

*Working together to strengthen the norms
against chemical and biological weapons.*



Welcome to the CBW Challenges Radar!

The "CBW Challenges Radar" is the official newsletter of [CBWNet](#), a research project which aims to identify options to *comprehensively strengthen the norms against chemical and biological weapons* (CBW). It is carried out jointly by four leading German research institutions:

- the Berlin office of [the Institute for Peace Research and Security Policy at the University of Hamburg \(IFSH\)](#),
- the [Chair for Public Law and International Law at the University of Gießen](#),
- the [Peace Research Institute Frankfurt \(PRIF\)](#) and
- the [Carl Friedrich Weizsäcker-Centre for Science and Peace Research \(ZNF\) at the University of Hamburg](#).

The project is funded by the [German Federal Ministry for Education and Research](#). The norms against chemical and biological weapons have increasingly been challenged in recent years. The project scrutinizes the forms and consequences of norm contestations within the CBW prohibition regimes from an interdisciplinary perspective. This includes a comprehensive analysis of the normative order of the regimes as well as an investigation of the possible consequences which technological developments, international security dynamics or terrorist threats might yield for the CBW prohibition regimes. Wherever research results point to challenges for or a weakening of CBW norms, the project partners will develop options and proposals to uphold or strengthen these norms and to enhance their resilience. Meet our team [here](#) and read our research agenda [here](#).

In our newsletter CBW Challenges Radar, we aim to keep you up to date on recent project activities, provide analysis of current challenges in the field and point you to relevant publications and opportunities. It comes out every 3-4 months. Spread the word and [sign up!](#)

Analysis: Allegations of Chemical Weapons Use in the Ukraine War

In the course of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, Russia has repeatedly accused Ukraine of planning to stage incidents using chemical weapons as "false flag" operations. The responsibility of such an operation would thereafter be assigned to Russia according to a Russian narrative that portrays a conspiracy by Western and other states against Russia.

Kiev consistently and persistently rejected all these Russian accusations. At the same time, it accused Moscow of preparing the ground for its own use of chemical weapons by disseminating these false allegations. Verifiable evidence for the respective claims has yet to be made available in public.

In the latest CBW analysis, we detail these accusations, provide historical context of Russian allegations of CW activities and explain the reaction of the international community. We argue that an adequate reaction by the international community would be important, and offer some perspective on possible action.

[Click here to read our latest publication](#)

CBWNet Launch in April 2022

[Learn More](#)

What's new at CBWNet

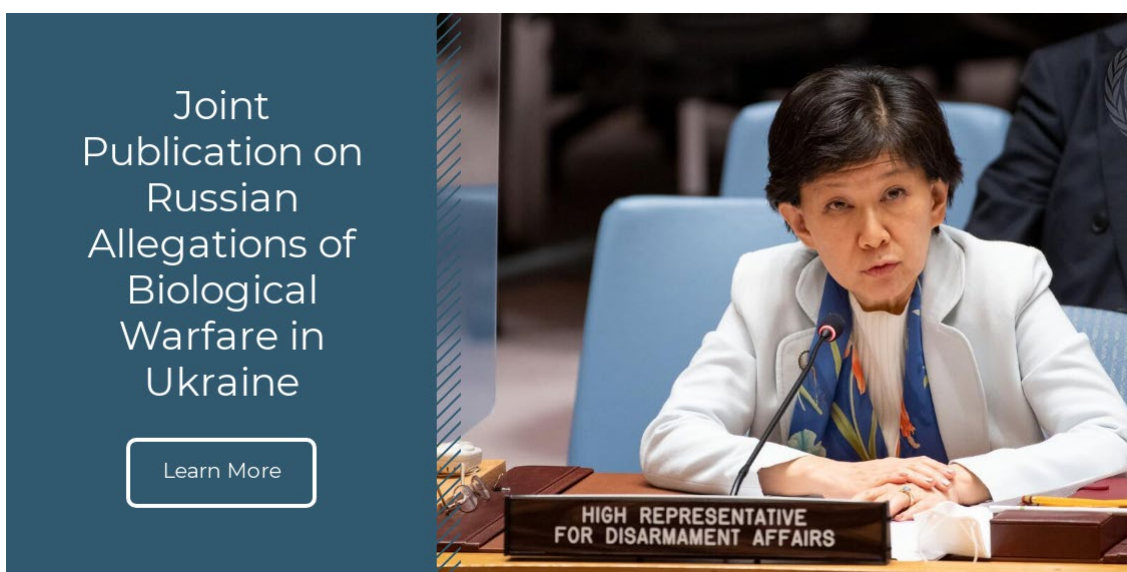
On the occasion of our launch in April 2022, we organized a high-level launch event, welcoming among others OPCW Director-General Fernando Arias and

German State Minister Susanne Baumann. The presentations discussed the achievements and future challenges of the CWC and have been published in the first [CBWNet Working Paper](#).

On May 20, 2022 project member Una Jakob participated in the Commemorative Seminar of the OPCW on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the CWC in The Hague. She spoke on the panel on chemical disarmament and the future of the OPCW. You can find the to OPCW video of the event [here](#).

Una Jakob also gave a presentation at the First Preparatory Workshop for the 9th BWC Review Conference organised by the UN Office for Disarmament Affairs and held in Vienna on July 5-6, 2022. The topic of her presentation was 'MX 5: Institutional Strengthening of the Convention.'

The CBWNet team also published a joint commentary on allegations of biological warfare in the Ukraine war.



Publications of interest

- The [Bioweapons Disinformation Monitor](#) has been launched, a project which provides resources to identify and combat the spread of deliberate falsehoods

- The UN Institute for Disarmament Research has outlined a way back towards BWC verification in a recent report entitled: [Back to the Future for Verification in the Biological Disarmament Regime?](#)
- The winners of the NTI "Next Generation for Biosecurity" Contest present in [Creating a Verification Protocol for the BWC: A Modular-Incremental Approach](#) their approach to verify the compliance with the BWC
- Yong-Bee Lim writes on the prospects of this year's BWC Review Conference for the Bulletin of Atomic Scientists: [As bioweapons negotiators prepare meet amid pandemic and torrents of disinformation, can they accomplish anything?](#)
- Gary A. Ackerman, Zachary Kallenborn and Philipp C. Bleek argue in the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists that [Covid probably hasn't helped bioterrorists, despite fears](#)
- A new [Data Brief from the Center for Security and Emerging Technology](#) map Biosafety Level-3 laboratories (BSL-3)
- In the "[Lawfare](#)" podcast, Sean Ekins and Filippa Lentzos discuss their recent discovery of potentially dangerous dual-use biotechnology
- Project member Alexander Kelle published a UNIDIR report: [Adding Novichok Agents to the CWC Annex on Chemicals: a Technical Fix and its Implications for the Chemical Weapons Prohibition Regime](#)
- The "Chemical Weapons Coalition" is collecting [Civil Society Recommendations for the 2023 CWC RevCon](#)
- Tuan H. Nguyen describes in [Countering the future chemical weapons threat](#) how the Chemical Weapons Convention can keep pace with recent developments in the fields and continue to strengthen the norm against chemical weapons.
- John Caves and Seth Arus published a report on [Controlling Chemical Weapons in the New International Order](#) at the Center for the Study of Weapons of Mass Destruction, National Defense University
- Project member Una Jakob, together with Filippa Lentzos contributed a chapter on chemical, biological and health security threat to the SIPRI

Yearbook 2022. Read the summary of the chapter here: [Chemical, biological and health security threats](#)

- A new piece by Jean Pascal Zanders on the role of chemical and biological weapons in regional disarmament has been published in the Journal for Peace and Nuclear Disarmament: [Chemical and Biological Weapons in Regional Disarmament in the Middle East and North Africa](#)

Coming up!

Events:

- [Training programme on disarmament and non-proliferation of WMD 2022](#), T.M.C. Asser Institute (The Hague), September 19-23
- [Biological Weapons Convention Review Conference](#), November 28 - December 16, 2022
- [Chemical Weapons Convention Conference of the State Parties](#), November 28 - December 2, 2022

News:

- [Germany prioritizes biological security](#) during its one-year presidency of the **Global Partnership Against the Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction**
- [Russia moved to trigger Article V of the Biological Weapons Convention](#) over the accusations of bioweapon-related activities by Ukraine, which a [Formal Consultative Meeting](#) between state parties on the allegations starting August 26
- [Russia has accused Ukraine to have poisoned soldiers with botulinum toxin type B](#); Kiev answered that such poisoning might follow the **consumption of expired canned meat**; Russia's defence ministry said its findings will be given to the OPCW
- A **German company** illegally exported a **toxic chemical** which might be used in the **production of the nerve agent Novichok**, as [reported by German news outlets](#) on August 30



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