

# BWC NEWSLETTER

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## BWC work in 2017



Video message of the then UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon to the Eighth BWC Review Conference

The Eighth Review Conference decided that the next Meeting of States Parties will take place in Geneva from 4 December 2017. The meeting will *“seek to make progress on issues of substance and process for the period before the next Review Conference, with a view to reaching consensus on an intersessional process.”*

The Conference also decided to renew the mandate of the BWC ISU, to continue the cooperation and assistance database with a view towards its improvement, and to renew the sponsorship programme.

Implementation of EU Council Decision (CFSP) 2016/51, particularly with respect to project 2 (Interaction with NGO stakeholders on S&T), project 3 (capacity development for BWC implementation) and project 6 (enabling tools for awareness-raising, education and engagement) will represent another key activity in 2017.

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## Foreword from the Chief of the BWC ISU

Dear Reader,

The BWC Implementation Support Unit has prepared this brief newsletter in line with its mandate to facilitate communication among States Parties and to serve as a focal point for the sharing of information related to the BWC.

Based on the positive feedback received about the weekly newsletters issued in preparation for the Eighth Review Conference, we hope that this document might be of benefit to you. It provides an overview of BWC-related issues and upcoming events.

This newsletter will be published periodically. Comments and feedback are welcome and should be sent to [bwc@unog.ch](mailto:bwc@unog.ch).

Yours,

Daniel Feakes

## Important Dates and Deadlines

**28 February** – deadline for expressions of interest in receiving assistance under project 3 EU Council Decision.

**28 February** – deadline for suggestions by States Parties on the improvement of the BWC Cooperation and Assistance Database.

**15 April** – deadline for submission of Confidence-Building Measure reports covering activities in calendar year 2016.

**Online UNODA Geneva Disarmament Activities 2017** - An online version of the UNODA Geneva Branch 2017 Meetings Calendar, including the official UN holidays of Geneva is available [here](#).

## Latest News for BWC States Parties

**Launch of EU projects to support BWC universalization and implementation** - Under EU Council Decision 2016/51 in support of the BWC, applications are sought from States Parties wishing to receive assistance in the implementation of the Convention. Applications should be submitted by 28 February 2017. Expressions of interest are also sought from Signatory States and States not party which would be willing to host in-country awareness-raising activities with a view to promoting BWC universalization. Letters have been sent to relevant Permanent Missions and to National Contact Points and further information is available on the [webpages](#) devoted to the EU support to the BWC.

**Status of contributions & 2017 scale of assessments** - On 31 December 2016, the Financial Resources Management Service of the United Nations Office at Geneva circulated a [summary](#) of the financial contributions to the four disarmament conventions. Detailed information pertaining to the contributions to the BWC is contained in Annex II of the document. Formal assessment notices for the [preliminary assessment](#) per State Party for contributions to the BWC budget for the year 2017 were sent to States Parties on 13 February.

**CBM reminder letter** – On 15 January, the ISU sent a reminder letter to Permanent Missions and National Contact Points about the upcoming deadline for the submission of Confidence-Building Measures covering calendar year 2016. The deadline for submission is 15 April 2017. Guidance in the preparation and submission of CBMs can be found in the [CBM Guide](#) which is available in all official languages.

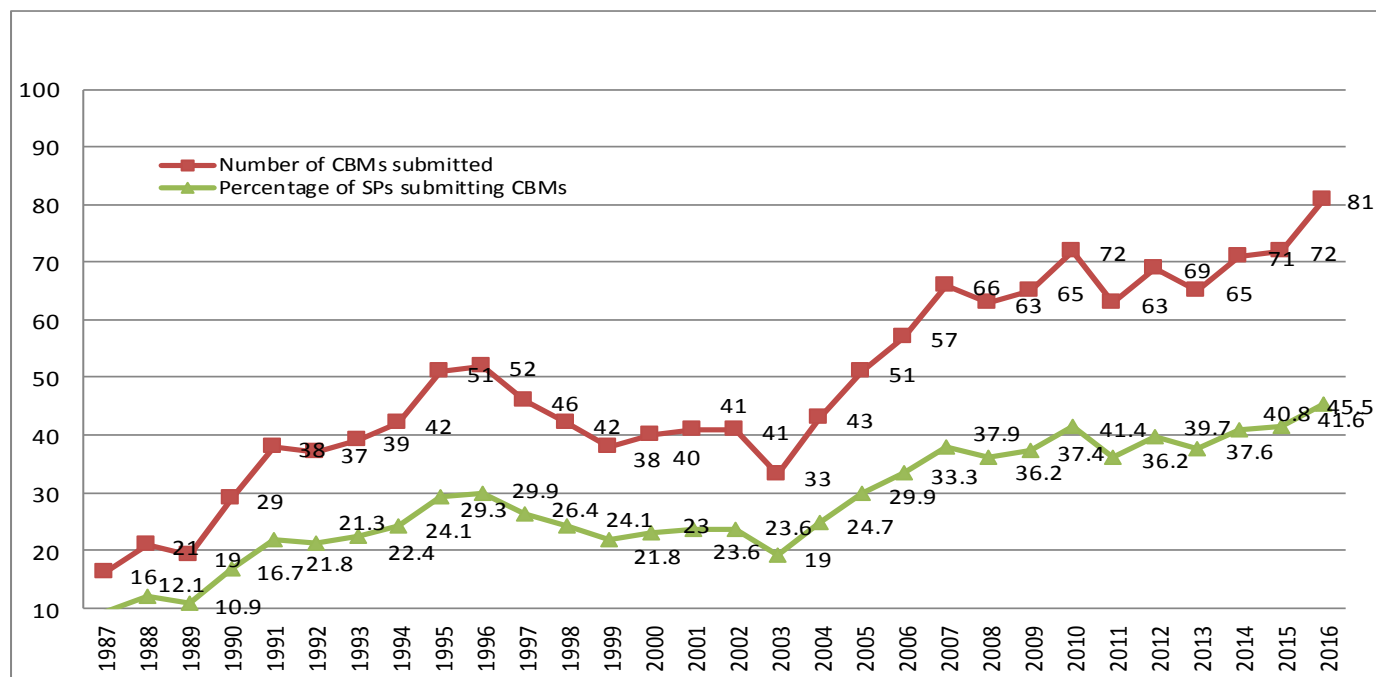
**Improving the Cooperation & Assistance Database** - The Eighth Review Conference mandated that the Implementation Support Unit (ISU), with inputs to be provided by States Parties, "will seek to improve the database to ensure that it is more user-friendly and comprehensive, and ensure that specific, timely and concrete offers of and requests for cooperation be provided by States Parties in the database." The ISU therefore [wrote](#) to States Parties on 15 December to invite them to submit inputs on the cooperation and assistance database with a view to its improvement. Inputs should be sent by 28 February.

**Additional Assistance Offers received** - Three new offers of assistance have recently been added to the Cooperation and Assistance database. Canada (in association with the International Federation of Biosafety Associations, IFBA), EU (project 3), and USA (in association with IFBA). More details on the offers can be found in the [database](#) itself.

## Latest News for BWC States Parties (cont.)

### CBM Status - new record: 81 submissions for reporting year 2015

Bosnia and Herzegovina recently submitted its CBM for the calendar year 2015, thereby bringing the total number of CBMs submitted in 2016 to 81, an all time high for the number of annual submissions received.



### Peer Review Exercise 2017 in Morocco

Morocco announced during the General Debate of the Conference on Disarmament on 14 February 2017 that it plans to conduct a peer review exercise on the implementation of the BWC in May 2017.

### BWC Sponsorship Programme

The ISU has recently received a financial contribution of USD 10,000 from India and a pledge of USD 20,000 from Australia for the 2017 BWC sponsorship programme. The funds will be used to enable experts from developing countries to participate in the MSP in December 2017.

### Update of the BWC Website

The ISU has updated the BWC website and created separate [webpage sections for the implementation of EU Council Decision 2016/51 in support of the BWC](#). The webpage on Project 3: '[Capacity Development for BWC implementation](#)' presents further information on the planned extended national implementation assistance programmes that will be provided to a maximum of eight BWC States Parties. The webpage on project 4: '[Support to preparations for the Eighth Review Conference](#)' covers all presentations and reports from the four workshops held in Astana, Brasilia, New Delhi and Addis Ababa during 2016.



## BWC ISU Activities December 2016—February 2017

### Presentations to courses at the Geneva Centre for Security Policy (9 February and 19 January 2017)

On 19 January, Mr. Daniel Feakes, Chief BWC ISU, participated in a panel discussion during a GCSP course on “Strategic Foresight and Existential Risks”. On 9 February, Mr. Feakes gave a presentation during the 21st edition of the “European Security Course”. On both occasions, Mr. Feakes highlighted the importance of the BWC and its comprehensive and effective implementation.



GCSP 21st European Security Course

### Briefing to the Secretary-General’s Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters (26 January 2017)

The Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters met in Geneva from 25-27 January for its 67<sup>th</sup> session, in which it, *inter alia*, addressed the impact of artificial intelligence on international security and the potential threat of cyberattacks by terrorists on nuclear facilities. At the Board’s request, Mr. Daniel Feakes, Chief BWC ISU, briefed on issues related to the BWC as well as on the aspect of cyber-threats and biosecurity.



Mr. Kim Won-soo, HR for Disarmament Affairs, opened the meeting of the Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters

### UN Counter Terrorism Implementation Task Force Table Top Exercise in The Hague (22-23 January 2017)

ISU staff attended a two day table top exercise of the [UN CTITF Working Group on Preventing and Responding to WMD Attacks](#). The Task Force is mandated to strengthen the exchange of information and knowledge among relevant UN entities and international organizations related to response to WMD terrorist attacks. The CTITF derives its mandate from the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, under General Assembly resolution 60/288 in 2006. 30 representatives, including experts from 16 international organizations participated in the table top exercise, hosted by the OPCW and funded by Canada.



Participants of the CTITF Table Top Exercise

## BWC ISU Activities December 2016—February 2017

### Visit by the University of Fribourg (12 January 2017)

20 students and staff from the University of Fribourg/American College Program paid a visit to the United Nations. As part of the programme, Mr. Alex Lampalzer briefed the group on the Convention and its role in multilateral disarmament. In addition, the group received briefings from other UNODA staff on the disarmament machinery and the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons.



Visit by the University of Fribourg to the United Nations

### Seminar on Assistance and Capacity-Building in the Context of UNSCR 1540, Disarmament and Non-Proliferation (9 December 2016)

Mr. Alex Lampalzer attended a one day seminar held at the African Union Headquarters in Addis Ababa. The event was carried out in collaboration with the Institute for Security Studies and with financial support from Denmark. Mr. Lampalzer staff briefed the participants about the outcome of the Eighth Review Conference and informed representatives about assistance and capacity-building programmes available for African states under the Convention.



Seminar on Assistance and Capacity-Building in the context of UNSCR 1540, Addis Ababa



## Recent Publications on Issues of Relevance to the BWC

*Disclaimer: the views and opinions in the publications are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the ISU or States Parties. Items are included as a service to readers and do not imply endorsement. The ISU is not responsible for the content of third party websites.*

**CAS-TWAS Centre of Excellence for Biotechnology and Clarivate Analytics Report (2016):** jointly 'Biotechnology in Developing Countries: Growth and Competitiveness'. The document provides an assessment of research and development activities carried out by developing countries in the field of biotechnology between 2005 and 2014.

**Annie DuPre and Nicolas Kasprzyk, Institute for Security Studies: (2016):** CBRN assistance and capacity-building programmes for African states - the directory, compiled by the ISS with financial support from Denmark, provides an overview of existing assistance and capacity building programmes available for African states in the CBRN area.

**Frédéric Suffert (2017):** Characterization of the threat resulting from plant pathogen use as anti-crop bio-weapons: an EU perspective on agro-terrorism - the document provides an analysis specific for Europe of the risk of plant pathogens being used as anti-crop bioweapons, taking into account both the biological and human dimensions of the threat.

**Institute for Defence Studies & Analyses: CBW Magazine: Journal on Chemical and Biological Weapons (Winter/July–December 2016)** - various articles in the publication address the outcome of the Eighth Review Conference including the four preparatory workshops in the framework of the EU Council Decision 2016/51.

**Maylis David, Ekaterina Konovalova, Clarisse Bertherat (2017):** Biological Weapons Convention 8th Review Conference outcome: below expectations (VERTIC Trust & Verify No. 155, Winter 2017) - the authors consider the outcome of the Eighth Review Conference that took place in November last year.

## Staff news

**Ms. Ngoc Phuong van der Blij**, Political Affairs Officer, has taken four months unpaid leave from January 2017. No replacement is envisaged during her absence.

**Ms. Ana Izar** joined UNODA Geneva Branch on 27 November 2016 as a Political Affairs Officer. Ms. Izar, who previously worked at the UN Department for Political Affairs in New York, will take the lead on coordinating the implementation of EU Council Decision (CFSP) 2016/51 in support of the BWC.

**Ms. Maylis David and Ms. Ekaterina Konovalova** have finished their internships with the BWC- ISU in December 2016. We thank them for their hard work in support of the BWC and wish them all the best for their future endeavors.

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## Implementation of EU Council Decision 2016/51

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