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MPs Discuss Treaty on Biological, Toxin Weapons Today

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he Parliamentarians for Global Action (PGA) is expected to organize a high profile African Regional workshop today, Monday 27th March 2017 at Parliament in Freetown. The 2 day event will promote the ratification and implementation against the development of biological as well as toxic weapons in Africa and the world at large. The workshop is hosted by the Sierra Leone House of Parliament under the purview of the Government of Sierra Leone, At least 17 international delegates are expected from Kenya, Liberia, Guinea Bissau, Congo, Somalia, Tanzania and other countries aboard. The workshop is supported by the Government of Canada's **Global Partnership Program** (GPP), under the auspices of PGA'S Global Campaign to

promote universality and national implementation of BWC.

The purpose of this Regional event is to raise awareness and understanding of the importance of becoming a State Party to the vital

convention as well as taking all necessary steps to ensure its robust implementation. The first multilateral disbarment treaty banning the development, production and stockpiling of all category of weapons of mass destruction, which doubles as **Biological Weapons** Convention (BWC) was first opened for signature on 10th April 1972. The treaty later entered into force on 26th March 1975 and 178 countries have joined the WBC to date.

Sierra Leone is among the first countries that became a state party to the convention in 1976. The country has been very instrumental in galvanizing supports against biological and toxin weapons. Sequel to the growing concern, in recent years, regarding the efforts by Non State Actors including terrorist organizations to manufacture and use biological weapons, a renewed international effort to improve the universality

and national implementation of BWC is underway. In recognition of the resurgent importance steps of BWC, countries including Angola, Cote d'Ivoire, Guinea and Liberia, became States Parties in just 12 months. Participants are expected to adopt a plan of action that will identify potential areas for follow-up actions to promote ratification and implementation of BWC at the conclusion of the workshop.