

## **Niue joins the Biological Weapons Convention**

On 27 July 2018 the United States of America announced that Niue had deposited its instrument of accession to the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) with the US Government which is one of three Depositary Governments of the Convention. Niue's accession to the BWC, effective as of 14 June 2018, brings the total membership of the Convention to 181 States Parties.

The Chairman of the 2018 BWC Meeting of States Parties, Mr. Ljupčo Jivan Gjorgjinski of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, welcomed Niue's accession: "I would like to warmly welcome Niue as the 181<sup>st</sup> State Party to the Biological Weapons Convention. More than ever, the BWC is a pillar of our fight against weapons of mass destruction and crucial for international security. I hope that this accession by Niue encourages the remaining three States not party to the BWC in the Pacific region to join the Convention at the earliest possible opportunity."

Niue's accession follows a universalization workshop for Pacific Island States that took place in July 2017 in Fiji, in which an official from Niue participated. The workshop was co-hosted by Fiji and the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs and was financed by the European Union under its Council Decision 2016/51 in support of the BWC. The workshop had a positive effect in the Pacific region as Samoa acceded to the BWC shortly afterwards on 21 September 2017.

The BWC Implementation Support Unit, which is based within the Geneva Branch of the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs, is working closely with other States not party, the Depositary Governments, relevant regional and international organizations and other entities to encourage the remaining 16 States which have not yet joined the BWC to do so without delay.

A total of six States have signed but not ratified the BWC (Central African Republic, Egypt, Haiti, Somalia, Syria and Tanzania), while a further 10 States have neither signed nor ratified the BWC (Chad, Comoros, Djibouti, Eritrea, Israel, Kiribati, Micronesia, Namibia, South Sudan and Tuvalu). In the Pacific region, there are three States that have yet to join the BWC (Kiribati, Micronesia, and Tuvalu) and it is hoped that Niue's accession will encourage them to join in the near future.