

## **ISU briefing on CBMs**

### **Agenda item 5**

**3 September 2021**

#### **Talking Points for Daniel Feakes, Chief BWC ISU**

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Distinguished delegates,

#### ***[Aims and objective of CBMs]***

- The Second Review Conference in 1986 agreed that States Parties are to implement a system of Confidence-Building Measures (CBMs). The purpose of the CBMs is to prevent or reduce the occurrence of ambiguities, doubts and suspicions, and to improve international cooperation in the field of peaceful biological activities.
- The Conference did not go further than outlining what information should be exchanged ('CBM Measures A-D'), but decided "to hold an ad hoc meeting of scientific and technical experts from States Parties to finalise the modalities for the exchange of information and data by working out, inter alia, appropriate forms to be used by States Parties for the exchange of information agreed to in this Final Declaration, thus enabling States Parties to follow a standardised procedure". This group met in Geneva from 31 March to 15 April 1987 and agreed on guidelines for what each measure covered and on the type of information to be provided for each.

#### ***[CBM Reports -basic facts]***

- As you know, CBM reports cover the activities of previous calendar year
- The CBM reports comprise of a summary form (form 0) and a main body with six CBM Measures A-G
- CBM reports are to be submitted by 15 April each year
- States Parties may wish to make their reports accessible on a restricted basis to other States Parties or, alternatively make them freely available.
- States Parties have different submission options: they can submit via e-mail to the BWC ISU, provide a hardcopy or make an online submission via the electronic CBM Platform

#### ***[ISU Mandate]***

- In line with the mandate provided by States Parties, the ISU carries out the following specific activities in relation to CBMs:
  - Maintains a secure website and makes all CBM reports available to States Parties, which is done through the electronic CBM platform
  - Circulates to national points of contact an annual reminder three months prior to the deadline (i.e. on 15 January every year)

- Regularly informs States Parties about CBM returns and provides statistics on the level of participation at the annual meetings of States Parties (reflected in the Annual Report of the ISU)
- Facilitates activities to promote participation in the CBM process, as agreed by the States Parties

### ***[CBM Submissions 1987-2020]***

- Overall one can note a positive trend over the last years and more States Parties provide the ISU with CBM reports;
- While a record number of 85 States Parties (46%) submitted CBMs in 2020, the overall level of participation nevertheless remains low with less than half of all States Parties having regularly exchanged CBMs. The majority of those States Parties which participate do so on a regular basis.

### ***[CBM submissions in 2020]***

- A total of 85 States Parties (46.4 per cent) submitted a CBM in 2020 covering the calendar year 2019;
- Almost two thirds of States Parties made their CBM reports accessible only to other States Parties, and 37% of the reports submitted in 2020 are freely available
- 70% of all submitting States Parties in 2020 prepared the report in English, followed by 11% in Spanish, 8% in French and Russian, 2% in Arabic and 1% Chinese;
- Of these, 39 submitted their CBM on or before the deadline of 15 April 2020;
- A total of 7 States Parties which submitted a CBM in 2019 did not do so in 2020;
- A total of 10 other States Parties which did not submit a CBM in 2019 did so in 2020;
- One State Party submitted a CBM for the first time in 2020 (Maldives); and
- A total of 55 States Parties had never submitted a CBM as of 31/12/2020.

### ***[Preliminary Trends for 2021]***

- Overall, there are positive indications concerning the 2021 submissions:
  - As of the end of August, 85 States Parties have submitted CBM reports; this is 13 more submissions than at the same time last year and equals the record number submitted in 2020;
  - I'd also like to note that so far three States Parties submitted CBM reports for the first time in 2021 (Afghanistan, Guatemala, Mozambique)
- Furthermore, the number of Parties that have made their CBM submissions online via the eCBM platform has increased considerable in 2021. A total of 20 States Parties (i.e. 24% of all submissions received so far) have done so directly through the eCBM platform;
- Since the ISU has requested States Parties for ICT security purposes during the last year to nominate individual experts for registration to the eCBM platform, we have provided accounts to more than 440 experts from 83 States Parties. The eCBM facility has had around 4,500 page views over the last three months.

- **Heightened interest by States Parties in CBM training and/or support:**
  - Already provided virtual CBM training upon request to seven States Parties
  - Additional virtual training planned for another four States Parties
  - Gratitude to States Parties having provided experts for CBM trainings in 2020 and 2021 (Japan, Kenya, Malaysia, South Africa, Switzerland)