

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



CBW Challenges Radar no. 5

Working Paper: Great Powers and the Norms of the BW Prohibition Regime

The United States of America and the Soviet Union were instrumental in creating the biological weapons prohibition regime more than 50 years ago. This has left the regime with a big gap in its normative structure related to the verification of treaty compliance. The working paper by Alexander Kelle and Eva Siegmann analyses great power involvement in several areas of regime implementation and concludes that none of the great powers, including China, has supported the addition of declaration and inspection norms. While recent US and Chinese initiatives could still lead to a strengthening of the regime in different areas, Russian policies, most notably false accusations against the US and others, threaten to undermine the regime.

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

Working Paper: National Implementation of International Norms against Biological Weapons

National implementation of the norms against biological weapons is necessary to ensure effective protections. One important aspect of this is the criminalization of violations of the prohibition. This working paper looks at the current state of criminalization on the basis of a comprehensive collection and analysis of national legislation. It finds that there are still significant gaps in many national legal systems which should be addressed or provisions that ought to be

modernized. In order to best facilitate this it is important that further efforts should be made to assist in national implementation.

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

Working Paper: Great Powers and the Norms of the CW Prohibition Regime

Great powers play an important role in the establishment of international institutions, such as the chemical weapons prohibition regime. However, once international regimes exist, they display path dependent behavior over longer periods. This raises the question of great power impact on the norms of an international regime once it has been established. This working paper by Alexander Kelle first presents the norms of the CW prohibition regime and subsequently analyses the policies of the United States, Russia and China in relation to several regime norms. It concludes that the key norms of the CW prohibition regime and their implementation over the past 26 years have largely conformed to the expectations of path dependency.

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

What's new at CBWNet

We recently welcomed [experienced industry expert Dr. Detlef Männig](#) to the CBWNet Transfer Network. Dr. Männig is an industrial chemist with over 35 years of experience and has been actively involved in industry-related issues of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC) for many years, serving on national and international working groups, as well as advisory boards for the OPCW.

On 23 and 24 October 2023, the CBWNet team at the Chair of Public Law and International Law at the Justus-Liebig-University Giessen hosted an [interdisciplinary conference](#) on the interconnectivity of norms against biological and chemical weapons. Along the topical areas of “multinormativity”

and “multi-level functionality of regimes,” the conference welcomed experts from the fields of law and political science, as well as practitioners.

CBWNet Activities

CBWNet hosted conference on norms against chemical and biological weapons in Giessen

[Learn More](#)



CBWNet coordinator Alexander Kelle, CBWNet consultant Ralf Trapp and transfer network member Ahmet Üzümcü contributed to the conference "[30 Years of CWC: Histories, Achievements, Challenges](#)", at the Max-Planck-Society in Berlin, 5-6 October. The conference was organized by The Fritz-Haber-Institut of the Max-Planck-Society, together with the University of Hamburg and the Chemical Weapons Convention Coalition.

News

- The United States completed the [destruction of its declared chemical weapons stockpile](#), meaning that all declared chemical weapon stockpiles have been irreversibly destroyed as of July 7
 - The White House issued an [executive order on the "safe, secure, and trustworthy development and use of artificial intelligence"](#) on October 30, in which the potential risks to biosecurity posed by AI are acknowledged
 - The OPCW adopted [measures to ensure compliance with the ban of chemical weapons](#) in Syria and elsewhere on November 30, at the 28th session of the Conference of States Parties in the Hague
 - The US Department of Defense celebrated the [30th anniversary of its chemical and biology defense program](#) on November 30
-

Publications of interest

Publications by CBWNet team members

- Almntaser Albalawi and Kristoffer Burck published [The Pursuit of Consensus](#). *The Fifth Chemical Weapons Convention Review Conference, PRIF Spotlight 8/2023, Frankfurt/M, DOI: 10.48809/prifspot0823*
- Anna Krin and her co-authors apply foresight methods to analyze the misuse potential of advances in synthetic biology, genome editing, and other emerging and enabling technologies for the weaponization of the anthrax-causing biological agent *B. anthracis* in [this article](#) for *Frontiers in Bioengineering and Biotechnology*.
- Una Jakob co-authored with Filippa Lentzos, King's College London, the chapter on chemical, biological & health security threats in the [2023 SIPRI Yearbook](#)
- Alexander Kelle was interviewed for the [51st issue of the EUNDPC e-newsletter](#), while Gunnar Jeremias talked about the impact of biotechnology advances on arms control in the [prior 50th issue](#)
- Kristoffer Burck published [The French Arrest Warrant for Assad – Breaking New Ground in the Prosecution of Chemical Weapons Use?](#) on the PRIF blog, 29 November 2023

Risk from AI

- [This report](#) on the convergence of AI and the Life Sciences, launched by NTI |Bio, offers recommendations on how to safeguard AI-bio capabilities
- The Bulletin of Atomic Scientists reports on how AI could [help terrorists develop biological and chemical weapons](#)
- The Center for Long-Term Resilience published [this report](#) on the intersection of AI and bio

Miscellaneous

- UNIDIR published a report on verification called [Verifying the BWC: A Primer](#), written by James Revill
- Jean Pascal Zanders talks about [The Biological Weapons Taboo](#) on War on the Rocks

- Richard Guthrie is [reporting from the BWC working group and state party meetings](#) in Geneva
- To commemorate the completion of the destruction of the world's declared stockpiles of chemical weapons, the Council on Strategic Risks published [this trilogy of articles](#) on the history of their elimination, co-authored by CBWNet transfer network member Ahmet Üzümcü
- OPCW Science Policy Adviser Peter J. Hotchkiss talks about [new challenges](#) of information sharing on new nerve agents following the elimination of declared chemical weapons stockpiles

Multimedia

- The Johns Hopkins Center for Health Security's podcast "The BWC Global Forum" has released a [new episode on the Strengthening of the Convention](#)
- German Health Minister Karl Lauterbach talks about biorisks from AI in [this documentary](#) from the German public-service television broadcaster ZDF (in German)

Coming up!

- Already ongoing: Biological Weapons Convention, [Meeting of States Parties](#), Geneva, 11-13 December, 2023
- EC-105 – One Hundred and Fifth Session of the Executive Council, The Hague, 5–8 March 2024



SPONSORED BY THE



Federal Ministry
of Education
and Research

Organized by



*Copyright © 2022 Institut für Sicherheitspolitik und Friedensforschung an der
Universität Hamburg, Reinhardtstrasse 7, 10117 Berlin.
All rights reserved.*

Want to change how you receive these emails?

You can [update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe from this list](#).

