

# **The BTWC 8th Review Conference**

*Political dynamics and opportunities for African states*

**Dr Jean Pascal Zanders**

*Assistance and capacity-building in the context of UN Security Council Resolution 1540, Disarmament and Non-Proliferation*

Seminar organised by the African Union and the Institute for Security Studies (Pretoria)  
Addis Ababa, 9 December 2016

# BTWC 8th RevCon: Major disappointment

- **Final document agreed**
  - No work programme for the next Intersessional Period (ISP)
  - Meetings of Experts (MX) deleted
- **Agreement in principle on annual Meetings of States Parties (MSP), but no substance**
  - To be determined in December 2017 (hopefully)
  - However, MSP has no decision-making authority ...

# Primary causes

- **Iran refused all compromises**

- Sought to return to legally binding measures using the 1996 negotiation mandate for the Ad Hoc Group (AHG)
- Believed that States Parties were getting too comfortable with ISP process, as evidenced by
  - Proposals to create open-ended working groups
  - Creeping institutionalisation of the (temporary) Implementation Support Unit in function of new tasks and responsibilities (instead of a formal international organisation)
- Insistence on full implementation of Article X
  - As a method of overcoming unilateral sanctions against it
  - Therefore wholesale rejection of current and proposed initiatives under Article X

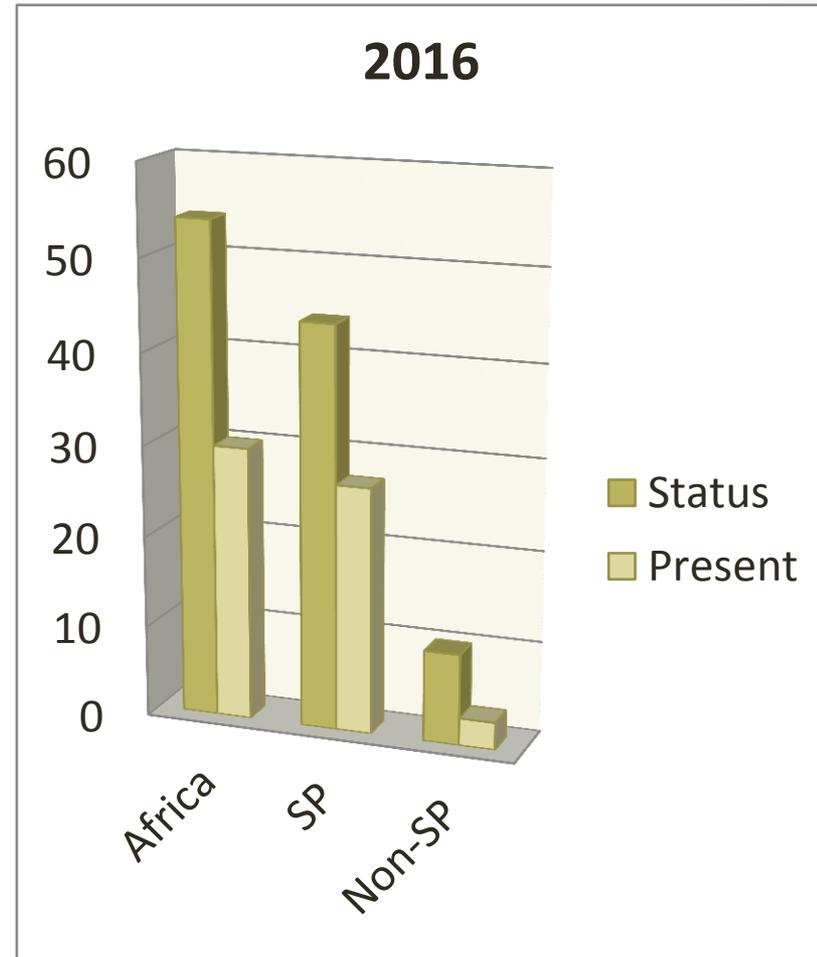
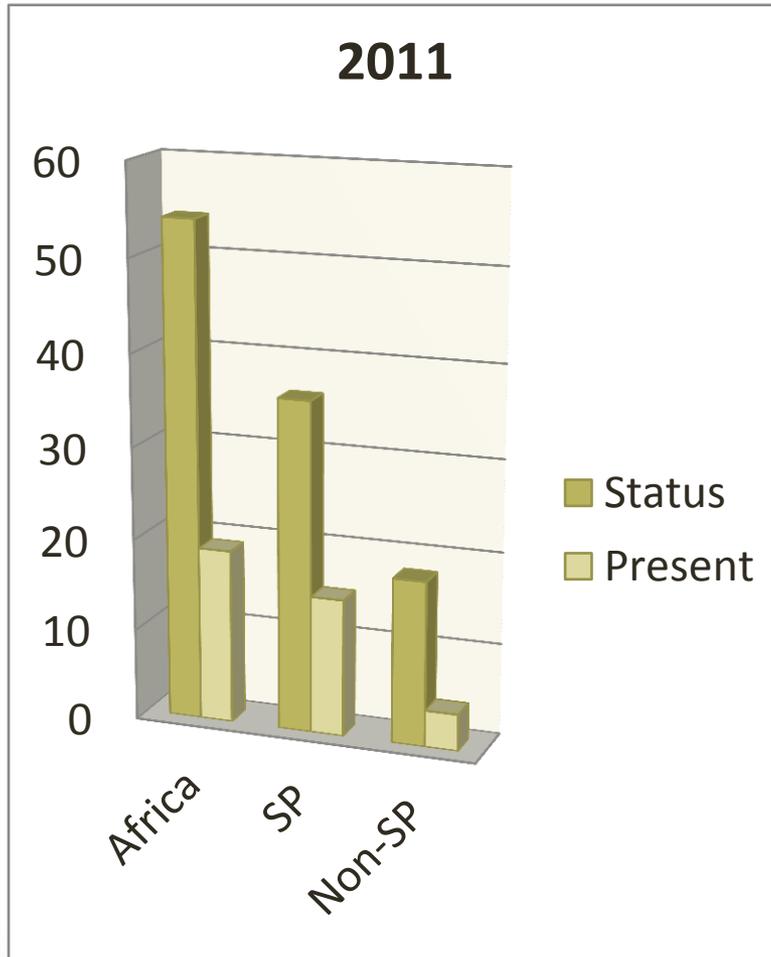
- **Tensions between Russia and the West**

- Even though compromises were possible (and probably agreed)

- **All taken by surprise**

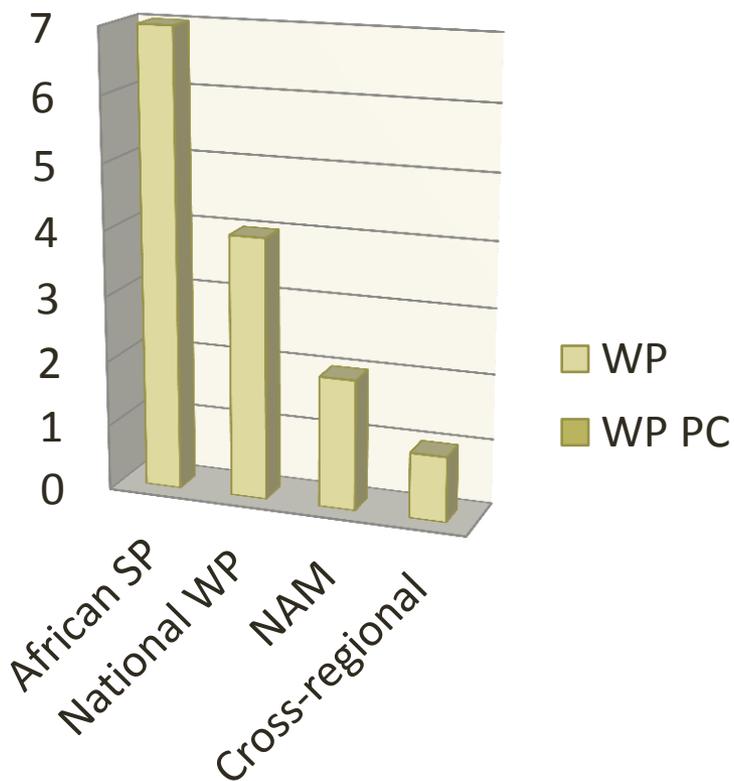
- Nobody expected Iran to refuse all compromises in end stage
- In final compromise efforts for work programme, everybody insisted on reinserting own pet projects

# African RevCon participation

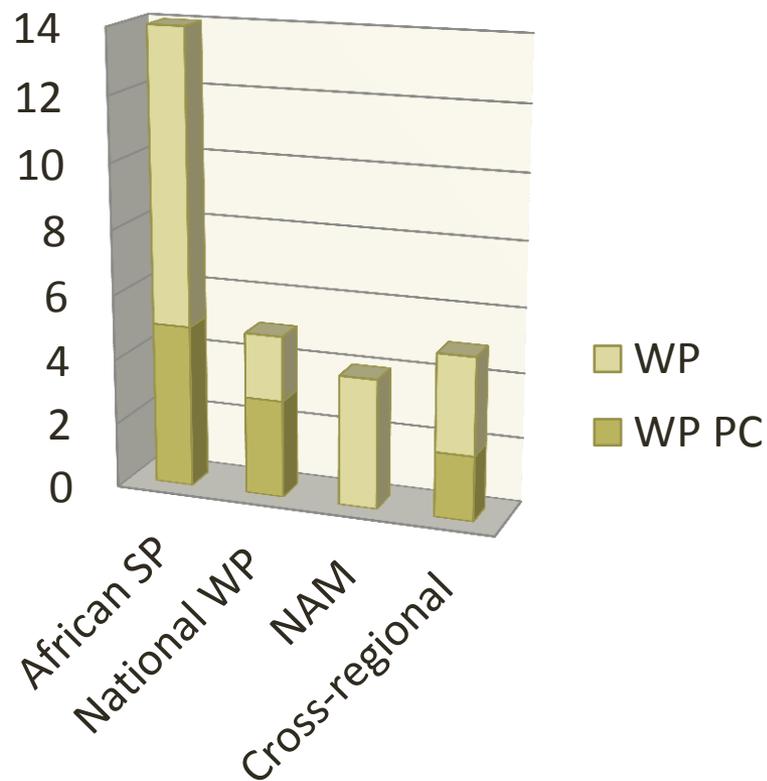


# African Working Papers

2011 – 0 PC + 29 WP



2016 – 39 PC + 44 WP



# A time for opportunities ... ?

- **Everything is open now**
  - Future structure of meetings
  - Topics
- **The period gives Africa time to articulate its specific interests**
  - Time for familiarisation in detail with the BTWC
  - Time for national and (sub)-regional capacity building
  - Time to catch-up with implementation requirements and standards
- **Opportunities for coordination**
  - Regional efforts at enhancing BTWC implementation
  - Setting up and participation in (sub-)regional exercises in building confidence in compliance
  - Stimulation of participation in cross-regional initiatives and exercises
  - Enhance communication skills between capitals and delegations in Geneva
  - Development of processes to prepare and submit position and working papers
    - National
    - Regional
    - Cross-regional
  - Have African countries speak out on their interests at BTWC meetings
  - Create an African Union caucus in Geneva to update and coordinate positions at meetings
  - Train African delegates to participate in end-game negotiations



# THE TRENCH

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[www.the-trench.org](http://www.the-trench.org)

*E-mail*

[jpzanders@the-trench.org](mailto:jpzanders@the-trench.org)

