



# The BWC Intersessional Process – Current Issues

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## 1972 Biological Weapons Convention

- // 170 states parties
- // Prohibition of development, possession and proliferation of biological agents for weapons purposes
- // Obligation to cooperate in the peaceful use of biology and biotechnology (Article X)
- // No verification system; Confidence-Building Measures (CBMs)
- // Implementation Support Unit (ISU)
- // Review conferences every 5 years

## The 2011 BWC Review Conference: Results

- // Final Declaration with review of all BWC articles
- // “Decisions and Recommendations”
  - // Extension of ISU until 2016, no additional staff or resources
  - // Revisions of CBMs
  - // Cooperation and assistance measures (sponsorship programme, database)
  - // New intersessional process 2012-2015

## Current Challenges

- // Rapid developments in biology, biotechnology, life sciences
- // Research with high dual-use potential
- // Risk of misuse and misperceptions
  
- // Absence of important topics from agenda (compliance!)
- // Fundamentally different interpretations of BWC and key concepts
  - // Security vs. development aspects
  - // Role of BWC relative to anti-terrorism and global health instruments

## Intersessional Process 2012-2015

- // Annual meetings of experts and states parties
- // 3 standing agenda items, to be covered annually
- // 2 additional topics, to be covered in two consecutive years each
  - // Enhancing CBM participation in 2012-2013
  - // Assistance in case of BW attack in 2014-2015
- // No mandate for decision-making
- // Negotiation of new measures not before 2016 Review Conference

## Standing Agenda Items 2012-2015 (1)

### **Cooperation and Assistance, with special emphasis on Article X**

- // Covers technology cooperation as well as assistance activities; scope disputed, highly politicised
- Needed: more pragmatic discussions and better use of database; more active engagement

### **Review of Science and Technology (S&T) Developments**

- // First formal consideration of relevant S&T developments
- // Currently mere collection of information, outcome unclear
- Needed: more structured and effective S&T review  
(documentation for MSP, task groups after 2016)

## Standing Agenda Items 2012-2015 (2)

### National implementation

- // Required: national legislation and regulations, including export controls, biosafety and biosecurity measures
  - Discussions about common standards
  
- // Emerging connection of national implementation with compliance:  
Implementation assessment, peer review
  - “We need to talk about compliance!” (BWC/MSP/2012/WP.11)

## Options for the EU

- // Ensure EU members' full implementation of all obligations
- // Continue supportive activities (BWC Action)
- // Increase pragmatic contributions to BWC meetings and cross-group cooperation
- // Enhance EU's visibility and participation opportunities
- // Start preparing for 2016 Review Conference
  - // Working Papers (joint or individual)
  - // Informal meetings/workshops etc.
  - // Language for MSP Reports

**Thank you for your attention.**

**Questions? Comments?**

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## EU BWC Action 2012-2015

### Regional workshops

- // Awareness-raising

### Extended implementation assistance

- // Universalisation
- // CBM assistance
- // Implementation measures
- // Awareness-raising
- // Codes of Conduct & biosafety/biosecurity standards

## EU BWC Action 2012-2015

### Enabling tools

- // National implementation guide
- // CBM guide
- // Electronic tool for CBM submission
- // Sponsorship for participation in BWC meetings
- // Trainings for experts of the UNSG investigation mechanism