

Biological Weapons Convention

Meeting of States Parties

4 – 8 December 2017

Information for participants from States Parties, Signatory States, Observer States, intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations

1. In accordance with the decision of the Eighth Review Conference, the 2017 Meeting of States Parties of the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) will take place from 4 to 8 December 2017 in Geneva, Switzerland.
2. The Meeting of States Parties will be chaired by Ambassador Amandeep Singh Gill of India, and Ambassador Michael Biontino of Germany and Ambassador Juraj Podhorský of Slovakia will serve as Vice-Chairmen.
3. The provisional agenda and the provisional programme of work for the Meeting of States Parties are available in all official languages as documents [BWC/MSP/2017/1](#) and [BWC/MSP/2017/2](#) respectively.
4. The present Aide-Mémoire has been prepared by the Implementation Support Unit and provides preliminary information for participants of the Meeting of States Parties. Documentation and other information will be posted, as it becomes available, on the BWC website (www.unog.ch/bwc/meeting).

Date and Venue

5. The Meeting of States Parties will be held in Geneva, Switzerland, for up to five days from 4 to 8 December 2017.
6. The Meeting of States Parties will be held in conference room XVIII, E Building of the Palais des Nations, United Nations Office at Geneva, Avenue de la Paix 8-14, 1211 Geneva 10, accessible via the Pregny Gate.
7. The meeting will begin on Monday 4 December 2017 at 10:00.

Registration

8. All participants in the Meeting of States Parties need to be registered in accordance with the procedures described below in paragraphs 9 to 13 depending on their status and affiliation. Those participants not already in possession of a security badge to access the Palais des Nations need to additionally complete the process described below in paragraphs 14 to 20.

9. **States Parties and Signatory States** wishing to participate should send, through their Permanent Missions, a letter or *note verbale* to the Implementation Support Unit notifying the full names and titles of the members of the delegation. The head of delegation should be clearly indicated. Only the names of participants listed in the letter or *note verbale* will be included in the official list of participants of the Meeting of States Parties. Formal credentials are not required for the Meeting of States Parties.
10. **States which are neither parties nor signatories to the Convention** may apply to participate in the Meeting of States Parties as observers. A letter or *note verbale* should be addressed, through their Permanent Missions, to the Implementation Support Unit applying for observer status and listing the full names and titles of the members of the delegation. The head of delegation should be clearly indicated. Observer status is granted by the decision of the Meeting. The Meeting will consider and decide on all requests for observer status at its opening session on Monday 4 December 2017. Only the names of participants listed in the letter or *note verbale* will be included in the official list of participants of the Meeting of States Parties.
11. **International organizations** may apply to participate in the Meeting of States Parties as observer agencies. A letter or *note verbale* should be addressed to the Implementation Support Unit applying for observer agency status, listing the full names and titles of the members of the delegation. The name of the head of delegation should be clearly indicated. Observer agency status is granted by the decision of the Meeting. The Meeting will consider and decide on requests for observer agency status at its opening session on Monday 4 December 2017. Only the names of participants listed in the letter or *note verbale* will be included in the official list of participants of the Meeting of States Parties.
12. **NGOs and academic institutions** may register to attend public sessions of the Meeting of States Parties. A letter on the official letterhead of the organization should be addressed to the Implementation Support Unit applying for attendance of the public sessions of the Meeting and listing the full names and titles of the representatives who will attend. NGOs and academic institutions that have not previously attended a BWC meeting should indicate previous interactions between the organization and the United Nations in relation to disarmament and non-proliferation issues. A mission statement or summary of work of the organization should be provided. Only the names of participants listed in the letter will be included in the official list of participants of the Meeting of States Parties.
13. *Note verbales* and letters should be submitted no later than Friday 24 November 2017.

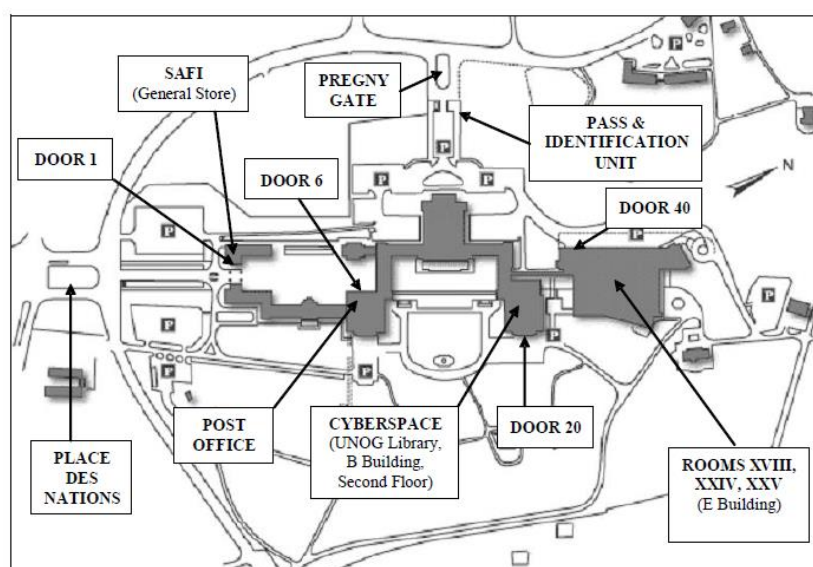
Access to the Palais des Nations

14. Valid grounds passes (issued either by the United Nations Office at Geneva or the United Nations Headquarters in New York) are required for entry into the Palais des Nations.
15. Participants already possessing a United Nations grounds pass may proceed directly to the meeting room (Room XVIII).
16. Participants who do not already have a United Nations grounds pass need to complete an application on the new online Indico system at <https://reg.unog.ch/event/22463/> and follow the process described. Indico is a new system that will facilitate participation in this and

future meetings at the Palais des Nations. Once participants are registered and approved by the system, their profile will remain and they will only have to update it if needed. Please note that participants will have to attach a scanned copy of their passport or national identification card and the *note verbale* or letter, including their name on the list of the delegation, as a mandatory document when registering on-line. If the requested documents are not attached, the system will reject the application. A [user guide](#) is available for reference on the webpage of the Meeting of States Parties under the registration category (<http://www.unog.ch/bwc/meeting>). For any queries, please contact the Implementation Support Unit at bwc@unog.ch.

17. Once the application has been approved in Indico, you will receive via e-mail an e-ticket / QR code. Grounds passes valid for the duration of the Meeting of States Parties will be available for collection from the Pass and Identification Unit at the Pregny Gate of the Palais des Nations. Participants are advised to come to the Pregny Gate well in advance to allow enough time for security checks.
18. Delegations from States and international organisations can collect their passes as from 12:00 on Friday 1 December 2017. Please bring a copy of the delegations' letter or *note verbale* or the e-ticket / QR code received after your successful Indico registration, in order to speed up the process.
19. NGO representatives can collect their badges in person from 08:00 on Monday 4 December 2017. A valid passport or national identification card will have to be produced along with the confirmation from Indico. Only representatives who have registered online and whose names have been properly included in the letter described above will be granted an access badge.
20. For security reasons, the identification badge must be worn and visible to UN Security staff at all times while visiting the Palais des Nations.

Getting to and from the Palais des Nations



Public transport

21. Upon arrival at Geneva airport, a free sixty-minute ticket for train, tram and bus travel within the Geneva area can be collected from the machine in the baggage reclaim hall. Many hotels in Geneva provide guests with free public transport passes for the duration of their stay.
22. The Palais des Nations is served by several tram and bus lines: Buses 8, 28, F, V and Z serve Pregny Gate (Appia stop) where the Pass and Identification Unit is located. Trams 13 and 15, as well as buses 5, 8, 11, 14, 28, V, F, and Z serve the Nations stop. The Place des Nations, where the Nations Gate is located, is some 500 meters away from the Pregny Gate. Bus 28 serves Geneva Cointrin Airport from the Nations and the Appia stops at the Pregny Gate and Bus 5 serves the airport from the Nations stop.
23. Further information such as itineraries, timetables, fares, etc. can be found on the website of the Transports Publics Genevois (see: www.tpg.ch).

Taxis

24. A taxi stand is located on Route de Pregny, some 25 metres from the Pregny Gate, in the direction of Place des Nations. Direct telephone number: +41 (0) 22 331 4133. Taxis are usually available around the clock.

Parking

25. Delegates wishing to park on the premises should request authorization in advance through their Permanent Mission in Geneva. The UN Security and Safety Service at Pregny Gate will issue the parking authorization at the same time as the delegate's identification badge. Due to building works related to the ongoing Strategic Heritage Plan, at the time of the Meeting of States Parties, parking in the vicinity of the E Building will be limited. Car parks P10 and the underground PA will be closed until the end of December 2017. Car park P5i will be available strictly for delegates' parking only until the end of December with a new drop-off area for delegates. Car park P11 will be closed until further notice.

Hotel accommodation and visas

26. The Implementation Support Unit cannot offer financial or logistical support to assist with travel to, accommodation during, or other costs related to attending or contributing to the Meeting of States Parties. The Implementation Support Unit is not in a position to provide letters of invitation or letters to embassies or consulates requesting that States or NGO representatives be provided visas for travelling to Switzerland in order to attend the Meeting of States Parties.
27. It is the responsibility of States or NGO representatives to make their own arrangements for visas, travel and related costs. Further information relating to the procedures and measures concerning the issuance of visas for Switzerland is available by contacting the

Swiss embassy or consulate in the applicant's country of residence or by referring to the Swiss Federal Office for Migration at www.bfm.admin.ch/content/bfm/en/home/themen/einreise/merkblatt_einreise.html. Further information is available on the website of the Permanent Mission of Switzerland at <https://www.dfae.admin.ch/eda/en/fdfa/entry-switzerland-residence/visa-requirements-application-form.html>

Attending the Meeting of States Parties

28. All formal sessions of the Meeting of States Parties (including the public sessions) will be held in Room XVIII, located on the first floor of the E Building at the Palais des Nations (see map above).
29. Side-events will be held in Rooms, XXIV and XXV (both on the first floor of the E Building). Details of the meetings scheduled for each day can be found on the screens opposite Door 40 located on the second floor of the E Building. All side events will be public meetings and the widest possible participation is generally encouraged.
30. Private meetings for regional groups or other groups of States Parties may be held during the Meeting of States Parties. The Secretariat will assist the Coordinators of the different groups with the announcements for such meetings and participants are kindly invited to check the notice boards regularly and/or the BWC website (www.unog.ch/bwc) for additional details.
31. An up-to-date timetable of events, including formal meetings, side events and informal sessions will be available on the Meeting of States Parties page of the BWC website (www.unog.ch/bwc/meeting).
32. Electronic boards outside each meeting room will clearly indicate whether the session in progress is public or private. All interested parties can attend public sessions. Private meetings are technically for States Parties only.
33. Food and drinks are strictly prohibited in the conference rooms. Activities involving food and drinks are allowed only in the areas designated for this purpose. Catering services should be contacted directly by side-event organizers at onu@eldora.ch, telephone number 022 917 5619.

Rooms and facilities for participants

34. In addition to the main meeting room (Room XVIII), a smaller meeting room nearby has been reserved for use by States Parties for private consultations. Room requests will be considered on a first-come, first-served basis but every effort will always be made to accommodate requests from States Parties. Those interested in reserving rooms should contact the Secretariat, which will be located behind Room XVIII during the meeting.
35. Delegates from States and international organizations have access to computer facilities in the delegates' room located near to Room XVIII. Additional computer terminals are

available near the Serpent Bar behind the conference room. Free wifi access is available in the meeting rooms and generally throughout the Palais des Nations.

36. Conference rooms can be made available to NGOs when they are not in use by States Parties. NGOs may also make use of the computers and printers in the delegates' room but once again, States Parties have priority. Additional computing facilities are available near the Serpent Bar and at the Cyberspace area of the UNOG library (Door 20, B Building, see map above).
37. Copy and reproduction facilities will not be available to participants.
38. A limited number of conference participants are also able to leave large luggage with security at the Pregny Gate. After being cleared by Security, baggage can be stored in special lockers. The Security Service has noticed that during busy periods, such as on the last day of a meeting, numerous delegates bring their luggage with them to the Palais des Nations after having checked out of their hotel. The Security Service wishes to remind all delegates that once the limited storage capacity is exhausted, no additional luggage will be accepted.
39. For security reasons, luggage and other belongings from participants cannot be stored in the offices of the Secretariat. The Secretariat will authorize removal of materials judged to be inappropriate.
40. Participants can also make use of the various cafes, cafeterias and restaurants in the Palais des Nations. The closest is the Serpent Bar which can be found behind Room XVIII on the first floor of the E Building. Other facilities in the E Building which might be of interest include the UNOG Bookshop (Door 41, second floor) and the UBS bank (Door 41, second floor).
41. A Post Office and another UBS bank are located at Door 6, C Building (see map) and SAFI (a small general shop) at Door 1, S Building (see map).

Documentation

42. Prior to the Meeting of States Parties, pre-session background and procedural documents have been made available on the BWC website (www.unog.ch/bwc/meeting). The provisional agenda for the Meeting of States Parties is available in all official languages as [BWC/MSP/2017/1](#) and the provisional programme of work is available as [BWC/MSP/2017/2](#).
43. States Parties wishing to submit working papers for the Meeting of States Parties should provide Microsoft Word versions to the Implementation Support Unit as soon as possible on bwc@unog.ch Please get in touch to discuss your specific requirements.
44. States and international organizations granted observer status might also wish to provide information to delegations at the Meeting of States Parties. Documents should be submitted in electronic and hard copy to the Implementation Support Unit. Electronic copies should be sent to bwc@unog.ch

45. During the Meeting of States Parties, in-session documents will be made available for collection from the documents booth inside conference room XVIII. The documents will also be made available on the BWC website (www.unog.ch/bwc/meeting) as they become available.

Secretariat

46. Further enquiries regarding attendance and participation in the Meeting of States Parties should be addressed to:

BWC Implementation Support Unit
United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs
United Nations Office at Geneva
Palais des Nations
CH-1211 Geneva 10
Switzerland
Tel: +41 (0)22 917 2230
Fax: +41 (0)22 917 0483
Email: bwc@unog.ch

47. Additional information, including documents related to the Meeting of States Parties, will be posted on the BWC website, prior to, during and after the meeting and can be found at www.unog.ch/bwc/meeting