials and scientific and technological information for the use of bacteriological (biological) agents and toxins for peaceful purposes. Parties to the Convention in a position to do so shall also co-operate in contributing individually or together with other States or international organisations to the further development and application of scientific discoveries in the field of bacteriology (biology) for the prevention of disease, or for other peaceful purposes.
- (2) This Convention shall be implemented in a manner designed to avoid hampering the economic or technological development of States Parties to the Convention or international co-operation in the field of peaceful bacteriological (biological) activities, including the international exchange of bacteriological (biological) agents and toxins and equipment for the processing, use or production of bacteriological (biological) agents and toxins for peaceful purposes in accordance with the provisions of the Convention.

■ ARTICLE XI

Any State Party may propose amendments to this Convention. Amendments shall enter into force for each State Party accepting the amendments upon their acceptance by a majority of the States Parties to the Convention and thereafter for each remaining State Party on the date of acceptance by it.

■ ARTICLE XII

Five years after the entry into force of this Convention, or earlier if it is requested by a majority of Parties to the Convention by submitting a proposal to this effect to the Depositary Governments, a conference of States Parties to the Convention shall be held at Geneva, Switzerland, to review the operation of the Convention, with a view to assuring that the purposes of the preamble and the provisions of the Convention, including the provisions concerning negotiations on chemical weapons, are being realised. Such review shall take into account any new scientific and technological developments relevant to the Convention.

■ ARTICLE XIII

- (1) This Convention shall be of unlimited duration.
- (2) Each State Party to this Convention shall in exercising its national sovereignty have the right

to withdraw from the Convention if it decides that extraordinary events, related to the subject matter of the Convention, have jeopardised the supreme interests of its country. It shall give notice of such withdrawal to all other States Parties to the Convention and to the United Nations Security Council three months in advance. Such notice shall include a statement of the extraordinary events it regards as having jeopardised its supreme interests.

■ ARTICLE XIV

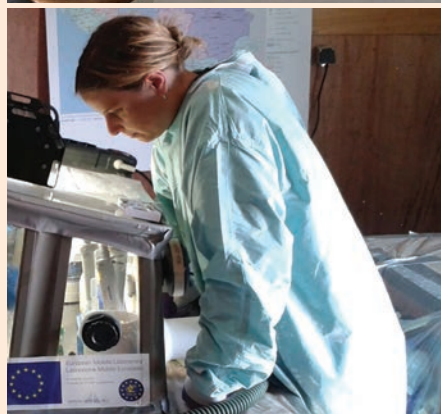
- (1) This Convention shall be open to all States for signature. Any State which does not sign the Convention before its entry into force in accordance with paragraph 3 of this Article may accede to it at any time.
- (2) This Convention shall be subject to ratification by signatory States, Instruments of ratification and instruments of accession shall be deposited with the Governments of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the United States of America, which are hereby designated the Depositary Governments.
- (3) This Convention shall enter into force after the deposit of instruments of ratification by twenty-

two Governments, including the Governments designated as Depositaries of the Convention.

- (4) For States whose instruments of ratification or accession are deposited subsequent to the entry into force of this Convention, it shall enter into force on the date of the deposit of their instruments of ratification or accession.
- (5) The Depositary Governments shall promptly inform all signatory and acceding States of the date of each signature, the date of deposit of each instrument of ratification or of accession and the date of the entry into force of this Convention, and of the receipt of other notices.
- (6) This Convention shall be registered by the Depositary Governments pursuant to Article 102 of the Charter of the United Nations.

■ ARTICLE XV

This Convention, the English, Russian, French, Spanish and Chinese texts of which are equally authentic, shall be deposited in the archives of the Depositary Governments. Duly certified copies of the Convention shall be transmitted by the Depositary Governments to the Governments of the signatory and acceding States.



For more information:

United Nations Office at Geneva
Website: <http://www.unog.ch/bwc>
E-mail: bwc@unog.ch
Twitter: [@bwcisu](https://twitter.com/bwcisu)