

# PROGRESS ON THE RATIFICATION OF THE BIOLOGICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION (BWC) IN TANZANIA



## PREVENTION AND CONTROL OF BIOLOGICAL THREATS

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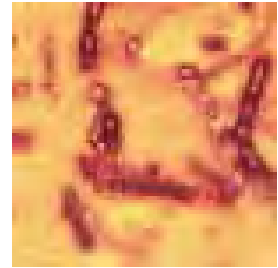
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# OUTLINE

- **Background**
- **Efforts to address BWC ratification delay**
- **Why delayed ratification?**
- **Next steps towards BWC ratification**
- **Conclusion**

# 1.0 Background: What are biological weapons?

- Complex systems that disseminate disease-causing organisms or toxins to harm or kill humans, animals or plants
- Generally consist of two parts – a weaponized agent and a delivery mechanism
- Almost any disease-causing organism (bacteria, viruses etc) or toxin (poisons derived from animals, plants or microorganisms) can be used
- The agents can be enhanced to make them more suitable for mass production, storage and dissemination



## BIOLOGICAL HAZARDS IN AFRICA

- 59 Biological agents are Human and Animal Pathogens and Toxins: are also found in Africa (23 virus, 21 bacteria, 15 toxins)
- Some of them can be zoonotic agents or have the capability to infect only animals.
- Some of them are toxic to human and animals.
- 11 Biological agents are Plant Pathogens can be found in Africa.
- The bioterrorism is not limited to human only. The impact of agro-terrorism could be devastating for African agriculture/herds.
- The security of pathogens must be a higher priority for the African authorities.

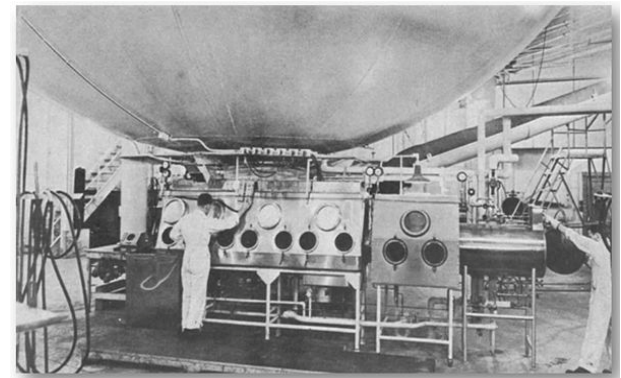


# Utilities of biological weapons

- In addition to strategic or tactical military applications, biological weapons can be used for:
  - political assassinations
  - the infection of livestock or agricultural produce to cause food shortages and economic loss
  - the creation of environmental catastrophes
  - the introduction of widespread illness, fear and mistrust among the public
  - terrorism

# Historical examples

- Historical examples include efforts to produce:
  - aflatoxin; anthrax; botulinum toxin; foot-and-mouth disease; glanders; plague; Q fever; rice blast; ricin; Rocky Mountain spotted fever; smallpox; tularaemia etc
- Past programmes have constructed missiles, bombs, hand grenades and rockets to deliver biological weapons
- A number of programmes also designed spray tanks to be fitted to aircraft, cars, trucks and boats



# The Bio-Agent Threat



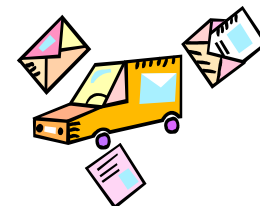
- Causes disease and death by inhalation, ingestion, or skin contact
- ***Some are Contagious!*** (transferred from person-to-person by contact)
- Many multiply in the body
- Symptoms may be delayed
- Some agents have **NO** vaccine
- Some survive dormant in the environment for weeks to years



# Bio-Agent Delivery



**Attacks can be overt or covert –  
method of delivery is important!**



**Overt** -- *Provides notice, creates panic...*

- aircraft, bombs, missiles

**Covert** -- *NO notice; spread may be unchecked for days!*

- Spray fine mist (e.g., into HVAC)
- Spread on food, water, surfaces (e.g., mail, vehicles)
- Contagious people and animals



# Bio-Agent Detection



***Bio-Agents are identified through symptoms or through time-consuming tests, because they cannot be:***

– Seen



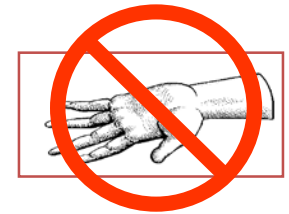
– Heard



– Smelled



– Felt



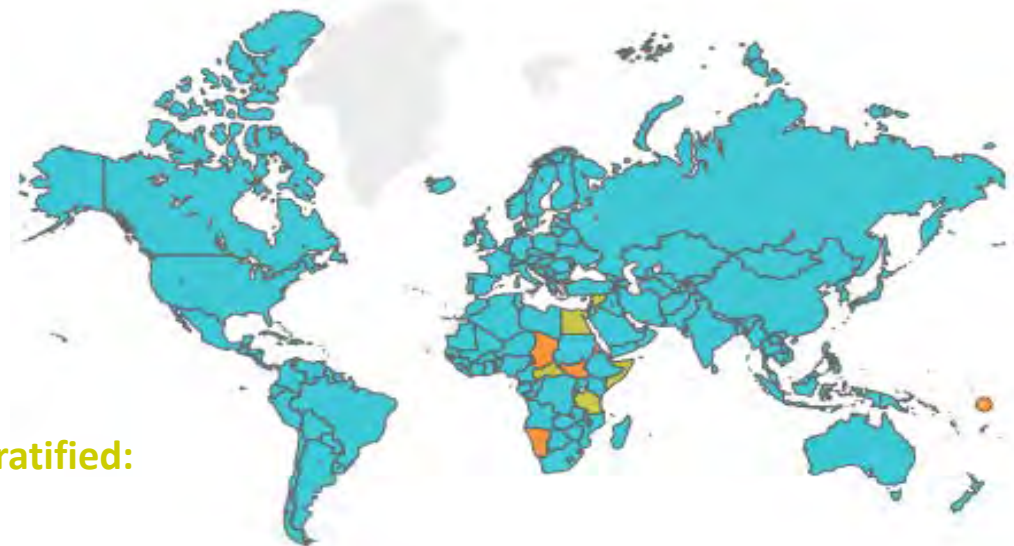
– Detected quickly by instruments



# Biological Weapons Convention

Prohibits the **development, production, stockpiling, acquisition, retention or transfer of biological weapons**

- Opened for signature on 10 April 1972
- Comprehensive scope
- Non-discriminatory in nature
- Unlimited duration
- Open to any state



**Six states signed BWC but not yet ratified:**

1. **Central African Republic**
2. **Egypt**
3. **Haiti**
4. **Somalia**
5. **Syria**
6. **Tanzania**

**181 States Parties**

**6 Signatories**

**11 States not party**

# BWC & SDG 3 – Good health and well-being

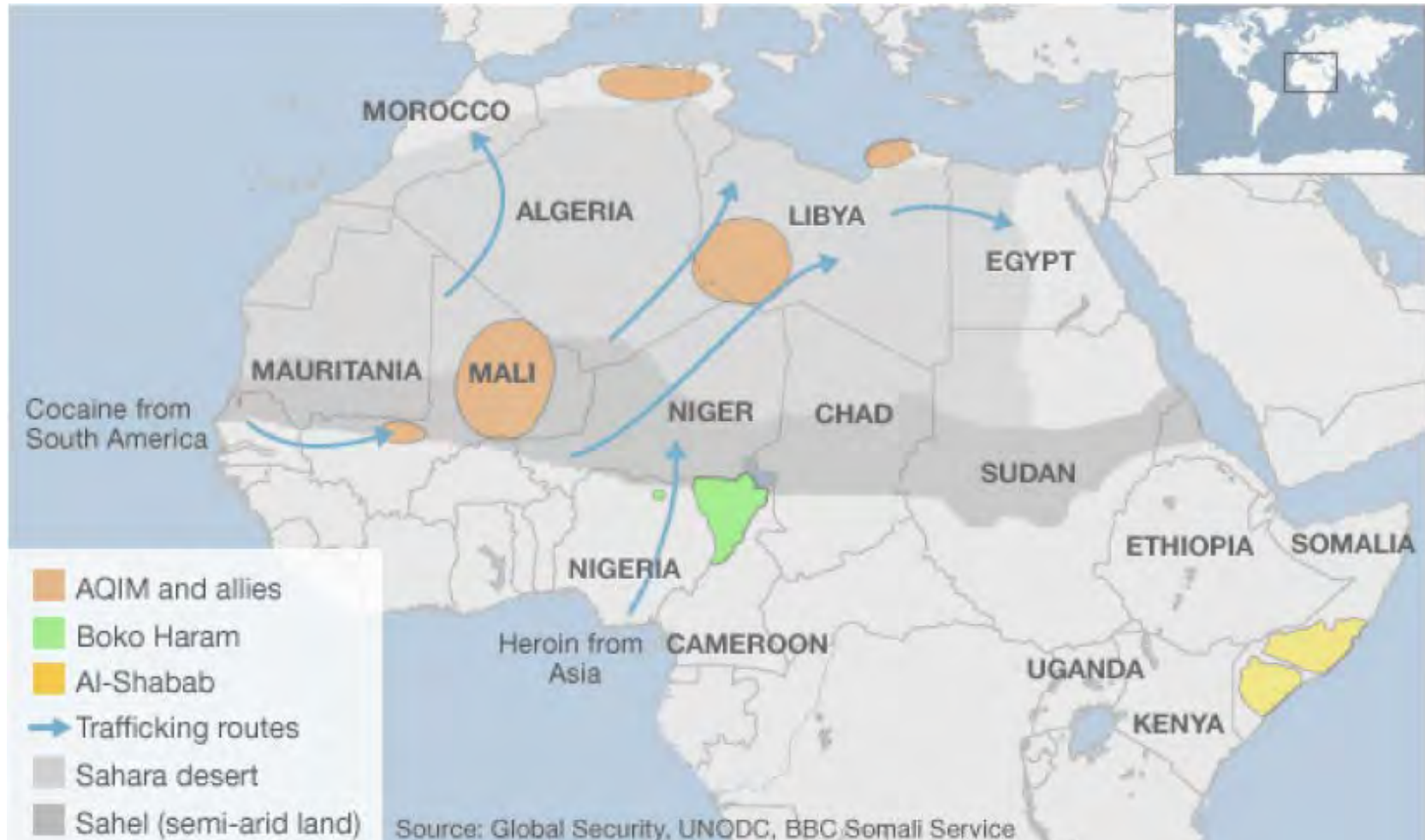


- Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages
- **Target 3D - Strengthen the capacity of all countries, in particular developing countries, for early warning, risk reduction and management of national and global health risks**
  - Indicator 3.D.1 - International Health Regulations (IHR) capacity and health emergency preparedness

## BWC alignment with SDG 3:

- ✓ Strengthening the capacity of the State Parties to promptly and effectively detect and respond to the alleged use or threat of use of biological weapons

# Activity of Militant and illicit trade routes in the region



# THE THREAT IS REAL AND PRESENT

## REPORT: CAPTURED ISIS LAPTOP CONTAINS BUBONIC PLAGUE, WMD INFORMATION

f SHARE 570 EMAIL g+ SHARE 6 TWEET 292



[Foreign Policy reports](#) that Abu Ali, commander of the rebel group, found the laptop in January after his men closed on a building from which Islamic State militants fled.

The laptop "contains a total of 35,347 files in 2,367 folders." These include "documents in French, English, and Arabic" and "videos of Osama bin Laden." There are instructions for jihad and stealing vehicles and for making bombs and disguises.

The laptop also contains information on biological weapons, including "a 19-page document on... how to weaponize the bubonic plague from infected animals." The document lauds biological weapons as being cheap yet capable of causing a "huge" number of "human casualties."

## Kenya police 'foil anthrax attack' by 'IS-linked group'

4 May 2016 · Africa Share



Kenyan police say they have foiled a "large-scale" biological attack using anthrax, by a terror group with links to so-called Islamic State (IS).

A man, his wife and another woman have been arrested. Rewards have been offered for two other men.

Police did not name the network, but said it stretches across the country and outside its borders, including to Somalia, Libya and Syria.

There was no immediate independent confirmation.

- [Africa Live: BBC news updates](#)
- [Al-Shabab split by IS calls](#)
- [What is Islamic State?](#)

In a statement, the police said Mohammed Abdi Ali, a medical intern at a Kenyan hospital, was in charge of a "terror network... planning large-scale attacks akin to the **Westgate Mall attack**" in which 67 people were killed in 2013 in Kenya's capital, Nairobi.

They say he was also "engaged in the active radicalisation" of students and helped recruit Kenyans "to join terror groups in Libya and Syria".

# Tanzania and BWC



- The Government of the United Republic of Tanzania signed the BWC on **16<sup>th</sup> August 1972**
- Tanzania is now in the process of ratification

## 2. Efforts to address BWC ratification delay

- Tanzanian Member of Parliament Hon. Jasson Samson Rweikiza presented on the delayed BWC ratification during the "Regional Africa Parliamentary Workshop" held in Sierra Leone on 27-28 March 2017.
- Contacted Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Asked the Ministry of Defence in the parliament – *“efforts were underway to make sure that Tanzania Ratifies the Convention”*.

## Efforts to address BWC ratification delay ..cont

- Dr. Malebo's research proposal to European Union (EU) on “Strengthening Tanzania's capacity to implement Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) related legislation and its corresponding institutional frameworks”.
- European Union Council Decision in support of the BWC (CFSP 2016/51): **Proposal put on hold!**
- ✓ ***Reasons: the extended assistance programmes offered under EU sub-project 3 are intended only for State Parties and Tanzania is not eligible to apply until it becomes a State Party to the BWC.***



## Efforts to address BWC ratification delay ..cont

- Contacted Ministry of Foreign Affairs for possible leading Ministry on BWC
- ✓ Several actors and no clear sector coordination on BWC
- ✓ Prime Ministers Office convened a meeting of BWC actors

# 3. Why delayed ratification? 1972 to date..(BWC actors)

Health



Agriculture



Livestock & Fisheries



Science and Technology

Defence



Prime Minister's Office



Foreign Affairs



Legal & Constitutional Affairs



Home Affairs



Vice-President's Office  
Division of Environment

## 4. Next steps towards BWC ratification

- Ministry of Foreign Affairs appointed Dr. Malebo as an acting NFP on BWC after Hon. Ambassador Mkwawa
- The Ministry of Defence is coordinating BWC stakeholders
- Stakeholders meeting held in August 2018 to solicit opinions and inputs for BWC ratification
- Bill for BWC ratification in progress, will be further tabled and discussed in the Parliament

# 5. Conclusion

- The Government of the United Republic of Tanzania is signatory to BWC
  - ✓ Support BWC
  - ✓ Committed to ratify BWC
  - ✓ Ratification process in good progress

## 6. Recommendations

- Carry out universalisation activities by focusing on awareness-raising among the key national players
- To conduct an awareness-raising session/meeting at all levels to enhance understanding and awareness of the BWC, as well as the benefits of joining the Convention
- Bring together key technical experts to discuss specific focus areas to better implement BWC activities in Tanzania;

# Thanks for Listening

