Getting Organised at the National Level for the Biological Weapons Convention

David Cliff, Researcher


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Governmental and other bodies involved in BWC implementation

- Office of the Prime Minister or Head of Government;
- Office of the Attorney-General;
- parliamentarians;
- law enforcement agencies;
- national academy of science;
- national forensic science laboratory;
- national border control authorities (customs, port authorities);
- national chamber of commerce; and
- national biotechnology industry association or other professional scientific bodies;
- civil society.
National structures for implementing the BWC

- Necessary to link roles and responsibilities of various authorities with specific obligations of the BWC
- Inter-ministerial processes or structures
- Designate national focal points
- Designate point of contact for CBMs
- Consider establishing a National Authority
  - **monitor** and supervise any activities, including transfers, involving biological agents, toxins and dual-use technology and equipment;
  - **enhance** national security and public health;
  - **satisfy** its obligations under the BWC, particularly Article IV commitments relating to national implementation and annually reporting to the national assembly or parliament on progress made; and
  - **fulfil** international reporting requirements, under the BWC and United Nations Security Council Resolution 1540.
National Authority

Internationally, the ‘National Authority’ could:

• act as a national focal point of contact for the BWC ISU;
• provide data and information relevant to the fulfilment of its international obligations to other States parties and international organizations; and
• share experiences and extend assistance to other States pertaining to implementation of the BWC.
National Authority

Nationally, the ‘National Authority’ could:

• collect any necessary information and prepare Confidence-Building Measure returns for submission to the BWC ISU;
• propose and support the adoption of legislative and other measures to implement the BWC;
• supervise and monitor the enforcement of legislation and regulations;
• grant licenses for the handling of biological agents for peaceful purposes;
• establish a national system to monitor and verify activities being conducted in authorized establishments;
• authorize and monitor internal and international transfers of biological agents, toxins and dual-use equipment and technology;
National Authority

Nationally, the ‘National Authority’ could:

(continued)

• create and maintain a national system to respond to biological emergencies;
• report to the parliament or national assembly on its activities;
• advise the prime minister or head of government on any BWC-related issues;
• coordinate and assist with any of the tasks above attributed to any other government bodies; and
• conduct or facilitate awareness-raising, education, outreach and training vis-à-vis the BWC, biosafety and biosecurity, national implementing legislation and other measures and codes of conduct for scientists.
Establishment of a National Authority

- Composition, structure and mandate
- Scope
- Centralized or decentralized
- Government bodies involved
  - Ministry of health
  - Ministry of trade
  - Ministry of foreign affairs
Assistance for Establishing a BWC National Authority

- BWC Implementation Support Unit
  Dr Piers Millett, Political Affairs Officer
  United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs
  Room C.115–117, Palais des Nations
  CH-1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland
  Telephone: +41 (0)22 917 3463
  Fax: +41 (0)22 917 0483
  E-mail: pmillet@unog.ch or bwc@unog.ch

- VERTIC
Contact VERTIC

NIM@vertic.org
+ 44 20 7065 0880

The Verification Research, Training and Information Centre (VERTIC)
Development House, 56-64 Leonard Street
London EC2A 4LT, United Kingdom
Tel +44 20 7065 0880
Fax +44 20 7065 0890
Web www.vertic.org