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(Information)

COUNCIL**EU Action Plan on biological and toxin weapons, complementary to the EU Joint Action in support of the BTWC**

(2006/C 57/01)

Introduction

The Council adopted on 27 February 2006 an EU Joint Action in support of the BTWC, including EU financial assistance. In addition, and complementary to the measures contained in that Joint Action, the EU hereby adopts an Action Plan on biological and toxin weapons. This Action Plan contains two measures to be implemented by EU Member States which do not require EU funding.

I. Efficient use of CBM*Purpose*

The EU wishes to revitalise interest in and use of CBMs. Increased use of CBMs would increase transparency in implementation of the BTWC.

Description

To this end, all EU Member States will ensure the fulfilment of their obligation under the BTWC to file a CBM return each year, beginning with 2006 as a first step. Notably, the EU will ensure that the current nine topics, each of which has its own reporting form, are reported each year by every BTWC State Party of the EU. Submission of CBM's by all EU Member States on a yearly basis would allow the EU to take diplomatic action towards other States Parties to the BTWC to fulfil their obligations under the Convention. EU Member States will furthermore develop thoughts on how best to improve the effectiveness of CBM's in the context of the BTWC and discuss these with other BTWC States Parties.

II. Investigations of alleged use of BW*Purpose*

The EU wishes to increase the effectiveness of the current UN Secretary General's mechanism for investigating cases of alleged use of (chemical) biological and toxin weapons. This mechanism is well established in legal terms, having received the endorsement of both the General Assembly and the Security Council. Separately the EU believes that the mechanism, which is now 15 years old, should be reviewed and updated as necessary.

Description

EU Member States will consider and volunteer expertise to the Secretary General in helping him update the lists of experts and laboratories that he may call on for an investigation. EU Member States will aim to submit information to the UN Secretary-General by the end of December 2006 and review and update this information every two years. EU Member States will keep partners informed of the steps they have taken to implement this action and will work with like-minded UN members to achieve this.
