



OPCW

Executive Council

Twenty-Third Meeting
21 October 2003

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DECISION

ACTION PLAN FOR THE UNIVERSALITY OF THE CHEMICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION

The Executive Council,

Recalling that the First Special Session of the Conference of the States Parties to Review the Operation of the Chemical Weapons Convention (hereinafter “the First Review Conference”) attached great importance to the attainment of universal adherence by States to the Chemical Weapons Convention (hereinafter “the Convention”) and **acting upon** the recommendation of the First Review Conference that the Executive Council (hereinafter “the Council”), with the cooperation of the Technical Secretariat, develop and implement a plan of action to further encourage, in a systematic and coordinated manner, adherence to the Convention, and to assist States ready to join the Convention in their national preparations for its implementation;

Recalling also resolutions of the United Nations General Assembly which stress the importance of achieving the universality of the Convention;

Recalling that the Conference of the States Parties has reviewed annually the progress, and has repeatedly adopted decisions entitled “Recommendation on ensuring the universality of the Chemical Weapons Convention” which, *inter alia*, have urged all States that have neither ratified nor acceded to the Convention to do so without delay;

Firmly believing that universality of the Convention is fundamental to the full achievement of its object and purpose;

Welcoming the substantial progress made towards universality of the Convention since its entry into force;

Noting however that among the States not Party are some whose non-ratification or non-accession is a cause for serious concern;

Recognising the positive effects that every new accession or ratification has for international peace and security and for global stability;



Recalling the decision of the Council that the OPCW's contribution to global anti-terrorist efforts in the context of the Convention should focus, *inter alia*, on the promotion of universal adherence to the Convention;

Underlining the important political, economic, and security benefits of becoming a State Party to the Convention, **recognising** the positive effect of international cooperation (e.g. on Article XI) among the States Parties on universality, **and convinced** that the desire for increased security and the determination to participate fully in the global community are incentives for States not Party to adhere to the Convention;

Recalling that States that remain outside the Convention would not be able to take advantage of the benefits that the Convention offers the States Parties;

Encouraging States Parties to promote the achievement of the common objectives of the Convention in order to encourage other countries to join the Convention;

Conscious of the fact that States Parties can encourage States not Party to adhere to the Convention, **and determined to** take all appropriate steps to intensify bilateral and multilateral efforts towards universality of the Convention; and

Inspired by the objective of achieving universal adherence to the Convention ten years after its entry into force;

Hereby:

Urges the States Parties, in conjunction with the Council and the Technical Secretariat, to undertake further efforts to promote universality of the Convention, including initiatives to address specific regions, sub-regions, or States, and covering all States not Party, in particular those whose non-adherence is a cause of serious concern;

Strongly supports the designation of "points of contact" by States Parties, on a voluntary and informal basis, in all regions and sub-regions relevant for the effective promotion of universality, to assist regularly in the implementation of this Action Plan and for the purposes of effective coordination;

Recommends that the Director-General should designate an officer of the External Relations Division to act as the focal point within the Technical Secretariat for the implementation of this Action Plan and for the purposes of effective coordination;

Requests the Technical Secretariat, having consulted with States Parties, to prepare a comprehensive annual document on planned universality-related activities, and to provide information to the Council on proposed initiatives, including on potential synergies with States Parties willing and able to join in universality-related efforts. The document should contemplate and systematise activities in which the Technical Secretariat has traditionally engaged and, if deemed appropriate, formulate new universality-oriented projects. The document should set indicative targets for increased membership. In particular, the document could include:

- (a) measures envisaged by the Technical Secretariat to assist States ready to join the Convention in their national preparations for implementing it;
- (b) bilateral assistance visits;
- (c) bilateral meetings with States not Party not represented in The Hague, as well as those represented in The Hague, and other activities of participation support and outreach;
- (d) regional and sub-regional seminars and workshops;
- (e) international cooperation activities which might include States in the process of ratifying or acceding to the Convention;
- (f) measures to increase awareness of the Convention, and of the work of the OPCW, including publications in official languages, as well as measures to reach the appropriate audience in States not Party; and
- (g) attendance at meetings of, or joint activities with, relevant international and regional organisations;

Requests the Technical Secretariat, in support of the document of planned activities, to provide information containing up-to-date details 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 and any other issues relevant to the provisions of the Convention;

Requests the Technical Secretariat to implement the document of planned activities within the resources approved for the Organisation's Programme and Budget, together with any voluntary contributions received for universality-related purposes, and in a cost-effective manner;

Strongly encourages States Parties to strengthen their efforts in the promotion of universality of the Convention, to actively pursue this objective, as appropriate, in their contacts with States not Party, and to seek the cooperation of relevant international and regional organisations;

Requests the Director-General to submit to the Conference at its regular sessions an annual report on the implementation of the Action Plan, and to keep the Council regularly informed, so that the Conference and the Council may review progress and monitor its implementation effectively;

Requests that this Action Plan be brought to the attention of the Conference at its Eighth regular session; and

Recommends that the Conference decide to review, at its Tenth Session, the implementation of this Action Plan, and take any decisions deemed necessary.