

# Australia Group

July 10, 2020

## What is it?

- The Australia Group (AG) is an **informal forum of countries which, through the harmonization of export controls, seeks to ensure that exports do not contribute to the development of chemical or biological weapons.**
- **It aims to allow exporting or transshipping countries to minimize the risk of assisting chemical and biological weapon (CBW) proliferation**
- **Coordination of national export control measures assists Australia Group participants to fulfil their obligations under the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention to the fullest extent possible.**
- **The Group meets annually to discuss ways of increasing the effectiveness of participating countries' national export licensing measures to prevent would-be proliferators from obtaining materials for CBW programs.**
- **Participants in the Australia Group do not undertake any legally binding obligations:** the effectiveness of their cooperation depends solely on a shared commitment to CBW non-proliferation goals and the strength of their respective national measures.
- **All states participating in the Australia Group are parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC), and strongly support efforts under those Conventions to rid the world of CBW.**

## Criteria for participation include, but are not limited to:

- **A commitment to prevent the spread of CBW proliferation, including being a party, in good standing, to the Biological and Toxins Weapons Convention and the**

Chemical Weapons Convention.

- Being a manufacturer, exporter or transshipper of AG controlled items.
- **Adopting and implementing the AG Guidelines for Transfers of Sensitive Chemical or Biological Items.**
- Implementing an effective export control system which provides national controls for all items on the AG common control lists and is supported by adequate licensing and enforcement regimes.
- **Creating legal penalties and sanctions for contravention of controls** and being willing to enforce them.
- **Creating relevant channels for the exchange of information including accepting the confidentiality of the information exchange;** creating liaison channels for expert discussions; and creating a denial notification system protecting commercial confidentiality.
- Agreeing to participate in the AG in a way that will strengthen the effectiveness of the AG in preventing CBW proliferation.

## **India and the Australia Group**

- **India was admitted to Australia Group as 43rd participant in 2018**
- India's membership will help to counter the spread of materials, equipment and technologies that could contribute to the development or acquisition of chemical/biological weapons.
- It is understood that the membership will also boost India's membership bid for the Nuclear Suppliers Group which is being opposed by China.