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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 16 AUGUST 2019 TO 15 AUGUST 2020**

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-92/DG.16 C-24/DG.13, dated 12 September 2019), and covers the period from 16 August 2019 to 15 August 2020.
6. As at 15 August 2020, 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 2020.
7. Despite the restrictions brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic, 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 throughout the reporting period.
8. 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. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, the Director-General limited engagements and visits during the reporting period. Nevertheless, he made full use of his contacts with States Parties and interaction with other international organisations to underline the importance of universality and to gather support for the efforts of the Secretariat in this regard.
9. The Secretariat continued to promote participation of representatives of States not Party in various OPCW-related events and activities, including the Twenty-Fourth Session of the Conference.
10. 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, 2018, and 2019 Council decisions.
11. During the period under review, Israel remained the only signatory State not Party to the Convention.
12. The Secretariat has maintained contacts with representatives of Israel at the Embassy of Israel in the Netherlands. On 5 August 2020, the Ambassador of Israel met with the Director-General at OPCW Headquarters and pledged a contribution to the Centre for Chemistry and Technology.
13. At the Twenty-Fourth Session of the Conference, four representatives of Israel participated as observers. In addition, the Ambassador of Israel to the Netherlands delivered a statement to the Conference.
14. There are three remaining countries that are neither signatories nor States Parties to the Convention, namely the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Egypt, and South Sudan.

15. Over the reporting period, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea did not respond to ongoing attempts by the Secretariat to initiate contact or to invitations to participate in OPCW-related activities.
16. With regard to Egypt, a representative of the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs attended the Twenty-Fourth Session of the Conference.
17. Concerning South Sudan, the Secretariat has maintained contacts with representatives of South Sudan at its Embassy in Brussels, Belgium. 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. In this respect, the Secretariat would invite States Parties to provide financial and other support to its efforts and activities in this area.
18. 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.
19. 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 2020

**Annex**

**STATES NOT PARTY AS AT 15 AUGUST 2020**

**TABLE 1: SIGNATORY STATES THAT HAD NOT RATIFIED THE CONVENTION**

	<b>State</b>	<b>Date of Signature</b>
1.	Israel	13 January 1993

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

	<b>State</b>
1.	Democratic People's Republic of Korea
2.	Egypt
3.	South Sudan