Benefits and Obligations under the BWC

Ngoc Phuong van der Blij
Political Affairs Officer
BWC Implementation Support Unit
United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (Geneva Branch)
Outline

- Obligations: financial assessments, NCPs, CBMs
- Assistance tools:
  - The ISU and its mandate
  - Cooperation and Assistance Database
  - BWC sponsorship programme
  - EU CD on the BWC
- Art.X
- Report of SPs on their implementation of Art.X
- The BWC Meetings of Experts in 2018
**National Contact Points (NCPs)**

- Sixth Review Conference decided that each State Party should designate a NCP
- **Role and responsibilities:**
  - Act as national focal point on BWC matters and communicate with other SPs and relevant IOs
  - Coordinate and facilitate national implementation
  - Coordinate the submission of CBMs
- Nomination form can be downloaded from [BWC website](#)
- Information on NCPs accessible via restricted part BWC website
- NCP Info provided:
  - 118 States Parties
  - 2 Signatory States
  - 3 States not party
  - 1 regional organization
Confidence-Building Measures (CBMs)

Purpose

... 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

BWC/CONF.II/13/II, p.6

Role

- Enhance transparency & strengthen trust
- Increase confidence in compliance
- provide a useful review of the status of national implementation
- Not a tool for verification
The Implementation Support Unit (ISU)

• First institutional presence for the BWC
• Officially operational in August 2007
• Housed in Geneva Branch of UN Office for Disarmament Affairs
• Funded by assessed contributions of all BWC States Parties
• Three full-time staff
• Eighth Review Conference renewed mandate until 2020
Mandate of the ISU

• Provide administrative support for BWC meetings
• Facilitate communication among States Parties and with relevant organizations
• Support national implementation efforts
• Act as “clearing house” for offers of and requests for assistance, establish and administer database
• Administer confidence-building measures (CBMs)
• Support universalization activities
• Support implementation of decisions and recommendations of Sixth, Seventh and Eighth Review Conference
Assistance & Cooperation Database

- Mandate from Seventh RevCon:
  - “The Conference decides to establish a database system to facilitate requests for and offers of exchange of assistance and cooperation among States Parties”
  - “The ISU will establish and administer a database, open to all States Parties, where these requests and offers will be stored”
  - The operation of the database will be reviewed at Review Conferences based on the reports and/or any recommendations by the MSP
Basic principles

• States Parties may submit any requirements, needs or offers for assistance
  • including in terms of equipment, materials and scientific and technological information regarding the use of biological and toxin agents for peaceful purposes

• States Parties may use the database to match offers with requests for assistance and then make their own further arrangements

• Once a match is made, the States Parties concerned will inform the ISU which will update the database accordingly

• The ISU may also, on request, facilitate the exchange of information among States Parties relating to the database and any resulting cooperation and assistance activities
New Database available

- ISU completely updated the database during 2017 on the basis of the inputs received.
- The new improved version of the database was presented at the MSP in December 2017 and is now operational.
- The new database can be accessed at [www.unog.ch/bwc/database](http://www.unog.ch/bwc/database).
- User guide and document explaining the operation of the database system are available.
New Database

• For passive use (only «reading»):
  • Offers are publically available
  • Requests: need username and password (the same provided for access to restricted area of the BWC website)

• For Active use (add or amend information in the database)
  • Registration is needed. Check user guide or contact the ISU for assistance
BWC Sponsorship Programme

• Established by 7th RC to "support and increase the participation of developing States Parties in the meetings of the intersessional programme".
• Funded by voluntary contributions from States Parties
• Administered by the ISU in consultation with the Chair and Vice-Chairs of the Meeting of States Parties.
• Criteria for selection
  • Priority to those SPs which have previously not participated in the meetings, or have been unable to regularly send experts from capital.
  • To promote universalization of the Convention.
States Parties supported under the BWC Sponsorship Programme from 2012 to 2017

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>MX or PrepCom in 2016</th>
<th>MSP or RevCon 2016</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Various projects

1) EU Council Decision 2016/51 in support of the BWC
   • Three-year project worth EUR 2.3 million
     • Project 1: Universalization
     • Project 2: Five regional workshops on S&T
     • Project 3: Extended Assistance Programmes in ten SPs

1) Norway 3-year project
Continued relevance and political interest in the BWC
Conclusions

• BWC key pillar of multilateral security architecture
• Strong norm against BWs established over the years
• Multidimensional nature of the BWC
• Need to universalize the Convention
• 2018 MXs is the first of the current ISP, will lay the foundation for 2019-2020 and Ninth RevCon
For more information...
www.unog.ch/bwc

Or contact:

BWC Implementation Support Unit
United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs
Palais des Nations
Geneva, Switzerland
tel: +41 (0)22 917 2230
fax: +41 (0)22 917 0483
e-mail: bwc@unog.ch
@BWCISU
www.facebook.com/1972BWC