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NOTE BY THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL

**ANNUAL REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION
OF THE ACTION PLAN FOR THE UNIVERSALITY
OF THE CHEMICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION
DURING THE PERIOD FROM 3 SEPTEMBER 2007 TO 25 SEPTEMBER 2008**

1. This Note has been prepared in accordance with the action plan for the universality of the Chemical Weapons Convention (hereinafter “the Convention”), which was adopted by the Executive Council (hereinafter “the Council”) at its Twenty-Third Meeting (EC-M-23/DEC.3, dated 24 October 2003) at the recommendation of the First Special Session of the Conference of the States Parties to Review the Operation of the Chemical Weapons Convention (RC-1/5, dated 9 May 2003). In the action plan, the Council requested the Director-General to submit to the Conference of the States Parties (hereinafter “the Conference”) at its regular sessions an annual report on the implementation of the plan, and to keep the Council regularly informed, so that the Conference and the Council may review progress and monitor its implementation effectively (EC-M-23/DEC.3).
2. In its decisions on the universality of the Convention and on the implementation of the universality action plan adopted at its Tenth (C-10/DEC.11, dated 10 November 2005) and Eleventh (C-11/DEC.8, dated 7 December 2006) Sessions, the Conference noted with satisfaction the progress that had been achieved since the adoption of the action plan and requested the Technical Secretariat (hereinafter “the Secretariat”) to provide further up-to-date information regarding the status of States not Party vis-à-vis the Convention, their prospects for adherence, their participation in universality-related activities, any significant chemical-industry issues, and any other issues relevant to the Convention (C-10/DEC.11, paragraph 9).
3. Furthermore, the Conference at its Twelfth Session (C-12/DEC.11, dated 9 November 2007) decided to continue with the action plan and decided that, at its Fourteenth Session, “it shall review the results and implementation of that plan and take any decision it deems necessary...” (C-12/DEC.11, paragraph 5). It further requested the Secretariat to continue to provide and keep current information on activities related to promoting the universality of the Convention and the progress being made thereon, including in an annual report to the Conference at its Thirteenth Session (C-12/DEC.11, paragraph 6).



4. Universality was also considered at the Second Special Session of the Conference of the States Parties to Review the Operation of the Convention (Second Review Conference), held in The Hague from 7 to 18 April 2008, which also welcomed the substantial progress achieved since the adoption by the Council of the action plan for the universality of the Convention and the subsequent decisions adopted by the Council and the Conference, and welcomed the fact that, of the 40 States not Party when the action plan was adopted, more than two-thirds (including one possessor State) had since joined the Convention (Report of the Second Review Conference, RC-2/4, dated 18 April 2008, paragraph 9.13).
5. The Second Review Conference further underlined the fact that the goal of universality shall be pursued by the Secretariat as well as States Parties as a matter of high priority and acknowledged the efforts made by the States Parties, the policy-making organs, the Secretariat, and the Director-General to this end (RC-2/4, paragraphs 9.12 and 9.13). At the same time, the Second Review Conference strongly urged all remaining States not Party to the Convention to ratify or accede to it as a matter of urgency and without preconditions, in the interests of enhancing their own national security, as well as affirming their commitment to global peace and security and to the object and purpose of the Convention (RC-2/4, paragraph 9.16).
6. In this context, the Second Review Conference, while welcoming efforts by Guinea-Bissau, Iraq and Lebanon, which were well advanced in the process of accession to the Convention, and requesting the Secretariat to continue to support their ongoing efforts aimed at adherence, also recalled that among the States not Party there were some whose non-adherence is a matter of serious concern (RC-2/4, paragraphs 9.16 and 9.13).
7. Finally, the Second Review Conference welcomed the decision by the Conference at its Twelfth Session to continue with the action plan for the universality of the Convention (C-12/DEC.11), and also called upon the Secretariat, the Director-General, the policy-making organs and all States Parties in a position to do so to intensify further their efforts with States not Party with a view to achieving full universality at the earliest possible date (RC-2/4, paragraph 9.18).
8. This report provides updated information on the status of participation in the Convention and the universality activities undertaken by the Secretariat since the last annual report on the implementation of the action plan for universality (EC-50/DG.14 C-12/DG.4, dated 14 September 2007), and covers the period from 3 September 2007 to 25 September 2008.
9. As at the date of this report, there were 184 States Parties to the Convention, with Guinea-Bissau being the latest State to join (19 June 2008). The Republic of Congo was the other State to have joined the Convention in the period under review (3 January 2008). As at 25 September 2008, there remained 11 States that had not ratified or acceded to the Convention. Of these, four had signed the Convention and seven had not. In addition, two States not Party, Iraq and Lebanon, had taken significant steps towards acceding to the Convention.

10. The annex to this Note contains two tables: the first lists the four signatory States that had yet to ratify the Convention as at 25 September 2008, and the second lists the seven non-signatory States that had not acceded to it.
11. During the period under review, the Secretariat continued to carry out a number of activities aimed at promoting universal adherence to the Convention and enhancing synergies with States Parties and with other international and regional organisations within the framework of the action plan for universality.
12. In particular, the Secretariat continued to support and facilitate informal consultations on the action plan under its previous facilitator, Mr Saïd Moussi of Algeria, and the new facilitator, Mr Lee Litman of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, who took over the facilitation in June 2008. The Secretariat also coordinated its universality-related activities with Member States through consultations with the “points of contact” on universality designated by States Parties.
13. The Secretariat further promoted and sponsored the participation of representatives of States not Party in various OPCW activities, particularly the Twelfth Session of the Conference and the Second Review Conference. During these conferences, bilateral meetings and briefing sessions on the Convention and on the work of the Organisation were organised for attending States not Party.
14. The Director-General continued to accord high priority to universality and maintained high-level contacts with representatives of States not Party to create awareness of the need and the importance for them to join the Convention. He also availed himself of his contacts with and visits to States Parties, as well as interaction with other international organisations and participation in international conferences and seminars (including in the context of the celebrations of the tenth anniversary of the entry into force of the Convention), to underline the importance of universality and to gather support for the efforts of the Secretariat in this area.
15. In this context, universality also featured prominently in the statements of the Director-General delivered at regional and international forums, including the United Nations General Assembly. In particular, the Director-General stressed the importance of reaching universal adherence to the Convention and of promoting international cooperation to that end, in his address to the First Committee of the Sixty-Second Session of the United Nations General Assembly (October 2007), as well as addresses at the United Nations Conference on Disarmament in Geneva (December 2007), the Fourth Meeting 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 (December 2007), as well as in his bilateral meetings with the United Nations Secretary-General, Mr Ban Ki-moon, with his High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, H.E. Mr Sergio de Queiroz Duarte, and with H.E. Dr Srgjan Kerim, President of the Sixty-Second Session of the United Nations General Assembly.
16. Universality was further included in the Director-General’s opening statement at a high-level meeting convened in New York, upon the initiative of the Director-General and in cooperation with the Netherlands and Poland, to celebrate the tenth anniversary

of the entry into force of the Chemical Weapons Convention (September 2007), as well as at a panel discussion co-organised by the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs and the OPCW, held in New York on “The Tenth Anniversary of the entry into force of the Convention and the inception of the OPCW” (October 2007).

17. In his opening statements at the regular sessions of the Executive Council, the Director-General provided comprehensive updates on the progress being made towards universality and on the relevant activities of the Secretariat.
18. The activities carried out by the Secretariat to promote the universality of the Convention in specific regions are detailed below. As in the previous year, universality activities were financially supported through the OPCW regular budget, as well as thanks to voluntary contributions by Member States and the European Union (EU) under its 2007 Joint Action on support for OPCW activities in the framework of the implementation of the EU Strategy against proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction.

Developments in Africa

19. The Republic of Congo deposited its instrument of ratification with the Secretary-General of the United Nations on 4 December 2007, and the Convention entered into force for this State on 3 January 2008. The Secretariat provided continued assistance to the Republic of Congo in its efforts towards ratification, as well as technical advice with regard to the depositing procedure. In the context of promoting early ratification by this country, the Director General also met with the Permanent Representative of Congo to the United Nations in New York.
20. With a view to promoting early ratification by Guinea-Bissau, the Secretariat sponsored representatives of this country to participate in the advanced course for personnel from lusophone States Parties who are involved in implementing the Convention, held in Salvador, Brazil (September 2007); in the ninth annual meeting of National Authorities held in The Hague (November 2007); and in the Second Review Conference, in the margins of which bilateral consultations on universality and briefing sessions on the Convention and on the OPCW were also organised by the Secretariat.
21. As a follow-up to previous efforts which began in 2007, a team from the Secretariat conducted a technical assistance visit to Guinea-Bissau from 18 to 21 February 2008, with a view to encouraging and assisting the authorities of this country in expediting the process for ratifying the Convention, and with a view to sustaining the momentum generated by recent measures taken by the Government of Guinea-Bissau, which included a decision by Parliament to ratify the Convention. The visit was also aimed at promoting awareness about the Convention, its obligations, and the benefits for States Parties.
22. The programme of the above-mentioned visit included two main components, namely bilateral meetings with senior government officials and an information workshop for experts and mid-level staff, representing stakeholder ministries. The delegation held

- bilateral meetings with the ministries of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Commerce, Justice, and the Interior, as well as with the Vice-President of the Supreme Court, the Chief of Cabinet and Director of the Office of the President of the Republic, the Director-General and Acting Minister of Defence, and the Director-General of Customs.
23. The Secretariat's team also organised a national information workshop on the Convention, which was attended by 30 participants representing the ministries of Foreign Affairs, Commerce, Justice, the Interior, and Defence, as well as representatives of the Supreme Court and the Directorate of Customs.
 24. Shortly thereafter, on 20 May 2008, Guinea-Bissau deposited its instrument of ratification of the Convention. On 19 June 2008, the Convention entered into force for this State and Guinea-Bissau became its 184th State Party.
 25. Sustained contacts were also maintained with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Angola and with its Embassy to the Kingdom of Belgium with a view to promoting early accession, as well as to organising a bilateral visit to assist the Angolan authorities in taking the required steps towards joining the Convention. In the same vein, in October 2007 the Director-General addressed a letter to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Angola, requesting his personal support for Angola's efforts aimed at acceding to the Convention and facilitation of the organisation of a bilateral visit.
 26. Furthermore, Angola attended the Second Review Conference as an observer, thereby signalling an interest in joining the Convention. It also participated in a special briefing on the Convention and the work of the OPCW, organised by the Secretariat in the margins of the Conference. In addition, the Director of the External Relations Division of the Secretariat met with the Angolan delegation and discussed matters related to Angola's accession and the support that the Secretariat could provide in this regard.
 27. The Secretariat also sponsored two representatives of Angola to attend the advanced course for National Authorities of lusophone States Parties, held in Brazil from 18 to 21 September 2007. Angola had also been invited to attend the training course for representatives of National Authorities of States Parties in Africa, held in Tshwane, South Africa, from 22 to 26 September 2008, but was unable to participate, due to parliamentary elections.
 28. The conflict in Somalia remains an impeding factor in respect of efforts to encourage accession to the Convention by this country. This was also the message conveyed to the Director-General when he met with the Permanent Representative of Somalia to the United Nations in October 2007, in the margins of the Sixty-Second Session of the General Assembly. The Secretariat, however, continues to monitor the development of the situation regarding Somalia, in the context of promoting universality.
 29. The attainment of universality in Africa is also a goal within the Programme for Africa, developed by the Director-General in consultation with the African Group of States Parties to the Convention, pending a decision by the States Parties within the framework of the decision adopted by the Conference at its Tenth Session

(C-10/DEC.13, dated 10 November 2005) on the establishment of an OPCW Office in Africa (EC-50/DG.17, dated 26 September 2007). This programme is aimed at strengthening cooperation with the region and accelerating efforts both to achieve universality and to ensure the full implementation of the Convention in Africa.

Developments in Asia

30. There remain two States not Party in North East Asia: the Union of Myanmar, which signed the Convention in 1993, and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, a non-signatory State.
31. During the period under consideration, contact was made with Myanmar on several occasions through its Permanent Representations to the United Nations in Geneva and in New York. In the margins of the Sixty-Second Session of the General Assembly, in October 2007, the Director-General met with H.E. Mr Hla Myint, Permanent Representative of Myanmar to the United Nations, accompanied by Mr Ye Minn Thein, Head of the Arms Control and Disarmament Branch of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Myanmar. As a follow-up to this meeting, a letter from the Director-General was addressed to H.E. Senior General Than Shwe, Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council of Myanmar, with a view to promoting this country's early ratification of the Convention.
32. In continuation of those contacts, another letter was later addressed by the Director-General to the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Myanmar, and to H.E. Mr U Wunna Maung Lwin, Permanent Representative of Myanmar to the United Nations Office and other international organisations in Geneva. The letter referred to the call made by the Second Review Conference for all States not Party to the Convention to accede to or ratify the Convention as a matter of urgency and without preconditions, and proposed a goodwill technical mission by the Secretariat to Myanmar, in order to brief the relevant authorities in the country on the status of implementation of the Convention, as well as to clarify or respond to any related queries.
33. In September 2008, the Director of the External Relations Division of the Secretariat also met with the Permanent Representative of Myanmar to the United Nations Office and other international organisations in Geneva. The Director briefed the Ambassador on the status of implementation of the Convention and the work of the OPCW, and encouraged the government of Myanmar to take part in OPCW events organised in Asia. They also discussed the prospects of Myanmar's ratification of the Convention and the assistance that the Secretariat could provide to this end.
34. The Secretariat sponsored a representative of Myanmar to attend the Seventh Induction workshop for diplomatic personnel involved in the work of the OPCW, held at the OPCW Headquarters in September 2007, as well as two representatives from the Ministry of Defence and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Myanmar to attend the fourth assistance-and-protection course for States Parties in Asia, held in Seoul, Republic of Korea, in September 2008. During this event, the Director of the External Relations Division held consultations with the two representatives of Myanmar, to encourage their country's early accession to the Convention.

35. During the period under review, the Secretariat continued to make efforts to reach out to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. To this end, the Director-General addressed a letter to the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and to its Permanent Representative to the United Nations Office and other international organisations in Geneva, encouraging this country to accede to the Convention and proposing a visit by a team from the Secretariat to Pyongyang, with a goodwill mission to brief authorities on current developments and trends relating to the universality and implementation of the Convention. At the time of finalising this report, no official response had been received from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in relation to the Director-General's letters.
36. Furthermore, the Secretariat invited the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to nominate representatives to OPCW events in Asia, including the above-mentioned assistance-and-protection course held in Seoul, Republic of Korea. A representative of the Permanent Mission of that country to the United Nations Office and other international organisations in Geneva, however, informed the Secretariat in a telephone conversation that the time was not yet appropriate for a representative of his Embassy to meet with a representative of the OPCW.

Developments in the Mediterranean Basin and the Middle East

37. Five States remained in these regions that had not yet become Party to the Convention, namely the Arab Republic of Egypt, Iraq, Israel (a signatory State), Lebanon, and the Syrian Arab Republic.
38. During the period under review, the Director-General held several bilateral meetings and made other official contacts with the Ambassadors and Heads of Mission of these States. The Ambassadors of Egypt, Iraq, Israel, and Lebanon accredited to the Kingdom of the Netherlands visited the Secretariat and met with the Director-General. The Director-General also held bilateral meetings in New York with the Permanent Representatives of Egypt, Iraq, and Lebanon to the United Nations in the margins of the Sixty-Second Session of the General Assembly.
39. Iraq, Israel, and Lebanon participated as observers in the Twelfth Session of the Conference, as well as in the Second Review Conference. In the margins of these conferences, bilateral consultations on universality were held and briefing sessions on the Convention and the work of the OPCW were organised by the Secretariat. In accordance with the Rules of Procedure of the Executive Council, the delegation of Iraq further participated as observer in the Fifty-Third Session of the Council.
40. In his statements at international forums, including his statements to the United Nations, the Director-General consistently urged the leaders of the remaining States not Party in the Middle East to seriously consider joining the Convention. He also dealt with this question in his address during the conference on "Middle East Security and Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) Non-Proliferation/Disarmament", organised by the European Union Institute for Security Studies, in Paris, in June 2008.

41. Furthermore, in order to enhance contacts and cooperation, particularly with Egypt, Israel, and the Syrian Arab Republic, the Director-General addressed letters to their Ministers of Foreign Affairs as well as to their Ambassadors in The Hague and in Brussels, in which he drew attention to the call made by the Second Review Conference for all States not Party to the Convention to accede to or ratify the Convention as a matter of urgency and without any preconditions. In those letters, the Director-General also proposed goodwill missions by a team of the Secretariat to their respective capitals, with a view to briefing representatives of the governments of the three States not Party on current developments and trends as they relate to the universality and the implementation of the Convention, and to discussing other matters of common interest.
42. Despite these efforts, Egypt, Israel, and the Syrian Arab Republic continued to cite issues of regional security as a justification for not joining the Convention. In this context, cooperation has been sought with the League of Arab States. In particular, the Director-General addressed a letter to Mr Amre Moussa, Secretary-General of the League of Arab States, as part of the follow-up actions mandated by the Second Review Conference. In his letter, the Director-General stressed the broad-based and substantial support that the Convention enjoys among members of the Arab League. He further appealed to Secretary-General Moussa to use all available opportunities to encourage Arab countries that are yet to join the Convention, to do so at the earliest, and invited him to visit the OPCW.
43. The Secretariat will continue to enhance its contacts with these States not Party and to explore new avenues for promoting universality in the region.
44. Iraq and Lebanon, on the other hand, have taken concrete steps towards joining the Convention. The prevailing circumstances in these two countries, however, have so far hindered this process.
45. At the request of the Lebanese authorities, a delegation from the Secretariat visited Beirut from 1 to 3 September 2008 with a view to continuing to assist this country in its accession process. The visit represented a follow-up to a previous one carried out in August 2007. The visit was funded under the 2007 European Union Joint Action in support for OPCW activities.
46. The programme of the visit included calls on and bilateral meetings with the Prime Minister, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Emigrants, the Minister of Justice, the Chairman of the Foreign Affairs and Immigration Commission of Parliament, as well as the Commander-in-Chief *ad interim* of the armed forces.
47. As reported earlier, in November 2006, the Lebanese Parliament approved accession to the Convention and the President promulgated the Law No. 765, dated 11 November 2006, "Authorising the Government to Join the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on their Destruction". In order for Lebanon to become a State Party, the instrument of accession has to be transmitted to the President for signature, upon recommendation of the Foreign Affairs Minister, through the Prime Minister.

48. The mission by the Secretariat appeared timely in view of the fact that the instrument of accession had not been deposited a year after the Secretariat's previous visit, and was useful in terms of conveying – to the highest level of the political leadership in Lebanon and at a crucial moment – a political message by the Director-General of the OPCW and on behalf of its membership regarding the importance they and the international community attach to Lebanon's accession to the Convention. At the same time, the delegation was able to clarify some issues as regards the nature of the Convention and the work of the Organisation, as well as to respond to questions relating to the advantages that Lebanon would derive from joining the Convention.
49. The Secretariat will remain in contact with Lebanon to follow relevant developments and to provide any further assistance necessary.
50. The Secretariat was informed about the recent efforts undertaken by Iraq to join the Convention. According to the information provided, the Iraqi Parliament had passed a bill on accession, which had been signed and promulgated by the Presidency Council. Iraq's draft implementing legislation was also well advanced. Informal indications were also received that the Convention was in the queue of international treaties to be ratified or acceded to and that a decision to that effect could be expected at any time in the near future.
51. In support of this country's endeavours towards accession, the Secretariat conducted the fourth workshop on the Convention for senior officials of the Government of Iraq, from 29 to 31 October 2007, in Amman, Jordan, as a follow-up to the previous three training courses held in July 2005 (at the OPCW headquarters) and February and December 2006, respectively (also in Amman). The fourth course was again supported by the Government of Jordan, and was partly sponsored by the Government of Japan. Eleven Iraqi officials representing the National Monitoring Directorate (NMD) of the Ministry of Science and Technology, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Industry and Minerals, and the Kurdistan Regional Government attended the workshop. The primary purpose of the workshop was to work toward finalising Iraq's draft initial declaration and to review the progress made by Iraq towards joining the Convention.
52. During the three-day workshop, experts from the Secretariat and representatives of participating States Parties worked with Iraqi experts to finalise Iraq's initial declaration and to put in place efficiently the required regulatory measures to implement the Convention. Participants agreed on a number of recommendations and actions to be taken by Iraq in order to finalise their initial declarations. Work on industry and legal issues was also carried out.
53. During the period under review, the Secretariat also provided advice to the Embassy of Iraq to the Kingdom of the Netherlands on the drafting of the instrument of accession.
54. The Embassy of Iraq appealed to the Secretariat for a donation of books on the Convention, including copies of the Convention in English, French, and Arabic, and other related legal texts, which would be used to upgrade the Embassy's outreach and

public relations library. The Secretariat compiled relevant materials and donated them to the Embassy.

55. The Government of Turkey offered to host the fourth regional workshop on the universality of the Convention in the Mediterranean Basin and in the Middle East Region, in Istanbul, Turkey, on 16 and 17 April 2009. The workshop will be sponsored under the 2007 European Union Joint Action in support for OPCW activities. As at the cut-off date for this report, the Secretariat had begun making organisational arrangements in cooperation with Turkish authorities.

Developments in the Caribbean

56. As for the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States (GRULAC), the Bahamas and the Dominican Republic (both signatory States) remained the only two States not Party as at the end of September 2008, although both countries had indicated their support for the Convention and their intention to join it.
57. In his official visits to States Parties in the region, the Director-General reiterated his appeal to the remaining States not Party in Latin America and the Caribbean to take the necessary steps to join the Convention without further delay, and again requested States Parties in the region to complement the Secretariat's efforts in this regard. In these endeavours, the Secretariat has also benefited from bilateral démarches and assistance on the part of some States Parties.
58. In the same vein, the Director-General addressed letters to the Secretary of State for External Relations of the Dominican Republic, and to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Bahamas, availing the readiness of the Secretariat to continue to support their efforts and to provide any assistance that may be needed to complete the process of ratification, as well as requesting them to take a personal interest in the matter, in order to see these countries joining the Convention at an early date.
59. The Dominican Republic also attended the above-mentioned high-level meeting on the Convention held in New York, and participated as an observer in the Twelfth Session of the Conference, as well as in the Second Review Conference.
60. Sustained contacts were continued by the Director-General and by other representatives of the Secretariat with the diplomatic missions of the Dominican Republic in The Hague and in New York, as well as with the Senate in Santo Domingo. In particular, the Director-General held a bilateral meeting with the Permanent Representative of the Dominican Republic to the United Nations in New York (October 2007). In these contacts, the Secretariat was assured that the Government of the Dominican Republic was considering the issue seriously, and that progress was being made.
61. The Cabinet of the Dominican Republic had further informed the Secretariat that ratification of the Convention had been recommended to Parliament for its consideration. The Secretariat later received information that, on 22 April 2008, the

Senate had approved ratification of the Convention and forwarded the dossier to the Chamber of Deputies for its consideration.

62. As a follow-up to the visit carried out in 2006, and with a view to accelerating the ratification process in the Bahamas, the Secretariat also continued contacts with the acting Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of this country, *inter alia* with a view to organising a high-level visit by the Deputy Director-General to Nassau.
63. The ratification process in the Bahamas seems to have recently regained momentum. In this context, the Government of the Bahamas requested experts from the Secretariat to attend a forthcoming consultation meeting among national stakeholders relating to the ratification and implementation of the Convention, expected to be held in Freeport in the autumn. Consultations and all necessary arrangements are being made accordingly.
64. The Secretariat also received information that the Government of the Bahamas had established a Committee to review the obligations arising from the Convention and to possibly serve as the future National Authority. According to the information provided, the Committee would meet one final time to decide whether to forward the ratification package to the Governor General for approval. The Bahamas has also drafted its implementing legislation, which is currently before Parliament, and under consideration by the Secretariat of the OPCW.

Conclusion

65. As in the past, the Secretariat will continue to utilise all available opportunities and resources, including diplomatic channels and international forums, to advance the objectives of the action plan in accordance with the mandate provided to it in the decisions of the Council, of the Conference and of the Second Review Conference, including through continued cooperation with regional and subregional organisations and the United Nations. The Secretariat will also continue to coordinate closely its activities and efforts with those of the States Parties, which can provide invaluable assistance towards achieving the objective of universal adherence to the Convention.
66. As expected, the rate of ratification and/or accession has continued to decline due to the very large number of States that are now already Party to the Convention. This situation gives rise to a number of challenges, including the need to continue to persuade those States which show the political will to join but are constrained by resource considerations. On the other hand, a specific challenge relates to those States whose reluctance in relation to joining the Convention is based on certain political and security reasons that they have cited (as is the case with a number of States not Party in the Middle East and in the Korean Peninsula).
67. The Secretariat will continue to accord priority to realising the objective set out under the action plan, namely the attainment of the universality of the Convention. In this endeavour, the Secretariat looks forward to enhancing cooperation and coordination with the Member States, especially in the context of those countries that have shown

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little inclination towards joining the Convention and/or entering into dialogue with the Organisation.

Annex: States not Party as at 25 September 2008

Annex

STATES NOT PARTY AS AT 25 SEPTEMBER 2008

TABLE 1: Signatory States that had not ratified the Convention

No.	State	Date of Signature
1.	Bahamas	2 March 1994
2.	Dominican Republic	13 January 1993
3.	Israel	13 January 1993
4.	Myanmar	14 January 1993

TABLE 2: States that had neither signed nor acceded to the Convention

1.	Angola
2.	Democratic People's Republic of Korea
3.	Egypt
4.	Iraq
5.	Lebanon
6.	Somalia
7.	Syrian Arab Republic