

# Practical information:

The Biological Weapons convention (BWC), which entered into force in 1975, bans the development and use of biological weapons. Currently, no country claims to run a biological weapon program, confirming the recognition of the norm.

Continuing and rapid advances in the life sciences offer great current and potential benefits for human, animal and plant health and welfare. At the same time, the development of life sciences yields knowledge, tools and techniques that could be misused for state-sponsored bioweapon development or bioterrorism. In this respect, the BWC lacks a legally binding verification regime to ensure compliance at state and institutional levels.

On the other hand, achieving effective biosecurity to prevent unauthorized possession and misuse of dual-use biological agents and technologies is a shared responsibility. All stakeholders must contribute to reducing the risk of deliberate misuse of the life sciences against the human community, animals, plants or the environment.

The seventh Review Conference of the BWC in December 2011 in Geneva provides an opportunity to strengthen the norm and treaty regime in this sense.

In the run up to the Review Conference, this seminar offers an opportunity for government and industry to share views, exchange insights and dialogue about possible ways to tackle potential dual-use issues in an effective manner while guaranteeing the needed development of sciences and technologies.

The objectives of this seminar are:

- To raise awareness about the risk and underline that biological non-proliferation is a biosecurity issue;
- To exchange information about what's in place to counter the risk from the government and industry side;
- To initiate a dialogue on possible future measures to counter this evolving risk, in the run-up to the BWC Review Conference in December 2011;
- To look at the role of biorisk management standards (like the CWA 15793:2008) with regard to biological non-proliferation;
- To consider concrete follow-on activities and actions.

Venue: Egmont Palace  
Petit Sablon 8,  
1000 Brussels

Participation is free but registration is mandatory.  
Lunch will be provided.

Working language: English

Parking is not possible in the Egmont Palace.  
Public parking ("Poelaert" and "Toison d'Or") is available in the direct vicinity.

There is a maximum of 50 participants in total.

**Please confirm your participation before 15 June**  
by sending a mail, with your name, function, organization and e-mail address to:

Frank Meeussen  
Directorate for Disarmament,  
Non-Proliferation and Arms Control  
Federal Public Service Foreign Affairs  
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This seminar is organized by Federal Public Service for Foreign Affairs (<http://www.diplomatie.be>) in cooperation with the Belgian Biosafety Professionals (<http://ebsaweb.eu/BBP.html>).

For more information you can contact  
Frank Meeussen or Philippe Stroot  
([philippe.stroot@xibios.be](mailto:philippe.stroot@xibios.be) - tel. +32 484 274 365) of BBP.

- 9:00 - 9:30 Arrival and coffee
- 9:30 - 9:45 **Introduction**  
**By Dirk Achten**, President of the Board of the Federal Public Service for Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation (BE)
- 9:45 - 10:15 **Session 1: Assessment and Awareness of the bio-weapon risk**  
**Ben Petro**, Principal Director to the Deputy the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Chemical and Biological Defense, Department of Defense (US)
- 10:15 - 10:25 Question round
- 10:25 - 10:45 **Session 2: What's in place to prevent the development of biological weapons on the governmental side.**  
**Philippe Herman**, Head Biosecurity & Biotechnology, Scientific Institute for Public Health (BE)
- 10:45 - 11:05 **Sander Banus**, Scientific Advisor, National Institute of Public Health and the Environment (NL)
- 11:05 - 11:35 Coffee break
- 11:35 - 12:00 **Session 3: What's in place to prevent the development of biological weapons on the industry side.**  
**Ursula Jenal**, Jenal & Partners Biosafety Consulting (CH) and European BioSafety Association – EBSA
- 12:00 - 12:30 Panel discussion and public debate on the former sessions with:  
**Gary Burns**, Global Biosafety and Biosecurity Manager, AstraZeneca (UK)  
**Philippe Stroot**, Xibios Biosafety Consulting (BE) and Chairman of Belgian Biosafety Professionals – BBP (BE)  
**Dick Verduyn**, Biological Safety Officer, Universiteit Wageningen (NL)

- 12:30 - 14:00 Lunch break
- 14:00 - 14:30 **Session 4: Looking ahead at the Bioweapon Convention Review Conference in December 2011**  
**Jean-Pascal Zanders** (BE), Research Fellow, EU Institute for Security Studies (FR)
- 14:30 - 15:00 **Session 5: Can biorisk management standards (like the CWA 15793) play a role with regard to biological non-proliferation?**  
**Gary Burns**, Global Biosafety and Biosecurity Manager, AstraZeneca (UK)
- 15:00 - 15:45 Panel discussion and public debate on the former sessions with:  
**Dirk Dons**, Expert biological disarmament, Ministry of Defence (BE)  
**Toon De Kesel**, Biosafety International Compliance Manager, Bayer CropScience (BE)  
**Ben Petro**, Principal Director to the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Chemical and Biological Defense, Department of Defense (US)
- 15:45 - 16:00 **Summing up of possible conclusions and follow-on actions**  
**Frank Meeussen**, Directorate for Disarmament, Non-Proliferation and Arms Control, Foreign Affairs (BE)  
**Philippe Stroot**, Xibios Biosafety Consulting (BE) and Chairman of Belgian Biosafety Professionals – BBP (BE)
- 16:00 - 16:15 **Closing remarks**  
**Ambassador Paul van den IJssel**, (NL), President of the Seventh Review Conference Of the Biological Weapons Convention
- 16:15 Closing reception



## The Biological Weapons Convention, Biosecurity and the Industry

Seminar

Management of the biological proliferation risk in life science institutions

20 June 2011  
Egmont Palace, Brussels

