

**Biological Weapons Convention**  
**Meeting of States Parties**  
**3 – 6 December 2019**



**United Nations Office at Geneva**  
**Palais des Nations**  
**Geneva, Switzerland**

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

1. The 2019 Meeting of State Parties to the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) will take place from 3 to 6 December 2019 in Geneva, Switzerland. The Meeting of States Parties will consider the factual reports of the Meetings of Experts which took place in July and August 2019, as well as a report from the Chairman on universalization activities and the annual report of the Implementation Support Unit. The Meeting of States Parties is also responsible for managing the intersessional programme, including taking necessary measures with respect to budgetary and financial matters by consensus with a view to ensuring the proper implementation of the intersessional programme.
2. The Meeting of States Parties will be chaired by Ambassador Yann Hwang of France.
3. The provisional agenda and the provisional programme of work for the Meeting of States Parties will be published on the MSP webpage as soon as they are available.
4. The present Aide-Mémoire has been prepared by the Implementation Support Unit (ISU) and provides preliminary information for participants in the Meeting of States Parties. Documentation and other information will be posted, as it becomes available, on the BWC [website](#).

### **Date and venue**

5. The Meeting of States Parties will be held in conference room XVII from 3 to 6 December 2019 in the E Building of the Palais des Nations, United Nations Office at Geneva, accessible via the Pregny Gate.
6. The meeting is scheduled to begin on Tuesday 3 December 2019 at 10:00.

### **Registration**

7. All participants in the Meeting of States Parties need to be registered in accordance with the BWC [Rules of Procedure](#) following the procedures described below in paragraphs 8 to 12 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 13 to 19.
8. In accordance with Rule 1 of the Rules of Procedure, **States Parties** wishing to participate should send, through their Permanent Missions, a letter or *note verbale* to the ISU 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.
9. In accordance with Rule 44.1 of the Rules of Procedure, **Signatory States** wishing to participate should send, through their Permanent Missions, a letter or *note verbale* to the ISU 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. In accordance with Rule 44.2(a) of the Rules of Procedure, **States which are neither parties nor signatories to the Convention** may apply to participate in the Meeting of States Parties as Observer States. Observer status is granted by the decision of the Meeting at its opening session. A letter or *note verbale* should be addressed, through their Permanent Missions, to the ISU 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. 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. In accordance with Rule 44.4 of the Rules of Procedure, **international organizations** may apply to participate in the Meeting of States Parties as observer agencies. Observer agency status is granted by the decision of the Meeting of States Parties, which will consider and decide on requests for observer agency status at its opening session. A letter or *note verbale* should be addressed to the ISU 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. 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. In accordance with Rule 44.5 of the Rules of Procedure, **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 ISU 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. *Notes verbales* and letters should be submitted no later than **Friday 22 November 2019**.

### **Access to the Palais des Nations**

14. Valid security badges (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 security badge may proceed directly to the conference room.
16. Participants who do not already have a United Nations security badge need to register online at <https://reg.unog.ch/event/19369/> and follow the process described. Participants who have already registered for a previous meeting at the United Nations Office at Geneva, can simply log in to their existing account and register for the Meeting of States Parties. Participants registering for the first time will need to provide details of their passport or national identification card and upload a passport quality photo. All participants will need

to upload a copy of the *note verbale* or letter from their delegation. If the requested documents are not attached, the system will reject the application. A [user guide](#) is available for reference. For any queries, please contact the Implementation Support Unit at [bwc@un.org](mailto:bwc@un.org)

17. Once the application has been approved online, you will receive via e-mail a UN Event Pass. Security badges valid from Monday, 2 December 2019 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 security badges as from 12:00 on Friday 29 November 2019. Please bring a copy of the delegations' letter or *note verbale* or the UN Event Pass received after your successful online registration, in order to speed up the process.
19. NGO representatives can collect their badges in person from 08:00 on Monday 2 December 2019. A valid passport or national identification card will have to be produced along with the UN Event Pass. Only representatives who have registered online and whose names have been properly included in the letter described above will be granted a security badge.
20. For security reasons, the identification badge must be worn and visible to UN Security staff at all times while inside the Palais des Nations.

## Getting to and from the Palais des Nations

21. The map below shows the main conference rooms, entrances and facilities within the Palais des Nations. It also shows the nearest bus and tram stops outside the Palais. A more detailed version of the map is also [available](#).



## **Accessibility to the Palais des Nations for persons with disabilities**

22. To facilitate access to the premises for persons with disabilities, UNOG's Security and Safety Service has implemented a standard procedure whereby priority access is automatically provided upon arrival at Pregny Gate. It is important to remember that external delegates, visitors and others can only access the Palais premises through the Pregny Gate.
23. After passing through the priority lane, Security Officers at the Pregny Gate will issue a special badge for persons with disabilities, which allows them to open the dedicated accessible door next to the elevator on the side of the Gate. While guiding the visitors to the next accessible elevator and explaining how to get around, the Security Officers will also provide the visitors with a map of the Palais, which clearly indicates accessible doors, elevators and restrooms.
24. When leaving the premises, visitors are instructed to return the special badge to Security. Visitors are also informed that if they leave after 19:30, they will have to leave the premises using the ramp and call for assistance (a telephone is available at the top of the ramp).

## **Public transport**

25. Upon arrival at Geneva airport, a free eighty-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.
26. The Palais des Nations is served by several tram and bus lines as shown on the map above: 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 Airport from the Nations and the Appia stops and Bus 5 serves the airport from the Nations stop.
27. Further information such as itineraries, timetables, fares, etc. can be found on the website of the [Transports Publics Genevois](#).

## **Taxis**

28. 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**

29. 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.

## **Hotel accommodation and visas**

30. The ISU 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, except for experts who may be selected under the [BWC Sponsorship Programme](#). Practical information about accommodation in Geneva can be found on the website of the [Geneva Welcome Centre](#).
31. 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 [website](#) of the Swiss Federal Office for Migration. Further information is available from the [Permanent Mission of Switzerland](#).

## **Attending the Meeting of States Parties**

32. All formal sessions of the Meeting of States Parties (including the public sessions) are scheduled to be held in Room XVII, located in the E Building of the Palais des Nations (see map above).
33. Side events are planned to be held in Rooms VII (A Building), XXIII, XXIV and XXV (E Building). Details of the meetings scheduled for each day can be found on the screens opposite Door 40 in the E Building.
34. 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](#) for additional details.
35. An up-to-date timetable of events, including formal meetings, side events and informal sessions will be available on the 2019 Meeting of States Parties [page](#) of the BWC website.
36. 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 for States Parties only.
37. 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](mailto:onu@eldora.ch), telephone number 022 917 5619.

## Rooms and facilities for participants

38. In addition to the main meeting room (Room XVII), 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 ISU during the meeting.
39. Computer terminals for the use of participants are available near the Serpent Bar behind room XVIII. Free wifi access is available in the meeting rooms and generally throughout the Palais des Nations.
40. Conference rooms can be made available to NGOs when they are not in use by States Parties. 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).
41. Photocopying facilities will not be available to participants.
42. 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.
43. For security reasons, luggage and other belongings from participants cannot be stored in the offices of the ISU. The ISU will authorize removal of materials judged to be inappropriate.
44. 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).
45. 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

46. Prior to the Meeting of States Parties, pre-session background and procedural documents will be made available on the BWC [website](#). The provisional agenda for the Meeting of States Parties and the provisional programme of work will be made available in all official languages on the Meeting webpage.
47. States Parties wishing to submit working papers for the Meeting of States Parties should do so by **8 November** by providing Microsoft Word versions to the ISU as soon as possible on [bwc@un.org](mailto:bwc@un.org) Please get in touch to discuss any specific requirements.

48. 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 ISU. Electronic copies should be sent to [bwc@un.org](mailto:bwc@un.org)
49. During the Meeting of States Parties, in-session documents will be made available on the BWC [website](#) as they are issued.

### **Secretariat**

50. 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  
Email: [bwc@un.org](mailto:bwc@un.org)

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.

### **Nomination of participants**

51. In order to promote Sustainable Development Goal 5 on gender equality, the Implementation Support Unit strongly encourages all States Parties, Signatory States, States not Party, international organizations and non-governmental organizations to strive for gender balance within their own delegations.

### **Participants' behaviour at UN system events**

52. The organizations of the United Nations system are committed to enabling events at which everyone can participate in an inclusive, respectful and safe environment.
53. UN system events are guided by the highest ethical and professional standards, and all participants are expected to behave with integrity and respect towards all participants attending or involved with any UN system event.
54. Advancing the Secretary-General's "zero tolerance" vision, and priority agenda to address sexual harassment in the workplace, a [Model Code of Conduct](#) has been developed to prevent harassment, including sexual harassment, at UN system events.
55. The [Model Code of Conduct](#) is not a legal document but aims to prevent harassment from occurring at UN system events by sharing expectations of standards of conduct in advance

of an event, as well as to support victims by ensuring they are aware that harassment is not tolerated at UN system events and what steps they can take if they are harassed or witness harassment.

56. The Model [Code of Conduct](#) applies to all participants of any BWC Meetings.