

**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**

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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

6 June 2011

Excellency,

I am writing once more in my capacity as President-designate of the Seventh Review Conference of the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) to update you on preparations for the Conference, and to encourage your continuing participation in these preparations.

I would like to thank you for your support and cooperation at the Preparatory Committee (13-14 April 2011). The Preparatory Committee succeeded in agreeing all the necessary procedural mechanisms for the Review Conference, including a provisional agenda. Just as importantly, the Preparatory Committee was held in a very collegial and positive atmosphere. I therefore believe we have made an excellent start in preparing for a thorough and comprehensive review of the Convention in December. The report of the Preparatory Committee, BWC/CONF.VII/PC/2, is available in all official languages on the ISU website: www.unog.ch/bwc/7rc.

Inputs for background documents

The Preparatory Committee decided to request the ISU to prepare a number of background documents (see BWC/CONF.VII/PC/2, paragraph 24). Three of these documents are to be compiled from information provided by States Parties, namely the documents on:

- compliance by States Parties with all their obligations under the Convention, to be compiled from information submitted by States Parties;
- 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; and
- the implementation of Article X, to be compiled from information submitted by States Parties, including information submitted pursuant to paragraph 54 of the Final Declaration of the Sixth Review Conference.

I would therefore like to invite States Parties to submit the relevant information to the ISU, preferably by e-mail to bwc@unog.ch. To ensure that the background documents can be

prepared and translated in good time for the Conference, I would request you to submit the information **no later than 31 August 2011**.

Development of substantive proposals

I would once again like to emphasise the importance of developing and sharing substantive proposals well in advance of the Conference. I would like to thank those delegations which have organised and participated in informal seminars and workshops for this purpose, and those which have shared proposals at the Preparatory Committee or on the "think zone" of the ISU website. Informal consultations to date have revealed a number of areas of interest to delegations. These include, *inter alia*: the future of the intersessional process, the confidence-building measures and the ISU; the need for a means to monitor and assess developments in science and technology; strengthening international cooperation and assistance activities and the implementation of Article X; possibilities for compliance and verification; and universalization.

It is important that we continue to work on these areas and others, to develop and share specific proposals. I encourage States Parties, both individually and in groups, to begin submitting formal working papers for the Review Conference. Once such proposals begin to emerge, we can consider whether there might be utility in convening some kind of more structured consultation process.

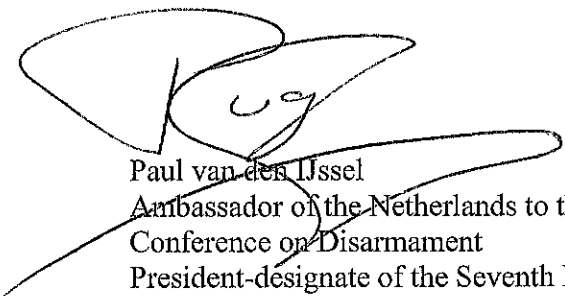
Universalization

I am pleased to report good progress with universalization efforts, with **Mozambique** recently becoming the 164th State Party to the BWC. The Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands, Mr. Uri Rosenthal, wrote in April to his counterparts in states not party to the Convention, urging them to join. With the permanent representatives of the Depositary governments of the Convention, I hosted a meeting in Geneva on 4 May for representatives of states not party, to raise awareness of the Convention and the Review Conference. I again urge all States Parties to redouble their efforts to persuade states not party to join the BWC, and to keep me informed of the results of any contacts.

Conclusion

We have made a positive start to the review process, and I remain confident that we are on track to secure a significant outcome at the Seventh Review Conference that combines ambition and realism. Over the coming weeks I will be continuing my consultations with individual delegations and groups, as well as with relevant international organisations, the scientific community, academic experts and NGOs. I value your views and suggestions, and I am available at your convenience if you would like to discuss any aspect of preparations for the Review Conference. I remind you that 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) 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