

# A practical introduction to the Biological Weapons Convention

Daniel Feakes

Head, BWC ISU

Ngoc Phuong van der Blij

Political Affairs Officer, BWC ISU

United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs, Geneva Branch





Photo credit: Keystone





## STORY TAGS



“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”

- Article I** Never under any circumstances to acquire or retain biological weapons
- Article II** To destroy or divert to peaceful purposes biological weapons and associated resources 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 to solve 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 do all of the above in a way that encourages the peaceful uses of biological science and technology



Angela Kane, Former UN High  
Representative for Disarmament Affairs

The BWC represents an “ironclad norm against the possession and use of biological weapons, and the abhorrence associated with the very idea of using disease as a weapon. How many States today boast that they are “biological weapon States”? Who argues now that the bubonic plague and smallpox are legitimate weapons to use under any circumstances?”



#### States Parties to the Biological Weapons Convention (May 2015)

1. Afghanistan	63. Guinea-Bissau	126. Romania
2. Albania	64. Guyana	127. Russian Federation
3. Algeria	65. Holy See	128. Rwanda
4. Andorra	66. Honduras	129. Saint Kitts and Nevis
5. Antigua and Barbuda	67. Hungary	130. Saint Lucia
6. Argentina	68. Iceland	131. Saint Vincent and the Grenadines
7. Armenia	69. India	132. San Marino
8. Australia	70. Indonesia	133. Sao Tome and Principe
9. Austria	71. Iran (Islamic Republic of)	134. Saudi Arabia
10. Azerbaijan	72. Iraq	135. Senegal
11. Bahamas	73. Ireland	136. Serbia
12. Bahrain	74. Italy	137. Seychelles
13. Bangladesh	75. Jamaica	138. Sierra Leone
14. Barbados	76. Japan	139. Singapore
15. Belarus	77. Jordan	140. Slovakia
16. Belgium	78. Kazakhstan	141. Slovenia
17. Belize	79. Kenya	142. Solomon Islands
18. Benin	80. Kuwait	143. South Africa
19. Bhutan	81. Kyrgyzstan	144. Spain
20. Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	82. Lao People's Democratic Republic	145. Sri Lanka
21. Bosnia-Herzegovina	83. Latvia	146. Sudan
22. Botswana	84. Lebanon	147. Suriname
23. Brazil	85. Lesotho	148. Swaziland
24. Brunei Darussalam	86. Libya	149. Sweden
25. Bulgaria	87. Liechtenstein	150. Switzerland
26. Burkina Faso	88. Lithuania	151. Tajikistan
27. Burundi	89. Luxembourg	152. Thailand
28. Cambodia	90. Madagascar	153. The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
29. Cameroon	91. Malawi	154. Timor Leste
30. Canada	92. Malaysia	155. Togo
31. Cape Verde	93. Maldives	156. Tonga
32. Chile	94. Mali	157. Trinidad and Tobago
33. China	95. Malta	158. Tunisia
34. Colombia	96. Marshall Islands	159. Turkey
35. Congo	97. Mauritania	160. Turkmenistan
36. Cook Islands	98. Mauritius	161. Uganda
37. Costa Rica	99. Mexico	162. Ukraine
38. Croatia	100. Monaco	163. United Arab Emirates
39. Cuba	101. Mongolia	164. United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
40. Cyprus	102. Montenegro	165. United States of America
41. Czech Republic	103. Morocco	166. Uruguay
42. Democratic People's Republic of Korea	104. Mozambique	167. Uzbekistan
43. Democratic Republic of the Congo	105. Myanmar	168. Vanuatu
44. Denmark	106. Nauru	169. Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)
45. Dominica	107. Netherlands	170. Viet Nam
46. Dominican Republic	108. New Zealand	171. Yemen
47. Ecuador	109. Nicaragua	172. Zambia
48. El Salvador	110. Niger	173. Zimbabwe
49. Equatorial Guinea	111. Nigeria	
50. Estonia	112. Norway	
51. Ethiopia	113. Oman	
52. Fiji	114. Pakistan	
53. Finland	115. Palau	
54. France	116. Panama	
55. Gabon	117. Papua New Guinea	
56. Gambia	118. Paraguay	
57. Georgia	119. Peru	
58. Germany	120. Philippines	
59. Ghana	121. Poland	
60. Greece	122. Portugal	
61. Grenada	123. Qatar	
62. Guatemala	124. Republic of Korea	
	125. Republic of Moldova	

**173** States have joined the BWC

**9** have signed but not ratified it: Central African Republic, Côte d'Ivoire, Egypt, Haiti, Liberia, Nepal, Somalia, Syria and Tanzania

**14** have neither signed nor ratified: Angola, Chad, Comoros, Djibouti, Eritrea, Guinea, Israel, Kiribati, Micronesia, Namibia, Niue, Samoa, South Sudan and Tuvalu

**Nuclear  
Weapons**



**Nuclear  
Non-proliferation  
Treaty**



**International  
Atomic Energy  
Agency**

**Chemical  
Weapons**



**Chemical  
Weapons  
Convention**



**Organization for  
the Prohibition of  
Chemical Weapons**

**Biological  
Weapons**



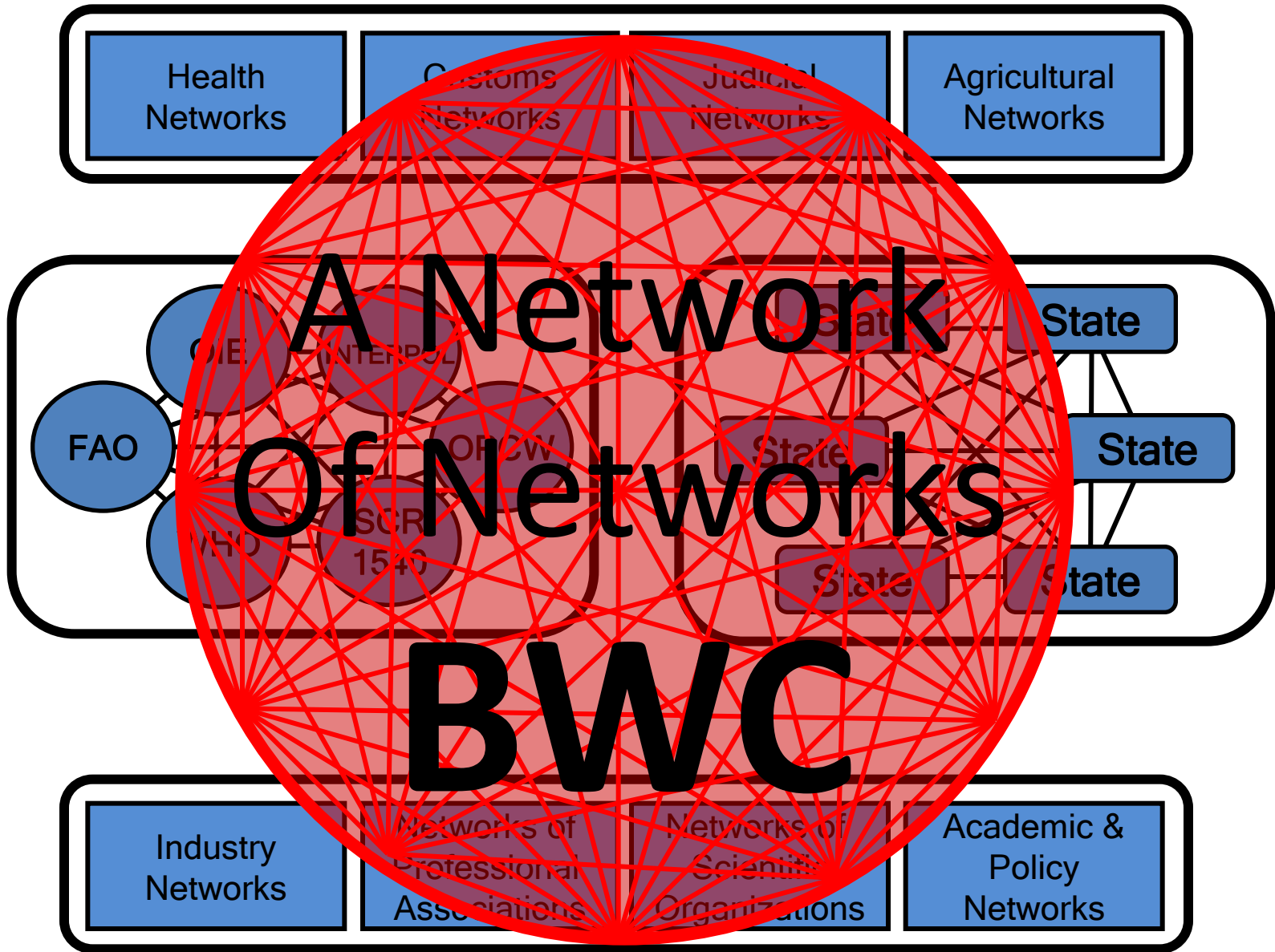
**Biological  
Weapons  
Convention**



**?**

# Networks of Departments

International Networks



Networks of States

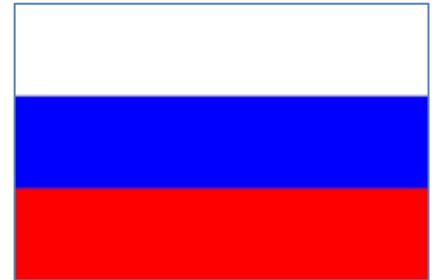
# Non-Governmental Networks

# Role of the Depositories

BWC is not a UN treaty

BWC has 3 Depositories: Russia, UK & USA:

- Convene meetings (& propose dates)
- Maintain lists of ratification & accession
- Promote treaty
- Central point for communication with states
- Seat on General Committee (Bureau) during RevCons







Charles Flowerree, former US  
Representative to the BWC

“The means by which these agreements survive and adapt to changing conditions after they enter into force deserve as much attention as the negotiations that produced them in the first place. They cannot be left simply to fend for themselves. ... For governments to realize the benefits they originally sought in arms control agreements, some government officials must live with them full-time, all the time.”

# Role of the RevCon

“... 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... are being realized. Such review shall take into account any new scientific and technological developments relevant to the Convention.”

**BWC Article XII**

# Organization of the RevCon

- Next RevCon will be in late 2016
- PrepCom in the Spring to deal with procedural matters:
  - Organization of RevCon
  - Date & duration
  - Provisional agenda
  - Draft rules of procedure
  - Background documentation
- RevCon president will be from Eastern European Group

# Seventh Review Conference 2011

## 2012 - 2015 Intersessional Programme

**System of  
Confidence-  
Building Measures**

**Procedures &  
Mechanisms for  
Responding to Use**

### **Standing Agenda Items**

**Assistance &  
Cooperation**

**Reviewing  
S&T**

**Strengthening  
Implementation**

**“The purpose of the intersessional programme is to discuss, and promote common understanding and effective action”**



# Budget & Administration

BWC meetings:

- Are paid for by all States Parties annually
- Are not United Nations events
- Are serviced by the United Nations
- Have secretariats formed around the ISU
- UNODA hosts the ISU
- Include the costs of the ISU (staff & travel)

# 10-14 August – Meeting of Experts



# 14-18 December – Meeting of States Parties

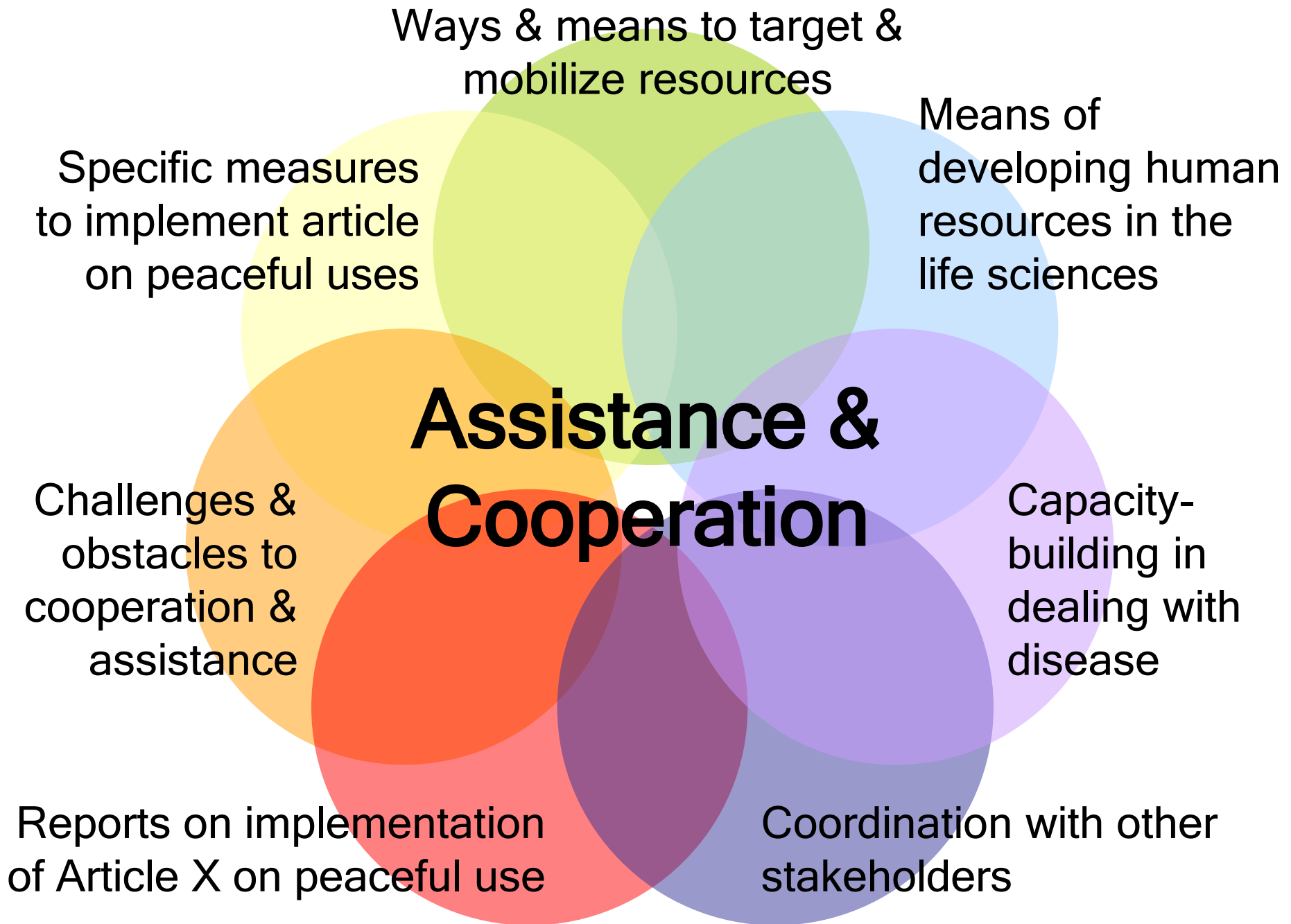
# Amb. Mazlan Muhammad, Malaysia



# 2015 Meeting of Experts

- Registration:
  - By Note Verbale from your PM in Geneva
  - No need for access badge (online form)
- Rolling schedule
- Documents:
  - Submit to ISU asap
  - Advance versions can be made available
- Side events and poster session





# Assistance & Cooperation Database



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THE UNITED NATIONS OFFICE AT GENEVA

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The United Nations in the Heart of Europe

Conference on Disarmament  
Anti-Personnel Landmines Convention  
The Biological Weapons Convention

Latest Information  
Membership  
7th Review Conference  
Meetings and Documents  
Implementation

Handbook Activity for States Parties  
National Implementation  
National Implementation Database  
Compendium of National Approaches  
Activities  
Sponsored Area for States Parties  
Cooperation Measures  
BWC Network  
Implementation Support Unit  
EU BWC Joint Action  
About Biological Weapons

## Disarmament

Restricted Area: Offers to provide assistance

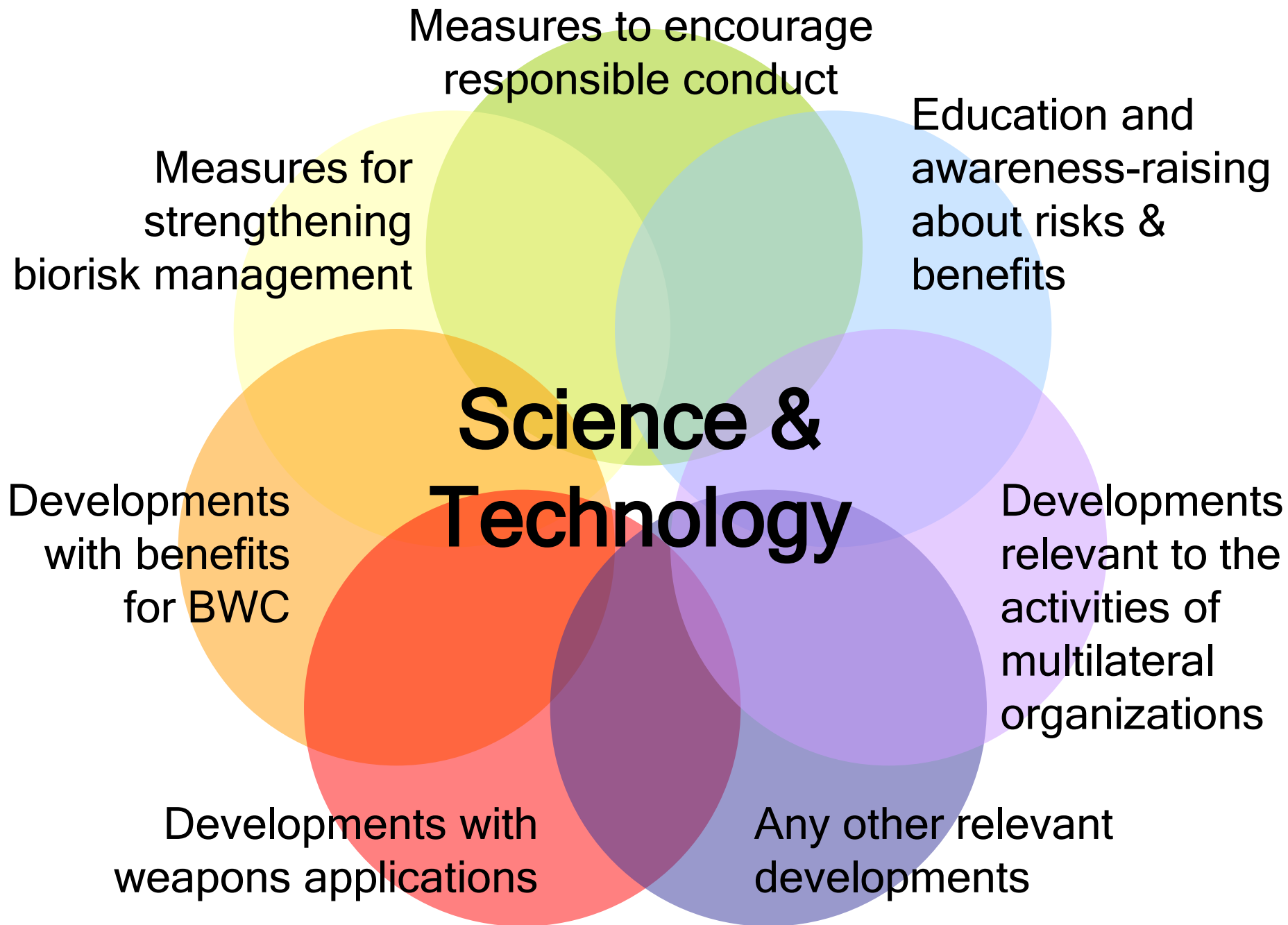
This page contains information for States Parties only and is not accessible to the public. It includes details of offers made to provide assistance in implementing the Biological Weapons Convention.

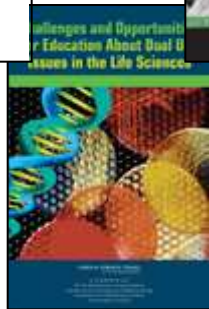
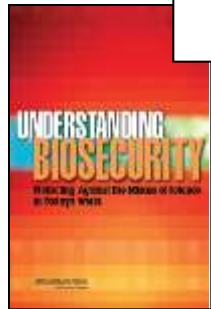
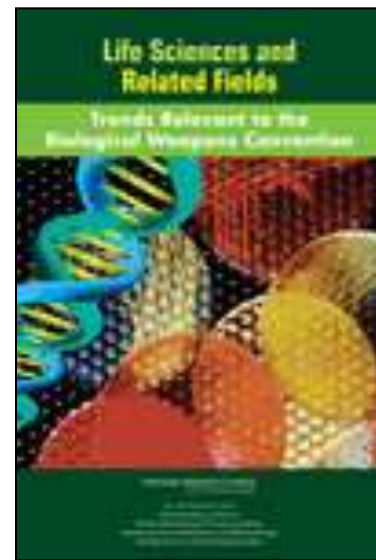
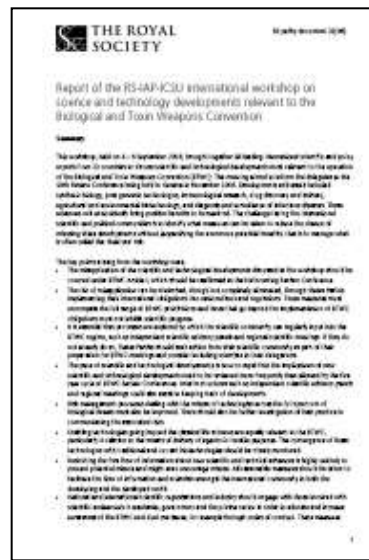
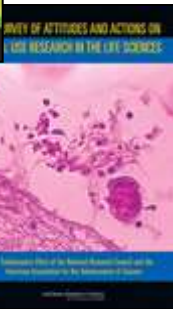
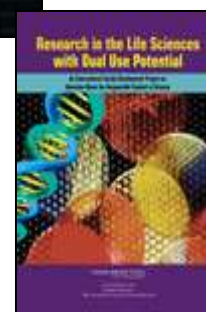
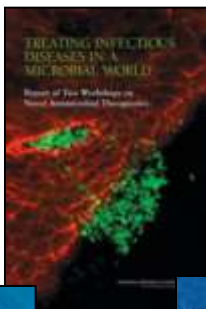
State	Index Number	Issue	Description	Contact	Status	Date Added

[www.unog.ch/bwc/restricted](http://www.unog.ch/bwc/restricted)

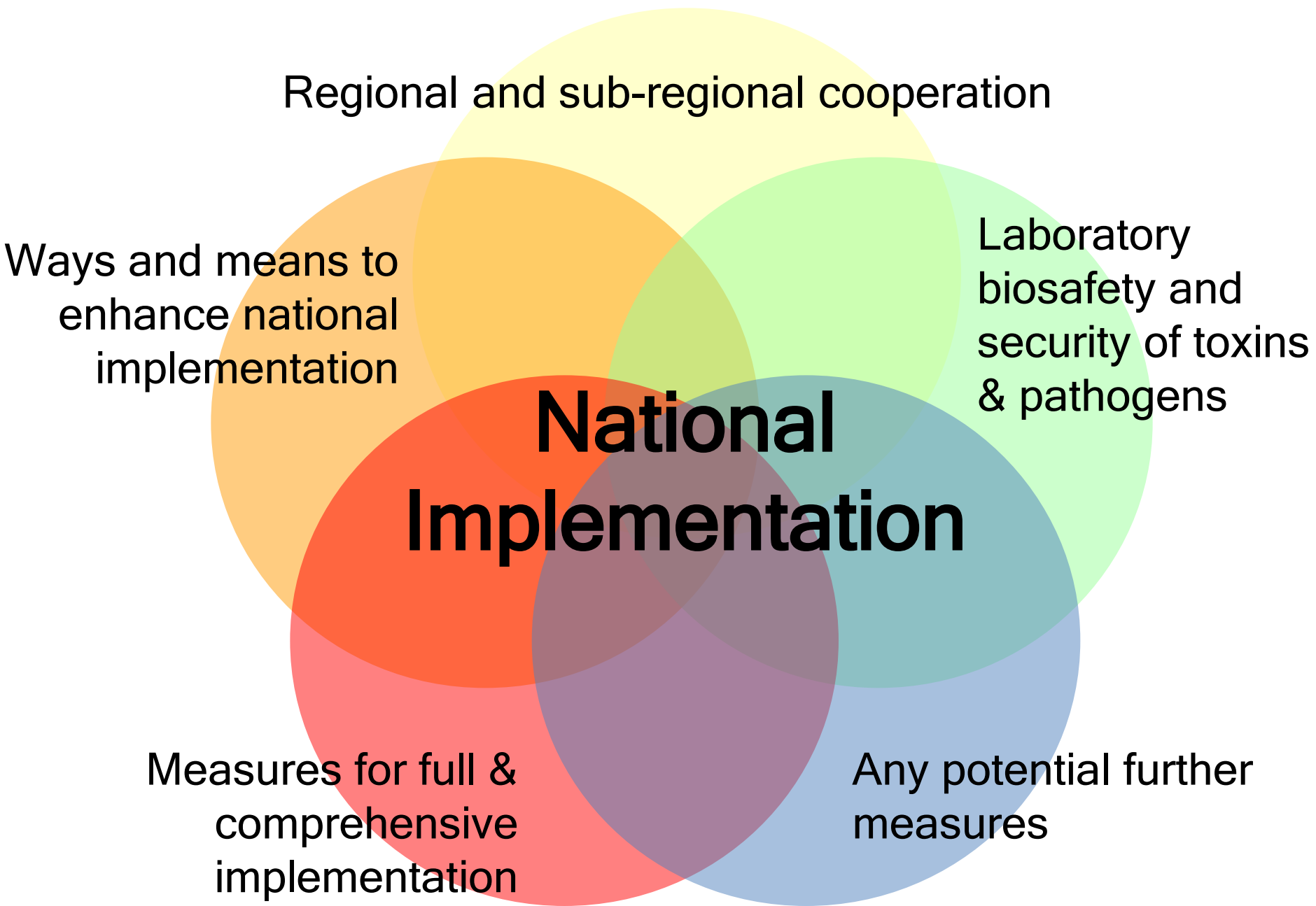


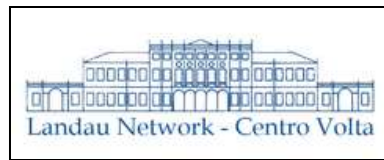
## Sponsorship Programme









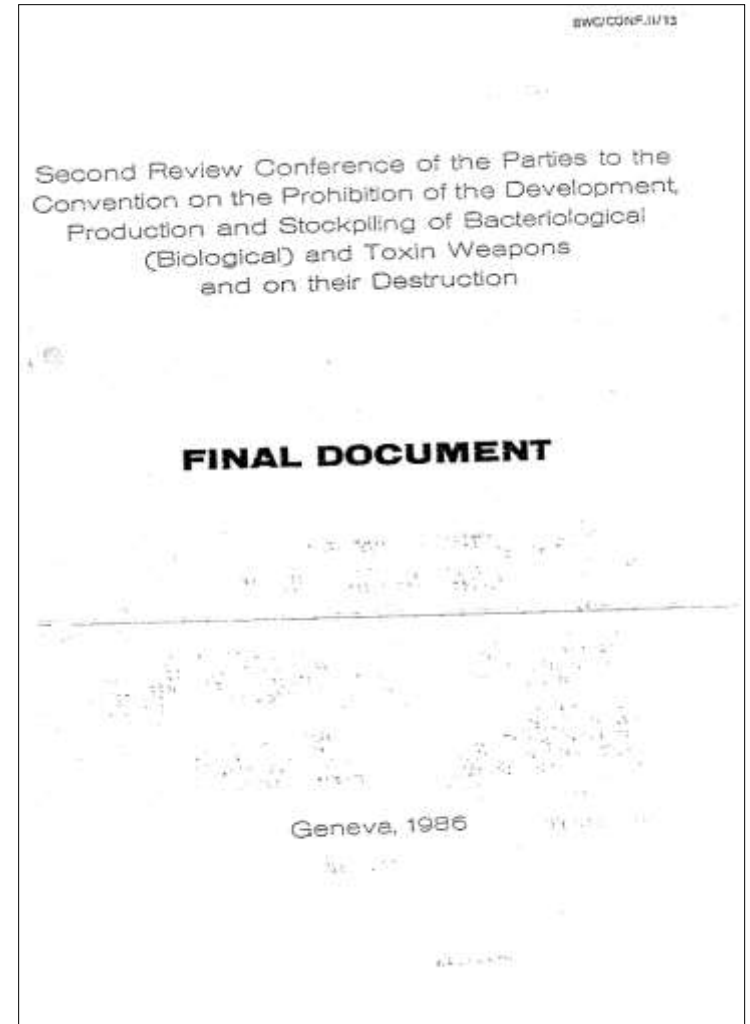


# System of Confidence-Building Measures



# Aim of CBMs

“... to prevent or reduce the occurrence of ambiguities, doubts and suspicions, and in order to improve international cooperation in the field of peaceful biological activities”



# Role of CBMs

- Enhance transparency & strengthen trust
- Establish picture of normal activity
- Limited focus on abnormal activity
- Element of compliance (?)
- Not a tool for verification
- Cooperation on peaceful use (?)

# CBM Forms

## Revised forms for the submission of the Confidence-Building Measures

At the Third Review Conference it was agreed that all States Parties present the following declaration, later amended by the Seventh Review Conference:

### Declaration form on Nothing to Declare or Nothing New to Declare for use in the information exchange

Measure	Nothing to declare	Nothing new to declare	Year of last declaration if nothing new to declare
A, part 1	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A, part 2 (i)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A, part 2 (ii)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A, part 2 (iii)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
C	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
E	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
F	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
G	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

(Please mark the appropriate box(es) for each measure with a tick, and fill in the year of last declaration in the last column where applicable.)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

State Party to the Convention: \_\_\_\_\_

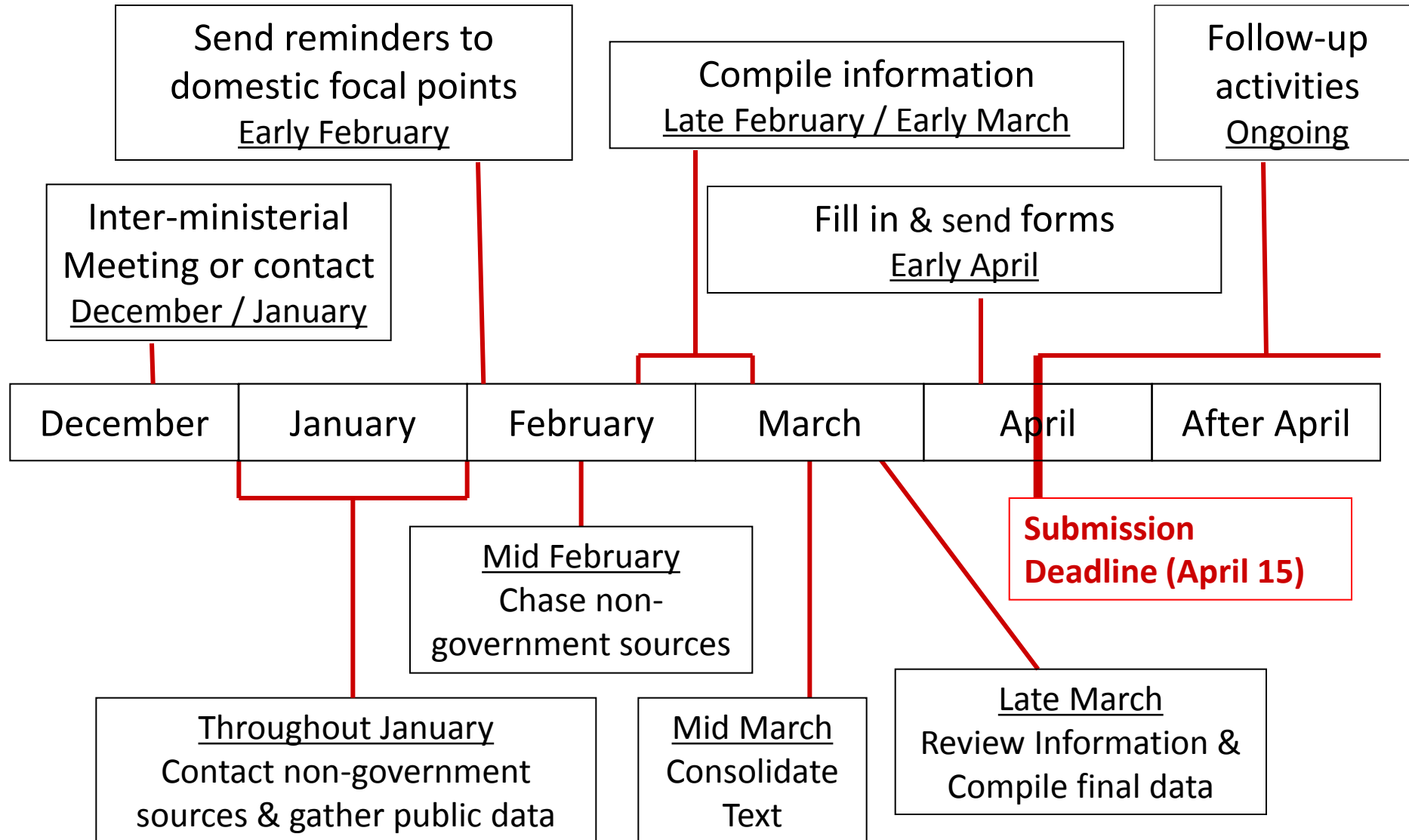
Date of ratification/accession to the Convention: \_\_\_\_\_

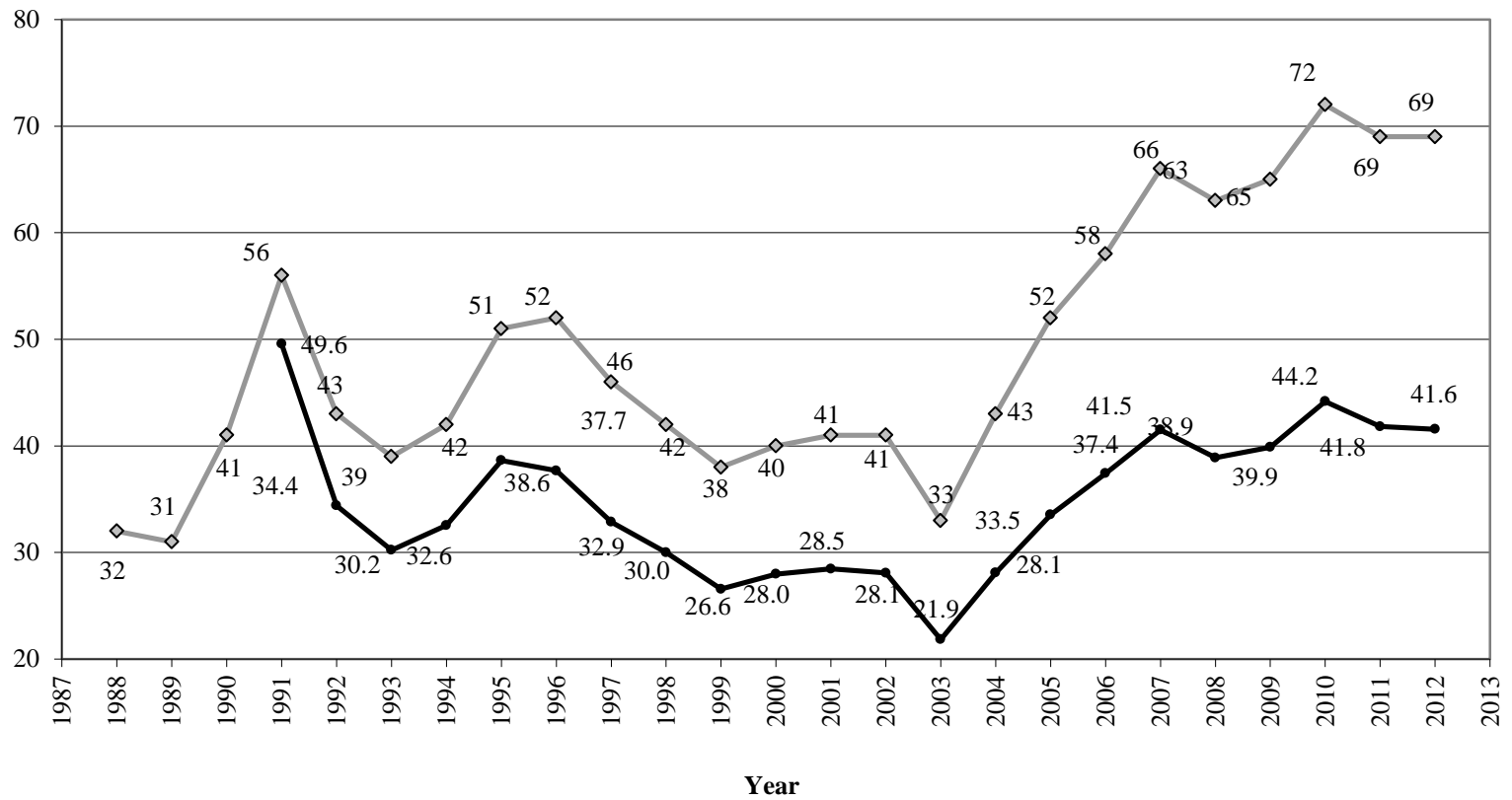
National point of contact: \_\_\_\_\_

- Form 0: “Nothing to Declare” or “Nothing New to Declare” for use in the information exchange
- Form A Part 1: research centres and laboratories
- Form A Part 2: National biological defence research and development programmes
- Form B: outbreaks of infectious diseases and similar occurrences
- Form C: encouragement of publications of results & promotion of use of knowledge
- Form E: legislation, regulations and other measures
- Form F: past activities in offensive and/or defensive biological research and development programmes
- Form G: vaccine production facilities



# Suggested CBM Timeline





—◇— No. of States Participating

—●— % of SPs Participating

# www.unog.ch/bwc/cbms



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DISARMAMENT

Where global solutions are shaped for you

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Conference on  
Disarmament

Anti-Personnel  
Landmines Convention

The Biological Weapons  
Convention

Latest Information

Membership

Assistance and Cooperation

Implementation

National Implementation  
Database

Intersessional Work

Building Confidence

Participating in the CBMs

UN Returns

CBM Intersessional Work

Science and Technology

Meetings and Documents

Implementation Support  
Unit

BWC Action

2009-2011 EU Joint Action

2006-2007 EU Joint Action

About Biological Weapons

The Convention on  
Certain Conventional  
Weapons

## Disarmament



### Participating in the CBMs

The Seventh Review Conference in 2011 revised the CBMs as well as their modalities and forms. The current forms and guidelines for completing them are below.

#### Blank CBM Forms (extracted from BWC/CONF.VII/7)

In Word document format:

بالعربية

中文

English

Français

Русский

Español

Please [click here](#) to access the English version of the CBM revised guide 2013.  
Please [click here](#) to access the Chinese version of the CBM revised guide 2013.  
Please [click here](#) to access the French version of the CBM revised guide 2013.  
Please [click here](#) to access the Russian version of the CBM revised guide 2013.  
Please [click here](#) to access the Spanish version of the CBM revised guide 2013.

For reference purposes copies of the old forms are still [available](#).

### How to complete the forms

Completing the CBM forms can take some time, especially for the first year of participation. Collecting the necessary information typically requires contacting several different government ministries and agencies. Each country's system of government is different, so we can only offer general guidance and suggestions here. There are three important tips to keep in mind:

- Start early: it could take a long time to contact the relevant agencies in order to gather information in time to meet the 15 April deadline.
- Use information that has already been compiled: some of the information required for the CBMs may also be required for other purposes, such as reports to the WHO or those mandated by Security Council Resolution 1540.

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### Related Information

#### FURTHER INFORMATION

➔ [Restricted Area for States Parties](#)

➔ [BWC UN General Assembly Resolutions](#)

#### DOCUMENTATION

[BWC Contact Point Form](#)

[BWC 7RC - Final Document](#)

[BWC Background Information](#)

[BWC & Additional Agreements - post 7RC](#)

[CBM revised guide 2013](#)

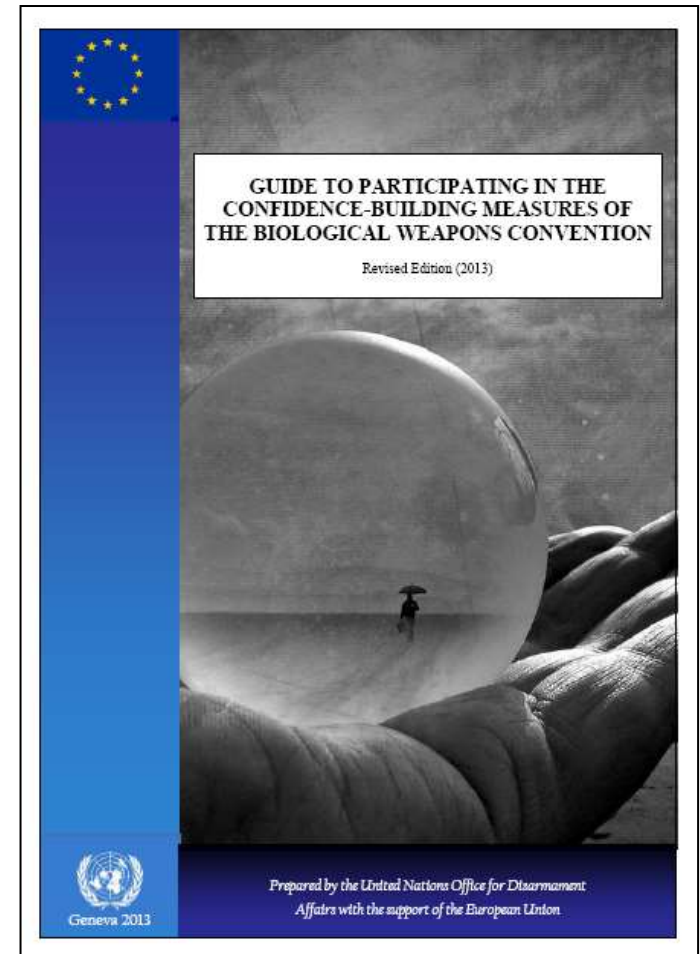
### Events & Meetings

November 2013

M	T	W	T	F	S	S
28	29	30	31	1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8

# CBM guide

- Available in A, C, E, F, R and S
- Practicalities for submission
- Identifying resources and contacts
- Detailed guidance on completion
- Subsequent submissions
- Sources of advice and assistance
- Sample letters



# Procedures & Mechanisms for Responding to Use



# 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."
- Additional agreements reached by previous review conferences and common understandings identified by past Meetings of States Parties:
  - implementation of Article VII
  - building relevant capacity
  - roles
  - the relationship between health and security issues



# Implementation of Article VII

- “that in the event that this Article might be invoked, the United Nations could play a coordinating role in providing assistance, with the help of States Parties”
- further dialogue regarding appropriate means of coordination between States Parties and relevant international organizations
- willingness of States Parties to provide assistance if BW used by anyone other than a State Party
- an event relevant to Article VII is more than an animal, plant or public health emergency

# Issues for continued discussion

- challenges to strengthening implementation of Article VII
- types of assistance that might be required
- clear procedures for submitting requests for assistance or for responding to a case of alleged use of biological or toxin weapons
- strengthening the procedures and mechanisms for the provision of assistance:
  - Inventory of assistance
  - Data bank on means of protection
  - Procedures for provisions of means of protection
  - Assistance fund
  - Capacity-building for regional and international organizations, including exercises etc

# Implementation Support Unit

“And perhaps most historically of all, we have agreed to establish an Implementation Support Unit to assist us in implementing the decisions of this Conference. For many years, the States Parties have debated the need for institutional support for the Convention. Now we have it, built not on a political argument, nor on a perception that “something is better than nothing”, but on the solid basis of the positive and practical contribution the temporary secretariat has made over the past three years.”

*Ambassador Masood Khan  
President of the Sixth Review Conference*

# Assistance and cooperation

- Assistance and cooperation database mandated by Seventh Review Conference
- ISU is responsible for:
  - Administering the database
  - Facilitating exchange of information
  - Reporting on offers made, requests sought and matches made
- 38 offers of assistance, but only 4 requests for assistance

# Database: assistance requests & offers

## General offers

- Ratification
- National implementation
- Legislation and administrative measures
- Export/import control regimes
- Confidence-building Measures
- Biorisk management/ Bio-safety and Bio-security
- Seminars, courses, training

## Database offers/requests

- Governance framework
- Confidence-Building Measures
- Disease surveillance/detection
- Emergency response
- Coordination
- Biorisk management/ Bio-safety and Bio-security
- Capacity building/ Human resources, Equipment, Facilities
- Risk communication
- Research to improve prevention, detection and response

State	Index Number	Issue	Description	Contact	Status	Date Added	Additional information
The 42 members of the Australia Group	Offer_2014_038	Governance Framework	<p><u>Project Title:</u> Australia Group assistance to develop, review and maintain national export controls</p> <p><u>Department/Agency:</u> N.A. The Australia Group (AG) is an informal network of 42 countries that consult on and harmonise their national export licensing measures on items which could be used in the production of biological or chemical weapons.</p> <p><u>Details:</u> Export licensing and other measures instituted by individual AG members assist in implementing key obligations under the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC), as well as the Chemical Weapons Convention and UNSCR 1540. Adherence to AG control lists and guidelines helps prevent proliferators from exploiting differences in national export control systems on dual-use biological agents, chemicals, and biological and chemical manufacturing equipment, technology and software. The AG recognises that many States continue to require assistance in implementing their obligations under the BWC, and the important role of the BWC Implementation Support Unit in helping to facilitate such assistance. Consistent with the Final Document of the Seventh Review Conference (BWC/CONF.VII/7) which states that "States Parties are invited, individually or together with other states or international organizations, to submit on a voluntary basis to the Implementation Support Unit any requirements, needs or offers for assistance", the AG desires to register its offer of assistance in this database. AG members would consider requests from States seeking assistance to develop, review and maintain national export, transit and transshipment controls to help prevent the proliferation of biological (and chemical) weapons. Such assistance would be provided on a voluntary, bilateral basis, by an individual AG member or a group of AG members.</p>	<p>Australia Group Secretariat Arms Control and Counter-Proliferation Branch Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade RG Casey Building Barton, ACT, Australia</p> <p>AGassistance@dfat.gov.au</p>	Current and ongoing	August 2014	More information on the AG is available on the website: <a href="http://www.australiagroup.net/en/index.html">http://www.australiagroup.net/en/index.html</a>
United	Offer_2014_037	Capacity Building/HR	Project Title: Interagency International Food Defence Outreach	ISN-BPS-DL@state.gov	Current	Feb.	





# National contact point

STATE PARTY:		
FULL NAME OF CONTACT PERSON (optional):		
TITLE / POSITION / FUNCTION: (e.g. "Director, WMD Section")		
AGENCY / MINISTRY:		
ADDRESS	STREET/ P.O. BOX:	
	CITY:	
	POST CODE:	
TELEPHONE NUMBER:		
FACSIMILE NUMBER:		
E-MAIL ADDRESS:		
WEBSITE URL:		

# Sponsorship programme

- Sponsorship programme mandated by Seventh Review Conference
- Supported by voluntary contributions from States Parties
- Aimed at developing States Parties, who have not previously/regularly attended BWC meetings
- Also available for States not party to the BWC

# Restricted area

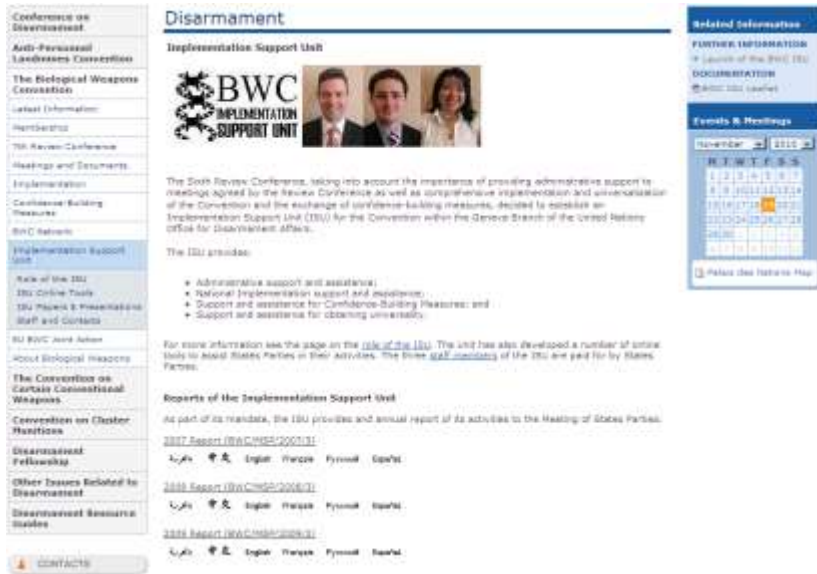
- Detailed information on national contact points
- CBM submissions
- Information on status of progress towards universalization
- Non-public parts of cooperation and assistance database



Ban Ki-Moon, Secretary-General of the United Nations

Today, the norm against the use and possession of biological weapons remains strong, and no country identifies itself as possessing biological weapons. However, we must remain vigilant. The eighth Review Conference in 2016 is an opportunity to consolidate progress and consider how to adapt this landmark Convention to the challenges posed by advances in science and technology, ... As we witness ever more remarkable breakthroughs in the life sciences, it is incumbent on us to ensure that such advances are used responsibly.

# For more information:



BWC Implementation Support Unit

United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs  
Palais des Nations  
Geneva

tel: +41 (0)22 917 2230

fax: +41 (0)22 917 0483

e-mail: [bwc@unog.ch](mailto:bwc@unog.ch)

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