



Press Statement
Adam Ereli, Deputy Spokesman
Washington, DC
March 28, 2005

Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention Depositories Joint Statement on 30th Anniversary

(This statement has been reposted for technical reasons)

Following is the text of a joint United States/United Kingdom/Russian Federation statement in support of the 30th anniversary, on March 26, of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention.

BEGIN TEXT:

The Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BWC) came into force 30 years ago today on 26 March 1975. The Convention was the first to ban an entire class of weapons of mass destruction and is one of the first and crucial components in the non-proliferation toolbox. It remains as relevant today as it was when it was first drafted, although the threats we face have evolved. The international response to those new threats builds on the strong foundation of the existing multilateral disarmament framework of which the BWC is a part.

Therefore, as the Depository Governments of Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention we reaffirm our support for the Convention. We seek practical realization of all BWC obligations. Our Governments will continue to work to strengthen it by participating fully in the current three-year work program, by encouraging its universality, and by pressing for full implementation of, and compliance with, the Convention by all its States Parties. In particular, we stress the necessity of adoption by all States Parties of relevant penal legislation for violations of the BWC. The Sixth BWC Review Conference in 2006 will give all States Parties an opportunity to review steps taken to meet the BW threat since the last Review Conference and to renew their commitment to the Convention, their compliance and its full implementation and to strengthen further the Convention.

We call on all States not Party to the BWC to join promptly and thereby strengthen the global effort to counter proliferation.

END TEXT

2005/358

Released on March 28, 2005

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