



**32nd Workshop of the Pugwash Study Group
on the Implementation of the Chemical and
Biological Weapons Conventions**

THE OPCW IN TRANSITION

30 April – 1 May 2011
Noordwijk, The Netherlands

The 32nd Workshop of the Pugwash Study Group on the Implementation of the Chemical and Biological Weapons Conventions entitled *The OPCW in Transition* was held in Noordwijk, the Netherlands, on 30 April and 1 May 2011. It was attended by 29 participants from 14 countries (Australia, Belgium, Germany, India, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Pakistan, Poland, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, United Kingdom and the United States) and included 7 representatives of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW). The meeting considered the items on the attached Agenda.

The Introductory Session began with a short report on the preparations for the Seventh Review Conference of the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) to be held in Geneva in December 2011 and this was followed by a short report on the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) initiative on chemical incapacitants and the implications of such materials for international law and for proliferation.

The main business of the workshop then commenced with an overview of the current status of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC)/OPCW. This noted that the years 2012/2013/2014 are years of transition for the OPCW as the destruction of the declared stocks of chemical weapons approaches completion. Consequently, the resources devoted to verification under Article IV and V of the Convention which have exceeded 80 per cent will decrease and consideration needs to focus on promoting international security through preventing the misuse for hostile purposes of toxic chemicals and their precursors, and thus contributing to the safe and secure utilisation of chemistry.

In regard to the destruction of declared chemical weapons, whilst it was evident that neither Russia nor the United States would meet the April 2012 deadline to complete the destruction, it was recognised that a political solution needed to be found that would not cause damage to the significance of the Convention in regard to international peace and security.

In the discussion the importance of ensuring that all States Parties had a sense of collective ownership of every Article of the Convention was recognised. It was also noted that the OPCW was hosting a conference on international cooperation and chemical safety and security in The Hague on 12 and 13 September 2011 involving all stake-holders. This conference was intended to help to ensure that chemistry is exclusively used in the service of humankind.

In subsequent sessions, attention was given to how the public profile, knowledge and understanding of the CWC could be increased. As the focus moves more to non-proliferation, protection and international cooperation, it is essential to achieve the involvement of wider stake-holders. Consequently, a public diplomacy action plan has been

drafted to achieve this. In discussion, it was noted that there was considerable variability in the availability of OPCW documents and that hitherto there had been a reluctance to directly engage with NGOs. The contrast was noted to the situation at the BWC meetings in Geneva where NGOs have been able to make statements in informal session for over ten years was noted, as was the ability of NGOs in Geneva to participate in poster sessions, thereby engendering a sense of involvement and partnership.

In looking ahead, the advances in science and technology of relevance to the CWC was noted. Such advances resulted in new chemicals, new substances and new methods of production. In addition, concerns existed about the safety and security of industrially produced chemicals. A particular challenge related to industry verification and what should be done in regard to such verification in the light of the forthcoming significant decrease in verification activities associated with Articles IV and V.

In considering the wider dimensions, mention was made of the involvement of the OPCW in the Green Customs Initiative along with the various multilateral environmental treaties. Given the general purpose criterion of the CWC, it was suggested that the European Union REACH initiative should be taken into account. There was general recognition that there are useful synergies involving the wider world.

There was discussion about incapacitants and a feeling expressed that these need to be considered by the States Parties to the CWC before incapacitants became a problem. It is understood that this subject is being considered by the Scientific Advisory Board.

In a session considering possible lessons and opportunities from the BWC regime, it was noted that the BWC had been strengthened through extended understandings agreed in the Final Declarations of the BWC Review Conferences. A similar approach whereby extended understandings relating to the CWC were agreed by the States Parties in their Final Declarations could make useful progress in regard to incapacitants and to other aspects of the CWC regime.

Consideration was also given to the convergence of chemistry and biology with a number of presentations being made. A particular point made was that those engaged in the advances of science and technology are generally unaware of the CWC and the BWC and are ignorant of dual-use issues. There is consequently a clear need for States Parties in both Conventions to take steps to achieve more effective national implementation and thereby ensure that all those engaged in the sciences are educated about and aware of their obligations under both Conventions.

The workshop concluded by noting that there had been lively and focussed discussion on the importance of achieving a successful transition in the focus of the CWC from verification of declared chemical weapons stockpiles to non-proliferation, protection and international cooperation. Although solutions could not be identified for all the potential problems, there was a shared appreciation of what needed to be addressed and useful ideas had been shared on how progress could be made.

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**Provisional Agenda
[11 March 2011]**

I Introductory Session

- i Welcome and introduction
- ii Reports
 - a Short report on preparations for the Seventh [2011] BWC Review Conference
 - b Short report on follow-up to the ICRC initiative on chemical incapacitants
- iii Report on the current status of the CWC/OPCW – a general overview presented by the OPCW-DG or his nominee

II The CWC Regime: Challenges and Possible Solutions

- i Defining major challenges
 - a Practical steps to ensure real progress on Universality
 - b Divergent understandings of obligations
 - c National implementation
 - d Compliance issues: Article IX, effectiveness of the industry monitoring regime
- ii Completing destruction of stocks and related chemdemil obligations
 - a Current situation: security, political and legal dimensions
 - b Reduction of destruction verification: the problem, its magnitude and its ramifications

III The CWC Regime in its transitional phase

- i Defining new priorities for the OPCW in the areas of verification, compliance, and security in general
 - a What role for tracking and analysis of new science and technology?
 - b Ensuring continuation of CW disarmament/non-armament
- ii Articles X and XI, and their roles in the security dimension of the CWC.
- iii Relevance of the BWC regime: possible lessons and opportunities
 - a Pertinent BWC practices, such as in implementation support, evolving diplomatic behaviour, stakeholder engagement including civil-society involvement, reframing of the security/development bargain, current and future CBMs &c
 - b Implications of the convergence of chemistry and biology for the CWC and BWC
- iv Are structural reforms needed if there is to be a strong and effective OPCW? What should be the future role of the OPCW in the international system and its relations with stake-holders and partners?