

Meeting of the States Parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction

5 November 2015

Original: English

2015 Meeting
Geneva, 14-18 December 2015
Item 11 of the provisional agenda
Progress with universalization of the Convention

Report on universalization activities

Submitted by the Chairperson

Summary

The Seventh Review Conference decided to request the Chair of the Meeting of States Parties to prepare an annual report on universalization activities (BWC/CONF.VII/7, Part III, paragraph 29). The Chairman of the Meeting of States Parties has duly compiled this document which outlines the results to date of the activities to promote universalization of the Convention undertaken by the Chairman, Vice-chairs and the Implementation Support Unit (ISU) in 2015. It also includes information from States Parties and different organizations, where that information has been provided to the Chairman or the ISU. The Convention currently has 173 States Parties (listed in the annex), with nine signatories and 14 States having neither signed nor ratified. A total of 23 States are not party to the Convention.

I. Introduction

1. Since the last report on universalization activities (BWC/MSP/2014/3 and Add.1), 1. Since the last report on universalization activities (BWC/MSP/2014/3 and Add.1), two States have joined the Convention: Mauritania on 28 January 2015, and Andorra on 2 March 2015, bringing the total number of States Parties to 173 (see Annex). A further nine States have signed but not ratified the Convention and 14 States have neither signed nor ratified the Convention. This report outlines what is known about these 23 States.

2. On 19 February 2015, the Swiss Mission in Geneva forwarded to the ISU a response from Côte d'Ivoire to a letter sent by Mr. Urs Schmid, Ambassador of Switzerland and Chairman of the BWC meetings in 2014, by the Swiss Minister for Foreign Affairs to States not Party encouraging them to join. The response stated that Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) ratification is on the agenda for 2015 in Côte d'Ivoire and listed as one of the priorities. The Council of Ministers of Côte d'Ivoire approved ratification of the BWC on 8 July 2015. Further information will be found below.



3. The Angolan parliament approved accession to the BWC and the Chemical Weapons Convention in April 2015. On 16 September 2015, Angola acceded to the CWC. The United States of America reported on 5 October 2015 that the Office of the President of Angola informed its Embassy in Luanda that the BWC instrument was on the President's agenda. Further information will be found below.

II. Activities to promote universalization

4. Since the 2014 Meeting of States Parties, the following universalization activities have been undertaken and reported to the Chairman or the ISU:

(a) The United States sponsored two representatives from the United Republic of Tanzania to attend the 2014 Meeting of States Parties, followed up by a demarche in March 2015;

(b) From 27 to 28 January 2015, the ISU participated in a regional workshop on BWC implementation for East Africa, in Nairobi, Kenya, funded by the European Union, and met with representatives of the United Republic of Tanzania and Djibouti and discussed their status regarding BWC universalization. The meeting also provided an opportunity to meet and brief a representative from the Intergovernmental Authority on Development about the BWC, as four of its eight members have not yet joined the BWC;

(c) In January and February 2015, the United States of America encouraged Andorra to complete the process of accession to the BWC, which it did on 2 March 2015. The ISU also remained in regular contact with the legal representative of Andorra, to provide information and support in this process;

(d) On 16 March 2015, a letter from the Chairman was sent to all Permanent Representatives of the States not party and signatory States to the BWC based in Geneva to encourage them to join the Convention as well as to request for an opportunity to brief them on the BWC. Between April and October 2015, the Chairman held a number of bilateral meetings in Geneva with the following States not party and signatory States: Central African Republic, Chad, the Comoros, Côte d'Ivoire, Djibouti, Egypt, Guinea, Haiti, Liberia, Namibia, Nepal, South Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic and the United Republic of Tanzania. Further details on each bilateral meeting will be found below;

(e) The United States of America sponsored a Guinean representative to attend the 2015 Meeting of Experts. The official met with representatives from the ISU, the Verification Research, Training and Information Centre and the Delegation of the United States of America to discuss in depth the accession process. In a subsequent meeting with the ISU, Guinea reiterated its intention to complete the process and informed the ISU about the nomination of a contact point on disarmament issues, including the BWC;

(f) Finland sponsored a representative from the United Republic of Tanzania to the 2015 Meeting of Experts. The official met with the ISU on the margins of the Meeting to discuss universalization. Further information will be found below;

(g) On 28 August 2015, the ISU gave a presentation to the participants in the 2015 United Nations Disarmament Fellowship Programme in Geneva, Switzerland. Participants included individuals from two Signatory States;

(h) On 6 and 7 October 2015, on the margins of the First Committee of the United Nations General Assembly in New York, the Chairman held a number of bilateral meetings with representatives of the following States not party and Signatory States: Angola, Kiribati, Micronesia, Samoa and Tuvalu. During his trip to New York, the Chair prioritized contacts with the four States from the Pacific region, as they are not represented in Geneva. With reference to Angola, the Chair sought clarification on its status regarding

the BWC, following its accession to the CWC. Further details on each bilateral meeting will be found below;

(i) In October 2015, the Verification Research, Training and Information Centre reported to the ISU that it had engaged with Angola, Djibouti, Eritrea, Guinea, Somalia and South Sudan regarding ratification or accession to the BWC;

(j) On 24 and 25 September 2015 the ISU took part in the Preparatory Meeting of the African Union Assistance Conference on United Nations Security Council resolution 1540. The meeting was a good opportunity to meet and brief the representative from the African Union regarding the BWC and its universalization, as 14 African Union Member States are not yet party to the BWC (six have signed the Convention and eight have neither signed, ratified nor acceded);

(k) On 29 and 30 October 2015, the African Union Commission and the ISU held a meeting entitled "Universalization of the Biological Weapons Convention in Africa". The objective of the meeting was to enhance understanding of the BWC and its implementation among States Parties, Signatories and States not party in Africa, in order to promote its universality, enhance national capacities for implementing its obligations and to promote the active participation of African Union Member States in BWC meetings. Participants included States Parties, Signatories States and States not party;

(l) The ISU remained in regular contact with the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons to coordinate mutual universalization efforts; and

(m) Throughout the year, the ISU remained in regular contact with States not party and Signatories that have expressed an interest in the Convention, sought assistance to join, or requested additional information.

5. To date, four States Parties have reported that they have taken action bilaterally to promote universalization of the Convention in 2015 or have reported to the ISU information regarding universalization progress: Finland, France, Switzerland and the United States of America. Details are listed in the respective entries in sections IV and V below. Throughout the year, the ISU has been coordinating with the Depositary Governments (the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America) on various universalization related matters.

III. Overview of current status

6. Activities held throughout the year have generated additional information on progress towards universalization. This report includes data from the activities listed above, as well as from communications from States Parties, States not party and Signatories, as well as interested organizations and entities.

7. The following tables show States not party and Signatory States by geographical region and by progress towards ratification or accession:

Table 1

Geographical region	States not party and Signatories* to the Convention	Total
Asia and Pacific	Israel, Kiribati, Micronesia (Federated States of), Nepal*, Niue, Samoa, Syrian Arab Republic*, Tuvalu	8
Latin America and Caribbean	Haiti*	1
Africa	Angola, Central African Republic*, Chad, Comoros, Côte d'Ivoire*, Djibouti, Egypt*, Eritrea, Guinea, Liberia*, Namibia, Somalia*, South	14

	Sudan, United Republic of Tanzania*	
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Table 2

Situation	States not party and Signatories* to the Convention	Total
Accession or ratification process well advanced	Angola, Comoros, Côte d'Ivoire*, Nepal*	4
Accession or ratification process started	Djibouti, Guinea, Haiti*, Namibia, United Republic of Tanzania*	5
Waiting for further information, assistance, or have other priorities, etc.	Central African Republic*, Chad, Eritrea, Liberia*, Kiribati, Micronesia (Federated States of), Samoa, Somalia*, South Sudan, Tuvalu	10
No action expected in near future	Egypt*, Israel, Syrian Arab Republic*	3
No information or feedback yet received	Niue	1

IV. Signatories

Central African Republic

8. On 15 June 2015, the Chairman had a bilateral meeting with Mr. Léopold Ismael Samba, Permanent Representative in Geneva, to promote the BWC, its intersessional process and meetings, and to encourage the Central African Republic to join the Convention. The Chair sought further information on its ratification status, as no further information had been reported since 2011. The Permanent Representative confirmed that the Chairman's demarche would be reported and that all the relevant documentation provided by the ISU would be transferred to the capital.

Côte d'Ivoire

9. On 11 June 2015, the Chairman had a bilateral meeting with Mr. Kouadio Adjoumani, Permanent Representative in Geneva, in order to promote the BWC, its intersessional process and meetings and to encourage Côte d'Ivoire to join the Convention. The Chair sought further information on progress. The Permanent Representative of Côte d'Ivoire confirmed that the Chairman's demarche would be reported and that all the relevant documentation provided by the ISU would be transferred to the capital. He added that the delay in ratifying the Convention was due to domestic reasons and he assured the Chairman that he would follow up with his capital and urge ratification of the Convention by the end of this year. France reported keeping close contact with Côte d'Ivoire throughout the year to support the ratification process. France reported to the ISU in October 2015 that the Council of Ministers of Côte d'Ivoire approved BWC ratification on 8 July 2015. The process may be delayed by elections which took place on 25 October 2015.

Egypt

10. On 28 April 2015, the Chairman had a bilateral meeting with Mr. Amr Ramadan, Permanent Representative in Geneva, to promote the BWC, its intersessional process and meetings and to encourage Egypt to ratify the Convention. The Permanent Representative confirmed that he would report the Chairman's demarche and transfer to the capital all the relevant documentation provided by the ISU. He reemphasized that BWC ratification is linked to other political considerations. A representative of Egypt participated in the

African Union workshop on “Universalization of the Biological Weapons Convention in Africa” in October 2015.

Haiti

11. On 13 April 2015, the Chairman had a bilateral meeting with Mr. Pierre André Dunbar, Permanent Representative in Geneva, to promote the BWC, its intersessional process and meetings and to encourage Haiti to ratify the Convention. The Chair sought further information on progress in Haiti on ratification. The Permanent Representative confirmed that he would report the Chairman’s demarche and transfer to the capital all the relevant documentation provided by the ISU. He added that Haiti is currently in a transitional political situation. Parliamentary elections are planned for late 2015 after which further progress on BWC ratification could be possible.

Liberia

12. On 20 October 2015, the Chairman had a bilateral meeting with Mr. Paul Wolokollie Tate, Counsellor and Chargé d'affaires of the Permanent Mission in Geneva to promote the BWC, its intersessional process and meetings and to encourage Liberia to ratify the Convention. The Chair sought further information on progress in Liberia on ratification. The representative of Liberia confirmed that he would report the Chairman’s demarche and transfer to the capital all the relevant documentation provided by the ISU.

Nepal

13. Nepal received an assistance programme under the European Union funded Action in support of the BWC and assistance activities were carried out from January to August 2014. A time line for ratification was set for the end of 2015 as part of the action plan. Nepal expressed strong interest in having implementing legislation ready before ratification of the Convention. The Deputy Director of the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific, in Kathmandu, Nepal reported to the ISU in February 2015 that the Foreign Ministry of Nepal indicated that they are on track towards ratifying the BWC, that the dossier was ready to be sent to parliament and ratification would be completed soon. On 14 April 2015, the Chairman had a bilateral meeting with Mr. Deepak Dhital, Permanent Representative in Geneva, to promote the BWC, its intersessional process and meetings and to encourage Nepal to ratify the Convention. The Chair sought further information on progress in Nepal. The Permanent Representative confirmed that he would report the Chairman’s demarche and transfer to the capital all the relevant documentation provided by the ISU. He added that the parliamentary process had been started. He also stated that joining the BWC is a priority and hoped that this could be achieved within 2015. The process of creating a National Authority is in place.

Somalia

14. The Verification Research, Training and Information Centre reported to the ISU having engaged with Somalia on ratification of the BWC in April 2015. Two representatives from Somalia participated in the Workshop for Intergovernmental Authority on Development States on enhancing implementation of resolution 1540 and other non-proliferation instruments, in which the ISU made several presentations on the BWC and the benefits of joining the Convention.

Syrian Arab Republic

15. The Syrian Arab Republic has traditionally linked the ratification of the Convention to other regional security considerations. The accession of the Syrian Arab Republic to the Chemical Weapons Convention may have opened an opportunity for the BWC. On 14 April 2015, the Chairman had a bilateral meeting with Mr. Hussam Edin Aala, Permanent Representative in Geneva, to promote the BWC, its intersessional process and meetings and to encourage the Syrian Arab Republic to ratify the Convention. The Chair sought further information on progress in the Syrian Arab Republic. The Permanent Representative confirmed that he would report the Chairman's demarche and transfer to the capital all the relevant documentation provided by the ISU. He reemphasized that BWC ratification is linked to other political considerations.

United Republic of Tanzania

16. The United States of America sponsored two representatives of the United Republic of Tanzania to the December 2014 Meeting of States Parties, followed up by a demarche in March 2015. The ISU met with the Permanent Representative in Geneva during the regional BWC workshop in Nairobi in January 2015, along with two officials from capital. During the workshop, the United Republic of Tanzania expressed its intention to ratify the BWC in the near future.

17. On 10 July 2015, the Chairman had a bilateral meeting with Mr. Modest Jonathan Mero, Permanent Representative in Geneva, to promote the BWC, its intersessional process and meetings and to encourage the United Republic of Tanzania to join the Convention. The Chair sought further information on its status. The Permanent Representative confirmed that he would report the Chairman's demarche and transfer to the capital all the relevant documentation provided by the ISU. Finland sponsored a representative of the United Republic of Tanzania to the Meeting of Experts in August 2015. The official met with the ISU on the margins of the Meeting to discuss universalization and confirmed that she would encourage her capital to join the BWC. In addition, a representative of the United Republic of Tanzania participated in the African Union workshop on "Universalization of the Biological Weapons Convention in Africa" in October 2015.

V. States neither signed nor ratified

Angola

18. The Verification Research, Training and Information Centre reported to the ISU having engaged with Angola on BWC accession in March 2015. On 16 September 2015, Angola acceded to the Chemical Weapons Convention. As the Angolan parliament approved Chemical Weapons Convention and BWC accession at the same time in April 2015, the Depositary Governments, the Chairman and the ISU, through various contacts and channels, immediately sought further information regarding possible accession to the BWC. The United States of America reported that Angola's instrument of accession is awaiting presidential signature and deposit. The Embassy of the United States of America in Luanda continued to engage the Government of Angola on the issue.

19. The Chairman met with Mr. Julio Helder Moura Lucas, Deputy Permanent Representative in New York on 7 October 2015, in order to seek further information regarding Angola's accession status. The Deputy Permanent Representative undertook to liaise with his capital on the status of the instrument of accession. In addition, a representative of Angola participated in the African Union workshop on "Universalization of the Biological Weapons Convention in Africa" in October 2015.

Chad

20. On 23 April 2015, the Chairman had a bilateral meeting with Mr. Malloum Bamanga Abbas, Permanent Representative in Geneva, to promote the BWC, its intersessional process and meetings and to encourage Chad to join the Convention. The Chair sought further information on progress with accession. The Permanent Representative confirmed that the Chairman's demarche would be reported to capital and that the documentation provided by the ISU would also be transferred. A representative of Chad participated in the African Union workshop on "Universalization of the Biological Weapons Convention in Africa" in October 2015.

Comoros

21. Information reported in October 2007 indicated that a draft instrument of accession was awaiting signature by the President of the Comoros. No further information regarding the instrument has been reported since then.

22. On 23 April 2015, the Chairman had a bilateral meeting with Mr. Sultan Chouzour, Permanent Representative in Geneva, to promote the BWC, its intersessional process and meetings and to encourage the Comoros to join the Convention. The Chair sought further information on its status. The Permanent Representative confirmed that the Chairman's demarche would be reported to capital and the Chairman's demarche would be reported to capital and that the documentation provided by the ISU would also be transferred.

Djibouti

23. On 21 April 2015, the Chairman had a bilateral meeting with Mr. Mohamed Siad Doualeh, Permanent Representative in Geneva, to promote the BWC, its intersessional process and meetings, and to encourage Djibouti to join the Convention. The Chair sought further information on its status. The Permanent Representative confirmed that he would report the Chairman's demarche and transfer to the capital all the relevant documentation provided by the ISU. One representative from Djibouti participated in a workshop in Nairobi in September 2015 for Intergovernmental Authority on Development Member States on implementation of United Nations Security Council resolution 1540 and other international instruments. The ISU also participated and gave a presentation on the BWC and encouraged Djibouti to join the BWC. The Verification Research, Training and Information Centre reported to the ISU having engaged with Djibouti on accession to the BWC in October 2015.

Eritrea

24. The Verification Research, Training and Information Centre reported to the ISU having engaged with Eritrea on accession to the BWC in September 2015. A representative from Eritrea participated in a workshop in Nairobi in September 2015 for Intergovernmental Authority on Development Member States on implementation of United Nations Security Council resolution 1540 and other international instruments. The ISU also participated and gave a presentation on the BWC and encouraged Eritrea to join the BWC.

Guinea

25. Switzerland transferred to the ISU a letter from Guinea, dated 17 February 2015, requesting a copy of the BWC. The ISU provided the requested document to the Permanent Mission of Guinea in Geneva, the latter was then transferred further to the capital.

26. On 25 June 2015, the Chairman had a bilateral meeting with Mr. Aly Diané, Permanent Representative in Geneva, to promote the BWC, its intersessional process and meetings and to encourage Guinea to join the Convention. The Permanent Representative

confirmed that he would report the Chairman's demarche and transfer to the capital all the relevant documentation provided by the ISU. On 16 July 2015, a follow-up letter from the Chairman was sent to the Permanent Mission in Geneva to encourage the capital to speed up the accession process. A letter from Guinea, dated 8 August 2015, was sent to the ISU, providing contacts of the newly appointed Focal Point of Guinea for disarmament issues.

27. The United States of America sponsored a Guinean representative to the Meeting of Experts in August 2015 who also participated in a joint ISU and United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research event on "Implications and Lessons Learned from the Ebola Virus Disease Outbreak for the Biological Weapons Convention" on 7 August 2015. The official, the General Inspector of Health, met with representatives from the ISU, the Verification Research, Training and Information Centre and the Delegation of the United States of America to discuss technical, legal and financial aspects of acceding to the BWC. A follow-up meeting took place later in the week between the ISU and a representative of the Permanent Mission in Geneva and the General Inspector of Health of Guinea. The latter informed the ISU he had been assigned directly by the Head of State to participate in the Meeting of Experts, establish contact with the Depositary Governments and the ISU and report his conclusions and recommendations on the BWC and its accession for Guinea. He believed that joining the Convention was important in light of the Ebola outbreak in West Africa, and would recommend that the Head of State take action without further delay.

Israel

28. No further information has been reported since 2014.

Kiribati

29. The Chairman met with Mrs. Makurita Baaro, Deputy Permanent Representative in New York on 6 October 2015, in order to promote the BWC and seek further information regarding Kiribati's accession status. The Deputy Permanent Representative raised concerns about the obligations under the Convention, including financial contributions and national reporting. At the moment, Kiribati does not have the capacity to fulfil these obligations.

Micronesia (Federated States of)

30. The Chairman met with Ms. Jane J. Chigiyal, Permanent Representative in New York on 6 October 2015, in order to promote the BWC and seek further information regarding Micronesia's accession status. The Permanent Representative raised concerns about the obligations under the Convention, including financial contributions and national reporting. At the moment, Micronesia does not have the capacity to fulfil these obligations.

Namibia

31. On 27 April 2015, the Chairman had a bilateral meeting with Ms. Sabine Böhlke-Möller, Permanent Representative in Geneva to promote the BWC, its intersessional process and meetings and to encourage Namibia to accede to the Convention. The Chair sought further information on progress in Namibia. The Permanent Representative of Namibia confirmed that she would report the Chairman's demarche and transfer to the capital all the relevant documentation provided by the ISU.

Niue

32. No further information has been reported since 2012.

Samoa

33. The Chairman met with Mr. Ali'ioaiga Feturi Elisaia, Permanent Representative in New York, on 7 October 2015, in order to promote the BWC and seek further information regarding Samoa's accession status. The Deputy Permanent Representative raised concerns about the obligations under the Convention, including financial contributions and national reporting. At the moment, Samoa does not have the capacity to fulfil these obligations.

South Sudan

34. On 28 April 2015, the Chairman had a bilateral meeting with Mr. Alison Monani Magaya, Permanent Representative in Geneva, to promote the BWC, its intersessional process and meetings, and to encourage South Sudan to join the Convention. The Chair sought further information on its status. The Permanent Representative confirmed that he would report the Chairman's demarche and transfer to the capital all the relevant documentation provided by the ISU. The Verification Research, Training and Information Centre reported to the ISU having engaged with South Sudan on accession to the BWC in September 2015. Two representatives from South Sudan participated in a workshop in Nairobi in September 2015 for Intergovernmental Authority on Development Member States on implementation of United Nations Security Council resolution 1540 and other international instruments. In addition, two representatives of South Sudan participated in the African Union workshop on "Universalization of the Biological Weapons Convention in Africa" in October 2015. The ISU also participated and gave a presentation on the BWC and encouraged South Sudan to join the BWC.

Tuvalu

35. The Chairman met with Mr. Aunese Makoi Simati, Permanent Representative in New York on 7 October 2015, in order to promote the BWC and seek further information regarding Tuvalu's accession status. The representative raised concerns about the obligations under the Convention, including financial contributions and national reporting. At the moment, Tuvalu does not have the capacity to fulfil these obligations.

Annex

List of States Parties to the Convention

(As at 30 October 2015)

Afghanistan
Albania
Algeria
Andorra
Antigua and Barbuda
Argentina
Armenia
Australia
Austria
Azerbaijan
Bahamas
Bahrain
Bangladesh
Barbados
Belarus
Belgium
Belize
Benin
Bhutan
Bolivia (Plurinational State of)
Bosnia-Herzegovina
Botswana
Brazil
Brunei Darussalam
Bulgaria
Burkina Faso
Burundi
Cambodia
Cameroon
Canada
Cape Verde

Chile
China
Colombia
Congo
Cook Islands
Costa Rica
Croatia
Cuba
Cyprus
Czech Republic
Democratic People's Republic of Korea
Democratic Republic of the Congo
Denmark
Dominica
Dominican Republic
Ecuador
El Salvador
Equatorial Guinea
Estonia
Ethiopia
Fiji
Finland
France
Gabon
Gambia
Georgia
Germany
Ghana
Greece
Grenada
Guatemala
Guinea-Bissau
Guyana
Holy See
Honduras
Hungary

Iceland
India
Indonesia
Iran (Islamic Republic of)
Iraq
Ireland
Italy
Jamaica
Japan
Jordan
Kazakhstan
Kenya
Kuwait
Kyrgyzstan
Lao People's Democratic Republic
Latvia
Lebanon
Lesotho
Libya
Liechtenstein
Lithuania
Luxembourg
Madagascar
Malawi
Malaysia
Maldives
Mali
Malta
Marshall Islands
Mauritania
Mauritius
Mexico
Monaco
Mongolia
Montenegro
Morocco

Mozambique
Myanmar
Nauru
Netherlands
New Zealand
Nicaragua
Niger
Nigeria
Norway
Oman
Pakistan
Palau
Panama
Papua New Guinea
Paraguay
Peru
Philippines
Poland
Portugal
Qatar
Republic of Korea
Republic of Moldova
Romania
Russian Federation
Rwanda
Saint Kitts and Nevis
Saint Lucia
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines
San Marino
Sao Tome and Principe
Saudi Arabia
Senegal
Serbia
Seychelles
Sierra Leone
Singapore

Slovakia
Slovenia
Solomon Islands
South Africa
Spain
Sri Lanka
Sudan
Suriname
Swaziland
Sweden
Switzerland
Tajikistan
Thailand
The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
Timor-Leste
Togo
Tonga
Trinidad and Tobago
Tunisia
Turkey
Turkmenistan
Uganda
Ukraine
United Arab Emirates
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
United States of America
Uruguay
Uzbekistan
Vanuatu
Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)
Viet Nam
Yemen
Zambia
Zimbabwe

List of signatories to the Convention

(As at 30 October 2015)

Central African Republic

Côte d'Ivoire

Egypt

Haiti

Liberia

Nepal

Somalia

Syrian Arab Republic

United Republic of Tanzania
