

Four New States Join BWC

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[Alexandra Schmitt](#)

Four new states have acceded to the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) since January 2013, bringing the total number of states-parties to 170.

Cameroon joined the treaty in January, followed by Nauru and Guyana in March and Malawi on April 2. All became states-parties to the treaty after depositing instruments of accession or ratification with the United States, which serves as a depository government along with Russia and the United Kingdom.

Sixteen states, including Israel, have neither signed nor ratified the treaty; 10 states, including Egypt and Syria, have signed but not ratified the treaty. Many states have called for universal adherence to the treaty, notably during the 2011 BWC review conference. At that meeting, the parties called on all states to “promote universalization of the Convention through bilateral contacts with states not party” and “through regional and multilateral fora and activities.”

In an April 8 press release, the U.S. State Department said the four new accessions “advance the BWC—one of the pillars of the global architecture against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction—and its universality.”

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