

**SEVENTH REVIEW CONFERENCE OF THE STATES  
PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION ON THE PROHIBITION  
OF THE DEVELOPMENT, PRODUCTION AND  
STOCKPILING OF BACTERIOLOGICAL (BIOLOGICAL)  
AND TOXIN WEAPONS AND ON THEIR DESTRUCTION**

Geneva, 5-22 December 2011

Secretariat:  
BWC Implementation Support Unit  
United Nations Office for Disarmament  
Affairs (Geneva Branch)  
Palais des Nations, CH-1211 Geneva 10  
Switzerland

tel: +41 (0)22 917 2230  
fax: +41 (0)22 917 0483  
e-mail: [bwc@unog.ch](mailto:bwc@unog.ch)  
web: <http://www.unog.ch/bwc>

To the Permanent Representatives of the States Parties  
and Signatories to the Convention on the Prohibition  
of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological  
(Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on their Destruction

25 January 2011

Excellency,

I am writing to you in my capacity as President-designate of the Seventh Review Conference of the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) to outline my plans for preparing for the Conference and to request your input and participation in these preparations.

Let me begin by thanking you for your support for my nomination as President of the Conference and Chairman of the Preparatory Committee. As I said at the Meeting of States Parties in December, I am committed to working closely with all States Parties in a transparent, inclusive and constructive manner in order to secure a positive outcome at the Review Conference that further strengthens the Convention.

Our first task is to make arrangements for the Preparatory Committee, which is scheduled to be held in Geneva from 13-15 April 2011. The purpose of this three-day meeting is to ensure that the necessary procedural mechanisms are in place for a thorough review of the Convention during the Review Conference itself. The Preparatory Committee will need to take decisions on such matters as the provisional agenda for the Review Conference, the rules of procedure, background documentation, publicity, and various other procedural and administrative items.

I have prepared a draft agenda for the Preparatory Committee (attached), which is identical to that used in 2006. You will note that, in keeping with the procedural nature of the meeting, there is no general debate. I would encourage delegations to examine the agenda and to prepare to discuss the respective items. One item that will need particular attention is the provisional agenda for the Review Conference; I would suggest that the agenda of the successful Sixth Review Conference would be a sound starting point for this. Another item that may need careful consideration is background documentation, as the background documents prepared by the Implementation Support Unit will be an important resource for our work. As a guide for your consideration, I attach the list of background documents requested by the Preparatory Committee for the Sixth Review Conference in 2006.

Although the Preparatory Committee will have no general debate or other formal opportunity to discuss substantive issues for the Review Conference, I would encourage delegations to


take advantage of the presence in Geneva of many capital-based colleagues and civil society representatives by holding informal meetings and consultations. Since the Preparatory Committee itself will be held from Wednesday to Friday, 13-15 April, the Monday and Tuesday, 11-12 April, are available for regional group meetings and other consultations. While bilateral and small-group consultations can of course be held at any time, I would suggest that any larger meetings or seminars be coordinated with the Implementation Support Unit, to avoid clashes and to make the best use of time for all delegations.

I would also encourage delegations to begin sharing substantive ideas and proposals for the Review Conference. I am grateful to those delegations which already put forward ideas and papers at the Meeting of States Parties in December. The ISU has set up a "think zone" in the Seventh Review Conference section of its website ([www.unog.ch/bwc/7rc](http://www.unog.ch/bwc/7rc)) where a number of papers and articles have already been made available. I hope States Parties will contribute their own material to this "think zone".

Finally, although we are all naturally focused on the Review Conference, it is important to remember that we must also continue with the everyday implementation of the Convention, and with efforts to boost its membership. I would therefore like to take this opportunity to encourage all States Parties to participate in the Confidence-building Measures (CBMs), and to remind you that the **deadline for submission is 15 April 2010**. More information on the CBMs, including the necessary forms, can be found on the website of the Implementation Support Unit (<http://www.unog.ch/bwc/cbms>). I also ask you to continue your efforts to contact states not party to the Convention and to persuade them to join.

In conclusion, I am looking forward to working closely with you in the course of the year to ensure a successful review of this important treaty. The successful work and constructive collaboration of States Parties over the four years of the intersessional process have built a sound foundation for further efforts to strengthen the Convention, and I am confident that if we maintain this approach we can achieve a highly significant outcome at the Review Conference and find the right mix between ambition and realism. I value your views and suggestions, and I am available at your convenience for consultations (contact details are attached). I would propose to meet the regional groups at a mutually convenient time in February for an initial discussion. The Implementation Support Unit is also at your disposal for any enquiries of a technical and administrative nature, and I encourage you to consult the ISU website ([www.unog.ch/bwc](http://www.unog.ch/bwc)) for up-to-date information and documentation.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.



Paul van den IJssel  
Ambassador of the Netherlands to the  
Conference on Disarmament  
President-designate of the Seventh Review  
Conference

Attachments

Annex A: Suggested agenda for the Preparatory Committee (1 page)

Annex B: Background documents requested in 2006 (1 page)

Annex C: Contact details (1 page)

**Annex A**

**Suggested agenda for the Preparatory Committee**

1. Opening of the meeting
2. Election of the Chairman and other officers
3. Adoption of the agenda of the Preparatory Committee
4. Organization of work of the Preparatory Committee
  - (a) Method of decision-making
  - (b) Languages
  - (c) Participation of non-States Parties
5. Organization of the Review Conference:
  - (a) Date and duration
  - (b) Provisional agenda
  - (c) Draft rules of procedure
  - (d) Background documentation
  - (e) Publicity
  - (f) Final document(s)
6. Appointment of a provisional Secretary-General
7. Financial arrangements for the Preparatory Committee and the Review Conference
8. Report of the Preparatory Committee to the Review Conference
9. Other business

**Annex B**

**Background documents requested by the Preparatory Committee in 2006**

(excerpt from the Report of the Preparatory Committee, BWC/CONF.VI/PC/2)

"22. The Preparatory Committee decided to request the Secretariat to prepare six background information documents as follows:

- (a) A background information document on the history and operation of the confidence-building measures agreed at the Second Review Conference and revised at the Third Review Conference. The document should include data in summary tabular form on the participation of States Parties in the measures since the last Review Conference;
- (b) A background information document on compliance by States Parties with all their obligations under the Convention. For the purpose of compiling this document, the Secretariat would request States Parties to provide information regarding compliance with all the provisions of the Convention;
- (c) A background information document on new scientific and technological developments relevant to the Convention, to be compiled from information submitted by States Parties as well as from information provided by relevant international organisations;
- (d) A background information document on developments since the last Review Conference in other international organizations which may be relevant to the Convention;
- (e) A background information document showing the additional understandings and agreements reached by previous Review Conferences relating to each article of the Convention, extracted from the respective Final Declarations of these conferences;
- (f) A background information document on the status of universalization of the Convention."

**Annex C**

**Contact details for the President-designate**

Permanent Mission of the Netherlands

Ambassador Paul van den IJssel  
Tel: 022 748 1850  
Mobile: 079 322 0818  
E-mail: paul-vanden.ijssel@minbuza.nl  
Blackberry: vandenijsselp@missionnl.ch

Ms. Eva Verberne-Schreuder, Second Secretary  
(until 4 March and after 1 August)  
Tel: 022 748 1852  
Mobile: 079 448 5440  
E-mail: eva.schreuder@minbuza.nl  
Blackberry: schreudere@missionnl.ch

Ms. Annelies Breman, Ambassador's Secretary  
Tel: 022 748 1853  
Fax: 022 748 1838  
E-mail: gev-cd@minbuza.nl

Implementation Support Unit

Mr. Richard Lennane  
Head of the ISU  
Tel: 022 917 2230  
E-mail: rlennane@unog.ch

Dr. Piers Millett  
Deputy Head of the ISU  
Tel: 022 917 3463  
E-mail: pmillet@unog.ch

Ms. Ngoc Phuong Huynh  
Associate Political Affairs Officer  
Tel: 022 917 2261  
E-mail: nphuynh@unog.ch

General ISU e-mail: bwc@unog.ch

ISU fax: 022 917 0483

---