

Working paper submitted by Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Guatemala, Mexico, Peru and Uruguay

(unofficial translation)

Universalization

The universalization of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on their Destruction is a fundamental element to fully achieve its objectives and purposes. Achieving universality contributes to strengthening the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

To achieve the universalization it is necessary that all States Parties show political will.

In this regard, the Review Conference is invited to consider the following recommendations:

- Welcome that since the last Review Conference, the Governments of Mali, Antigua and Barbuda, Palau, Timor Leste, Sudan, Azerbaijan, Kyrgyzstan, the Republic of Moldova and Tajikistan have acceded the Convention or deposited their instruments of ratification. Now, the Convention counts 155 States Parties.
- Call upon those States that have not adhered to the Biological Weapons Convention or have not yet ratified it to do so at the earliest.
- Call upon States to withdraw all reservations made to the 1925 Geneva Protocol in order to strengthen the norm that prohibits the use of biological weapons.
- Underline the importance of promoting international co-operation and technology transfer as incentives to achieve universality.
- Adopt an Action Plan to facilitate achieving the universality of the Biological Weapons Convention which among other things includes:
 - A mandate to the Support Unit to undertake actions devoted to promote universalization. The mandate should include among other things:
 - Scheduling activities that enhance the interest of States not Parties.
 - Assistance to those States that request it, to adapt their legislation for allowing them to accelerate their ratification or accession process to the Biological Weapons Convention.
 - To promote the participation of States not Parties at regional meetings and related events of the Biological Weapons Convention.

- A commitment by States Parties to intensify the efforts towards the universalization of the Biological Weapons Convention, through bilateral means as well as within the framework of regional and multilateral meetings.
 - These efforts might include among others, exchanging information concerning legislative experiences between States Parties and Non-Parties.
- An invitation to States Parties to appoint a focal point responsible for coordinating actions towards achieving the universality of the Biological Weapons Convention. A report of these actions should be presented in the framework of the Annual Meetings.