

# **OPCW Advisory Board on Education and Outreach (ABEO)**

*The First Year*

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**Chair of ABEO**

*Briefing to the OPCW Executive Council*

The Hague, 13 October 2016

# Establishment of ABEO

- **Decision by the Executive Council (8 October 2015)**
  - Document EC-80/DEC.5
  - Confirmed at the 20<sup>th</sup> Session of the Conference of States Parties (December 2015)
- **Mandate**
  - Advice to the Director-General
  - On matters relating to education, outreach and awareness-raising, and public diplomacy
  - Concerning the CWC and its (domestic) implementation
  - In relation to States Parties and key stakeholder communities
- **Scope**
  - Deepening the involvement of the stakeholder community in the prevention of re-emergence of chemical weapons
  - Current and planned activities that fall under education, outreach and awareness-raising, and public diplomacy

# Composition of ABEO

- **15 Nationalities**

- Africa

- Kenya, Morocco, South Africa

- Asia

- China, India, Iraq, Japan

- Eastern Europe

- Poland, Russian Federation

- Latin America and the Caribbean (GRULAC)

- Argentina, Mexico,

- Western Europe and Other States

- Belgium, Germany, United Kingdom, United States

- **Appointment**

- 3 Years (once renewable)
- However, no limitation on duration of ABEO

- **Observers**

- 1 permanent observer: International Union for Pure and Applied Chemistry (IUPAC)
- Non-permanent observers

# First meeting of ABEO

- **OPCW Headquarters, The Hague, 28 – 29 April 2016**
- **Principal activities**
  - Team building
  - Briefings by various units in the Technical Secretariat
  - Briefings by ABEO Members and Observers on own educational and outreach activities
  - First consideration of issues to be addressed by the ABEO
    - Strategic-level (longer-term considerations)
    - Short-term projects and specific requests by the Director-General
  - Distribution of coordination responsibilities for agreed tasks to be undertaken in the run-up to the second meeting
- **Election**
  - Dr Jean Pascal Zanders (Belgium) as Chairperson
  - Dr Edith Valles (Argentina) as Vice-Chairperson

# Some core points for consideration

- **Need for common understandings**

- Terminological clarity for future discussions
- Identification of potential stakeholder communities
- Differentiation between 'targets' and 'partners' among the stakeholders
  - The same stakeholder community may be partner under certain circumstance, while 'target' in other ones

- **Need for the ABEO to reach out to**

- Stakeholder communities
- State Parties
- Constituencies within the Technical Secretariat
- OPCW Scientific Advisory Board
- Other international organisations with a view of identifying and developing possible synergies

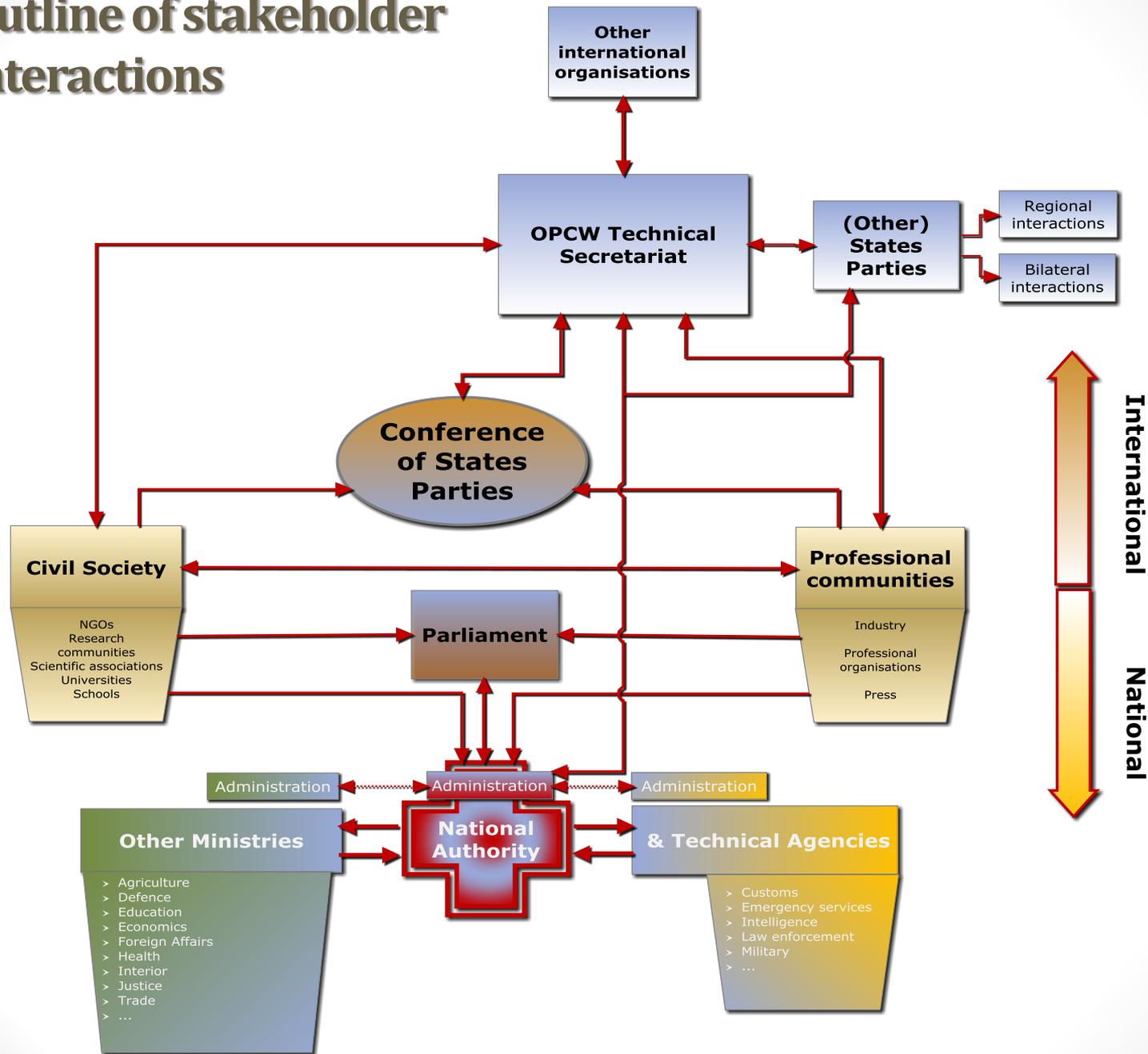
- **Identification and clarification of strategic (longer-term) goals**

- Evaluation of tasks and activities in function of changing circumstances
- Development of multi- and cross-disciplinary approaches
- Identification, elaboration and prioritisation of issue areas
- Consideration of recommendations for the 4<sup>th</sup> Review Conference (end 2018)

# Second meeting of ABEO

- **OPCW Headquarters, The Hague, 4 – 6 October 2016**
- **Principal activities**
  - Follow-up of decisions and recommendations of first meeting
    - Reporting from *coordination groups* and discussion of outputs
    - Communication of advise to Technical Secretariat (both prior to and during 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting)
  - Deepening understanding of stakeholder communities
  - Clarification of concepts
  - Expert advise on educational strategies and strategic communication
  - Decisions concerning the functioning of the ABEO
  - Recommendations to the Director-General

# Outline of stakeholder interactions



# Common understandings

- **Education as a strategy**

- Covers different goals & strategies
- Formality and goal orientation
- Builds on prior knowledge, expertise and skills
- Context and setting will determine best methodology and degree of formality

- **Outreach as a strategy**

- Supplements policies or activities by official bodies, and may rely on activities by other communities, such as civil society constituencies; and
- Seeks out potential target audiences and then reaches out to them;
- Often aims to develop and nurture constituencies to sustain an entity's goals;
- Informs or assists rather than instructs target audiences.

- **Public diplomacy as a strategy**

- 'the public, interactive dimension of diplomacy which is not only global in nature, but also involves a **multitude of actors and networks**. It is a key mechanism through which nations **foster mutual trust and productive relationships** and has become crucial to building a secure global environment.'
- 'to **capture the emerging trends in international relations** where a range of non-state actors with some standing in world politics—supranational organizations, sub-national actors, non-governmental organizations, and (in the view of some) even private companies—communicate and engage meaningfully with foreign publics and thereby **develop and promote public diplomacy policies and practices of their own**.'

# Recommendations – 1

- **CWC 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of EIF**

- Brand the celebration as '*20th Anniversary Year*'.
- Event in The Hague, but also global, regional and national celebration.
- Ensure OPCW strategic outreach to stakeholders. The 20th anniversary celebration in The Hague should include senior representatives of the sciences and industry. For other activities, invite appropriate regional or international industry and scientific organisations.
- Regional meetings be held to celebrate the science behind the effectiveness of the OPCW in meeting its mandate, perhaps back-to-back with regional National Authority events and involving key partners (academe and industry).
- Produce a film on the destruction of chemical weapons so as to preserve some filmic record of these processes for the future education of scientists and engineers.
- Early notification to enable organisational planning of regional and local events; provide funds to initiate & support organisation.
- Set up a website dedicated to the 20th Anniversary Year with information about events.
- Adopt a celebration-specific logo .
- That outreach material on the OPCW and the CWC, specific to the 20th anniversary, be created for broad distribution.

# Recommendations – 2

- **Publicise condemnations of the use of (industrial) toxic chemicals as weapons**
  - Letter campaigns of chemical associations worldwide
  - Increasingly from chemical industry associations
- **EU-funded project on Youth Outreach**
  - Framework suggested (OPCW Youth Ambassadors)
  - Competition for secondary school pupils and university students
  - Ideas need to be further refined
- **Civil society engagement**
  - Development of outreach and public diplomacy activities during the sessions of the Conference of the States Parties.
  - Goal: Promotion of interactions between and among stakeholder communities and between those communities and the Technical Secretariat and States Parties.
- **Public diplomacy strategy**
  - OPCW's public diplomacy strategy should be reviewed in line with public diplomacy goals

# Decisions – Status of observers

- **Basic status (conscious of precedence)**

- ABEO may by consensus decision invite persons with relevant expertise to attend a meeting as observers;
- Observer status exists for duration of the meeting only; and
- No formal functional relationship between the ABEO and observers exists during intersessional periods.

- **Will always be invited to attend:**

- A representative of IUPAC
- A representative of the International Council of Chemical Association (ICCA) [New]

- **Practical organisation of ABEO work during intersessional periods**

- Any former observer to join intersessional discussions implementing decisions of the ABEO;
- Participation in intersessional discussions by a former observer will always be voluntary; and
- Participation in intersessional discussions by a former observer does not create any obligation on the part of ABEO, including concerning participation in subsequent ABEO meetings.

# Decisions – New coordination groups

- **Assisting National Authorities to carry out education and outreach**
  - Follow up from requests by the Technical Secretariat and States Parties after 2016 regional meetings
  - Seeking means to enhance coordination among NAs, encouraging use of existing educational materials, and stimulating ideas for developing new ones, etc.
- **Overarching theme**
  - Conceptual development of '*Prevention of re-emergence of chemical weapons*'
- **Engagement of specific stakeholder communities**
  - Particularly scientific associations, industry, professional organisations and other expert communities
  - Themes:
    - Raising barriers against erosion of norm against CW and CWC
    - Keeping them informed and engaged in CWC-mandated activities
    - Engaging them in the further development of the CWC regime in light of the changing national or international environments in which the CWC must remain relevant
- **Immediate challenges to the CWC regime**
  - Declarations of new stockpiles,
  - Allegations of CW use or proliferation,
  - International community's struggle to respond effectively to such charges,
  - Etc.
- **Engagement with other international organisations**
  - Association with broader fields of peace and disarmament education (e.g., UN programmes)
  - Link up where useful with BTWC ISU, CTBTO, IAEA, etc.
- **Continuation of coordination groups on 'Longer-term strategies', 'Outreach at the regional, national and local level' and 'Youth outreach'**

# Thank you

