

The EU and the future of the BTWC

*Strategies towards and beyond
the 8th Review Conference*

Dr Jean Pascal Zanders

Director, The Trench

Senior Research Associate, Fondation pour la recherche stratégique

4th Consultative Meeting of the EU Non-Proliferation Consortium

Brussels, 13 – 14 July 2015

End of a special era

- **Collapse of the 5th RevCon (2001)**

- 1st separate coordination by EU member states in 2001
- EU contributed to salvaging the BTWC process → intersessional meetings
 - Focus on actionable programme items rather than on deepening treaty regime

- **Invasion of Iraq (2003)**

- Highly divisive for EU
- Fresh common ground for EU member states via *EU Strategy against the proliferation of WMD*

- **Privileged intermediary**

- EU viewed as a moderating influence on the Bush administration
- Gave EU a prominent role as an honest broker
- Ended, however, with the election of President Obama

6th and 7th BTWC RevCons

- **6th RevCon: In-depth preparations**

- Submission of in-depth EU working papers
 - 7 consensus documents of (then) 25 EU member states and presented by 1 or 2 states
 - No consensus on one document; presented as national working paper
 - Supported by concrete action: 1st Joint Action in support of the BTWC (2006 – 08)
- Weakness of EU negotiating strategy
 - EU working papers generated great interest, particularly during 1st week of RevCon
 - 2nd week: running behind negotiations
 - Consensus-building process too cumbersome to adapt positions in function of debates
 - 3 decision-making centres: capitals, Brussels and delegation coordination in Geneva
 - 3rd week: decision time and irrelevancy of EU positions
 - No updated positions
 - No prioritising of positions (EU red lines & secondary preferences; fall-back strategies)

- **7th RevCon: No coherence among national positions**

- Common position, but national working papers (no longer on behalf of the EU)
- Less visibility for EU of follow-on Joint Actions (now via ISU / UNODA)
- Some EU members shot down other EU member positions, even though in CP
- Refusal of one EU member to support expansion of ISU, even though in CP



Final front bench (Dec 2010)

Towards 8th RevCon (2016) and beyond

- **In the making**
 - New common position for the RevCon
 - New Action Plan in support of the BTWC
- **Actionable programme elements**
 - Continuation of the intersessional process
 - Identify concrete programme elements that are red lines for EU members + common defence
 - Have priorities reflected in new Action Plan in support of the BTWC
- **Challenges for the EU member states**
 - The opportunistic coalition of the unwilling (or 'PRIIC's')
 - Need for coordinated tactical approach on how to introduce a proposal (*including prior to RevCon*)
 - Coordinated respond to their challenges or counter undesired proposals
 - 40th Anniversary of entry into force of BTWC (March 2015)
 - Russia re-emphasised its proposal to reopen negotiations using AHG mandate and create OPBW
 - USA laid out its red lines for the RevCon
 - EU RevCon consultative process : how to adapt common positions and strategy to evolving realities?
- **Long-term strategic thinking on the deepening of the BTWC regime**
 - *Bringing back disarmament*: What is the EU's longer-term vision for the BTWC?
 - How can the EU help to modify the framework for debate in function of that vision?
 - How can the EU set up action programme in the field to engage partners worldwide on that vision?



THE TRENCH

Recalling where science, industry and military art converged
Challenging entrenched positions

www.the-trench.org

E-mail

jpzanders@the-trench.org

