



Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the
Netherlands

Seventh Review Conference of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention

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Review Conference





What is the BTWC?

- Signed in 1972, entered into force in 1975
- Fully prohibits the use, development, stockpiling, or otherwise acquiring biological and toxin weapons
- First multilateral disarmament treaty banning a whole category of weapons
- One of the three pillars of the international non-proliferation and disarmament regime, together with the CWC and NPT
- No verification provisions
- Currently has 165 parties



7th RevCon Preparations

For the presidency

- Consulting with all relevant players, in Geneva, New York, and capitals
- Participation in seminars across the globe
- Chair preparatory meetings in Geneva
- Identification problematic topics
- Promote universalization of the Convention

For other countries

- Preparing national positions
- Preparing working papers on various topics
- Building coalitions





The Review Conference

- December 5-22, Geneva
- Content
 - Number of difficult topics
 - » Future Intersessional Process
 - » Verification
 - » 2012 conference WMD free zone in the Middle East
 - » Decision making
 - Budget difficulties





The Review Conference

Structure

- Review part and forward-looking part
- Formal meetings and informal negotiations
- Bilateral meetings
- Facilitators
- Presidency teamwork





Outcome

- Agreement on new Intersessional Proces (ISP) for 2012-2016
 - Two annual meetings → Meeting of Experts and Meeting of States Parties
 - » One chair and two vice-chairs
 - Three standing agenda items
 - » Developments in science and technology
 - » Assistance and cooperation, in particular Article X
 - » National implementation



Outcome

- Other decisions
 - Extension mandate Implementation Support Unit
 - Update of Confidence-Building Measures (CBMs)
 - Continued attention to universalization
 - Establishment of Article X database
 - Sponsorship program
 - Focussed attention on fuller participation CBMs (2012-2013)
 - Focussed attention on implementation art. VII (2014-2015)
- No agreement could be reached on
 - Decision-making during the Intersessional Process
 - Verification
 - Enlargement of the ISU



Outcome

What does the outcome mean?

- Outcome as ambitious as possible
- It strengthens the BTWC
- Specifics will need to be worked out during ISP
- Perhaps boost for multilateral disarmament in Geneva

