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Swedish Presidency
of the European Union

To the Permanent Representatives in
Geneva of the States Parties, Signatories
to the Convention on the Prohibition
of the Development, Production and
Stockpiling of Bacteriological
(Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on
their Destruction, and Observer
Delegations.

Excellency,

Under a strategy adopted by the European Council (Heads of State and Government), the European Union is committed to the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and to effective multilateralism. As part of this strategy, the EU Council has adopted a Joint Action in support of the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC). The start of the implementation of the Joint Action was marked at the launching event at the BWC Meeting of Experts in August 2009.

One of the projects of the Joint Action is to support participation in the Confidence-building Measures (CBMs) of the BWC, including through the development and publication of a practical guide to participating in the CBMs. This guide is now complete, and on behalf of the EU I have the honour to invite you, your collaborators and BWC experts from capital, to the

**Official Launch of the Guide to Participating in the Confidence-building
Measures of the Biological Weapons Convention**

Tuesday 8 December 2009, 13:00-15:00 (sandwich lunch included)

Room XXIII, Palais des Nations
(1st floor, Building E, Door 40)

The guide has been prepared by the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs in consultation with national experts from EU Member States. The aim of the guide is to provide practical advice and guidance to officials responsible for preparing the annual CBM submissions. The guide includes background information on the CBM process, general advice for preparing to participate in the CBMs, and detailed guidance on gathering the specific information required for each CBM form. The guide will be made available free to States Parties, and will be published in each of the six official languages of the United Nations (Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish).

The European Union Joint Action in support of the Biological Weapons Convention was adopted on 10 November 2008, and is being implemented by the Geneva Branch of the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs over the period May 2009 to April 2011. The overall objectives of the Joint Action are to support the universalisation of the BWC, to enhance its implementation, including through the submission of confidence-building measures (CBMs), and to support the best use of the 2007 - 2010 intersessional process in the lead up to the next review conference of the Convention.

I hope you and your colleagues will be able to join us for the launch of this guide. With your support and collaboration, we believe the guide will help to raise the level of participation in the CBMs, and thus contribute to increasing transparency, supporting the effective implementation of the Convention, and reducing the risks posed to global security by biological weapons and bioterrorism.

For logistical purposes, I would be grateful if you would confirm your attendance via e-mail to the BWC Implementation Support Unit at **bwc@unog.ch** by 4 December.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.



Magnus Hellgren
Ambassador

encl: Programme for the Launch of the Guide to Participating in the Confidence-building Measures of the Biological Weapons Convention

**Launch of the Guide to Participating in the Confidence-building
Measures of the Biological Weapons Convention**

13:00-15:00, Tuesday 8 December 2009
Room XXIII, Palais des Nations, Geneva

PROGRAMME

- 13:00 Sandwich lunch served outside room
- 13:30 Introduction and welcome
*H.E. Mr. Magnus Hellgren, Ambassador of Sweden for Disarmament,
representing the Presidency of the European Union*
- Why a guide to participating in the CBMs?
*Dr. Andreas Strub, Coordinator of the Office of the Personal Representative
on non-proliferation of WMD, General Secretariat of the Council of the
European Union*
- The importance of the CBMs in strengthening the BWC
*H.E. Mr. Marius Grinius, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of
Canada, Chairman of the 2009 meetings of the BWC*
- A brief tour of the guide
*Mr. Richard Lennane, Head, BWC Implementation Support Unit, United
Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs*
- 13:45 Questions and discussion (including with EU national experts who
participated in developing the guide)
- 15:00 Close
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