

**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 16 AUGUST 2017 TO 15 AUGUST 2018**

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. Following the adoption of the action plan, successive sessions of the Conference, including its special sessions to review the operation of the Convention, reviewed the action plan on universality, reaffirmed its validity, urged the remaining States not Party to join the Convention, and requested the Technical Secretariat (hereinafter “the Secretariat”) to continue with its implementation.
3. In particular, the Third Special Session of the Conference of the States Parties to Review the Operation of the Chemical Weapons Convention (hereinafter “the Third Review Conference”) reiterated that “the universality of the Convention is essential to achieving its object and purpose and to enhancing the security of States Parties, as well as international peace and security” (paragraph 9.33 of RC-3/3*, dated 19 April 2013).
4. The Third 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; requested the States Parties to further intensify their efforts with all States not Party to encourage them to ratify or accede to the Convention at the earliest; requested the Secretariat and the Director-General to make full use of all available opportunities and resources, including new mechanisms such as special envoys, as and when considered appropriate by the Director-General, to pursue this goal at all levels, including in close cooperation with other international, regional, and subregional organisations; and requested the policy-making organs to continue to annually review ongoing efforts to achieve universality.



5. This report provides an overview of recent developments with regard to 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 (EC-86/DG.12 C-22/DG.12, dated 30 August 2017), and covers the period from 16 August 2017 to 15 August 2018.
6. As at 15 August 2018, there were 193 States Parties to the Convention, and four States that had not ratified or acceded to the Convention. Of these, one had signed the Convention and three were non-signatories. The annex to this Note lists the States that were not Party to the Convention as at 15 August 2018.
7. A particular highlight during the period under review was the entry into force of the Convention for the State of Palestine on 16 June 2018, making it the 193rd State Party to the Convention.
8. Throughout the reporting period, the Secretariat continued reaching out to the remaining States not Party and actively promoted universal adherence to the Convention within the framework of the action plan for universality.
9. The Director-General continued to accord high priority to universality and maintained high-level contacts with representatives of States not Party in order to create awareness and sustain a positive dialogue on the importance of joining the Convention. He also made full use of his contacts with, and visits to, States Parties and of his interaction with other international organisations, academic institutions, think tanks, policy institutes, research centres, and international conferences to underline the importance of universality and to gather support for the efforts of the Secretariat in this regard.
10. The Secretariat continued to promote participation of representatives of States not Party in various OPCW-related events and activities, including the Twenty-Second Session of the Conference.
11. The activities carried out by the Secretariat to promote the universality of the Convention are detailed below. As in previous years, universality-related activities were financially supported through the Programme and Budget of the OPCW, as well as through voluntary contributions by the European Union under its 2012, 2015, and 2018 Council decisions.

Developments in Africa

12. During the period under review South Sudan remained the only State not Party to the Convention in Africa.
13. The Secretariat has maintained contacts with representatives of South Sudan at its Embassy in Brussels, Belgium.
14. On 7 November 2017, the Director-General met with the Ambassador of South Sudan to the European Union and Benelux Countries to discuss South Sudan's progress in relation to joining the Convention and its capacity needs and requirements that the Secretariat could help to further bolster.

15. South Sudan participated as an observer in the Twenty-Second Session of the Conference. The Director-General of International Cooperation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of South Sudan delivered a statement to the Conference, in which he provided an update on the internal process of accession to the Convention.
16. On 24 January 2018, the Director of the International Cooperation and Assistance Division of the OPCW sent a letter to the Ambassador of South Sudan to the European Union and Benelux Countries, confirming the Secretariat's readiness to organise a requested awareness-raising event on the Convention for South Sudanese officials.
17. On 4 May 2018, a Secretariat representative met with the Deputy Ambassador of South Sudan to the European Union and Benelux Countries in Brussels to discuss progress made by South Sudan to accede to the Convention and to reiterate the offer to organise an awareness-raising event.
18. In follow-up to this meeting, on 22 May 2018, the Director-General sent a letter to the Minister of Foreign Affairs of South Sudan, reaffirming the OPCW's readiness to assist South Sudan in acceding to the Convention.

Developments in Asia

19. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea remains the only State not Party to the Convention in Asia. It has not responded to ongoing attempts by the Secretariat to initiate contact or to invitations to participate in OPCW-related activities.
20. On 16 May 2018, through an initiative of the Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict, representatives of the Secretariat met with members the Korean National Peace Committee, a non-governmental organisation from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, to brief them on the work of the OPCW and the benefits and obligations of joining the Convention.

Developments in the Middle East

21. Egypt and Israel remain the only two States not Party to the Convention in the Middle East region. Israel remains the only signatory State not Party to the Convention.
22. In the margins of the Twenty-Second Session of the Conference, Secretariat representatives met with a former Ambassador of Egypt, who was attending the Conference as a member of a non-governmental organisation, to discuss OPCW membership and issues of interest to Egypt relevant to the Convention.
23. Israel participated as an observer in the Twenty-Second Session of the Conference, and an official of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Israel delivered a statement. Three representatives of Israel also participated as observers in the Fourth Special Session of the Conference. On 7 June 2018, two representatives of Israel participated in the Conference on Countering Chemical Terrorism, which was held at the OPCW Headquarters.

24. On 6 July 2018, the Secretariat hosted a day-long workshop for prominent Israeli opinion shapers at the OPCW Headquarters, in cooperation with Chatham House, the Royal Institute of International Affairs (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland). During the briefing, the Director-General and experts from the Secretariat gave presentations on the work of the OPCW and answered questions from the participants.

Conclusion

25. The Secretariat will continue to accord high priority to the fulfilment of the goal of universality, as established under the action plan and the relevant decisions of the Council and the Conference.
26. As in the past, the promotion of universal adherence to the Convention will be pursued through the utilisation of all available resources and opportunities, including diplomatic channels, international forums, and cooperation with States Parties and the United Nations, as well as with other international and regional organisations.
27. With the progressive reduction in the number of States not Party, the strategy of the Secretariat in implementing the action plan focuses on a bilateral approach. As such, the Secretariat will remain sensitive to the varying stages of progress regarding Convention membership and will maintain its proactive pursuit of a strategy of tailored activities for each State not Party based on the actual degree of readiness. The Secretariat will use possible opportunities fitted to each case and continue to urge States not Party to reconsider their position, or to facilitate their respective internal processes with a view to gaining their membership as soon as possible. Given the foreseeable challenges to achieving full universality of the Convention, the Director-General will continue to urge all States Parties to further intensify their own efforts to realise this goal.

Annex: States not Party as at 15 August 2018

Annex

STATES NOT PARTY AS AT 15 AUGUST 2018

TABLE 1: SIGNATORY STATES THAT HAD NOT RATIFIED THE CONVENTION

	State	Date of Signature
1.	Israel	13 January 1993

TABLE 2: STATES THAT HAD NEITHER SIGNED NOR ACCEDED TO THE CONVENTION

	State
1.	Democratic People's Republic of Korea
2.	Egypt
3.	South Sudan

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