

## The Biological Weapons Convention Meeting of Experts August 2010

As recorded in *Report 26* (December 2006), the Sixth Review Conference of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BWC) held in Geneva from Monday 20 November to Friday 8 December 2006 agreed an Intersessional Programme for 2007-2010. This required one topic to be considered in 2010: for the one-week Meeting of States Parties prepared for by a one-week Meeting of Experts *to discuss, and promote common understanding and effective action on:*

(vi) *Provision of assistance and coordination with relevant organizations upon request by any State Party in the case of alleged use of biological or toxin weapons, including improving national capabilities for disease surveillance, detection and diagnosis and public health systems.*

It was also agreed at the Sixth Review Conference that the Meetings in 2010 should be chaired by the Non-Aligned Movement and Other States Group and as recorded in *Report 31* (February 2010) it was announced at the Meeting of States Parties in December 2009 that Ambassador Carlos Portales of Chile would be the Chairman for the Meeting of Experts on 23 to 27 August 2010 and for the Meeting of States Parties on 6 to 10 December 2010.

Ambassador Carlos Portales of Chile wrote to the States Parties on 25 February 2010 saying that the topic for 2010 is

*an important topic that goes to the heart of key obligations in Article VII of the BWC to provide assistance to States Parties which are exposed to danger as a result of violations of the Convention. I believe that our work on this topic should be aimed at helping us to answer the fundamental practical question: "if a biological weapon were to be used tomorrow, how would we, the States Parties, individually and collectively respond?"*

This letter went on to say that another focus of his activities this year will be universalization. He also encouraged all States Parties to participate in the Confidence-building Measures. Finally, he mentioned that the Seventh Review Conference would be held next year and said that:

*Preparation for the Review Conference is not formally on our agenda for 2010, and is not part of my mandate as Chairman. Nevertheless, it is natural and welcome that States Parties should wish to start informal discussions on the Review Conference in the course of this year. I encourage delegations to consider holding seminars and other events to begin considering options for 2011, including on the margins of the Meeting of Experts and Meeting of States Parties.*

In Regional Group Meetings in March 2010, Ambassador Portales reiterated the four key areas of activity and announced

that there had recently been a change of government in Chile and consequently his term as Ambassador in Geneva would end on 14 May. He proposed that he would continue as Chairman until 14 May holding consultations and making preparations for the Meeting of Experts and then, once his successor as Ambassador of Chile has been appointed, the head of the Implementation Support Unit, Richard Lennane, would write to all delegations in his capacity as Secretary of the Meeting of States Parties, proposing that the new Ambassador be appointed as Chairman. Then if no State Party objected within a certain period, the appointment would be accepted and his successor would take up his or her duties as Chairman.

Ambassador Pedro Oyarce was appointed Ambassador of Chile to the United Nations in Geneva, and following Richard Lennane's letter to all delegations, Ambassador Oyarce took up the position of Chairman of the 2010 Meetings of the BWC and, on the same day, 12 July 2010, he wrote to all States Parties to say that he intended to follow the same lines as proposed by his predecessor in his letter of 25 February 2010 and in his discussions with the Regional Group Meetings in March 2010. In this letter Ambassador Oyarce provided an indicative schedule for the Meeting of Experts. In addition, he also proposed that a poster session should be held from 16.30 to 18.00 on Tuesday 24 August in the area outside Room XIX where the Meeting of Experts would be held.

### Meeting of Experts, 23 to 27 August 2010: Opening Plenary Session

The Meeting of Experts began on Monday 23 August 2010 with Ambassador Pedro Oyarce in the Chair in a plenary session when he welcomed all those present before turning to procedural matters. In regard to the adoption of the Agenda, he noted that BWC/MSP/2010/MX/1 (all official papers are available at <http://www.opbw.org> and at <http://www.unog.ch/bwc>) had been circulated in all languages. This was adopted. The programme of work (BWC/MSP/2010/MX/2), had likewise been circulated and was adopted.

The Chairman noted that the Implementation Support Unit (ISU) had prepared three background papers (BWC/MSP/2010/MX/INF.1, INF. 2 and INF. 3, providing background information on the topic being considered. MX/INF.1 is a 9-page document entitled *Previous agreements and understandings under the Convention relevant to the provision of assistance and coordination in the case of alleged use of biological or toxin weapons*. The paper collects texts relevant to the topic of the provision of assistance and coordination in the case of alleged use of biological or toxin weapons, drawn from the Convention itself, the final declarations of successive Review Conferences, and the reports of the Meetings of States Parties in 2004 and 2005. MX/INF.2 is a 7-page document entitled *The role of international organizations in the provision of assistance and coordination in the case of alleged use of biological*

or toxin weapons which summarizes the relevant mandates and activities of international organizations that might be called upon to act if an allegation was made as to the use of a biological or toxin weapon. The paper includes information on the International Committee of the Red Cross, the International Criminal Police Organization, the Organization of American States, the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, the World Health Organization, the World Organization for Animal Health, and the United Nations. MX/INF.3 together with MX/INF.3/Corr.1 is a 5-page document entitled *Technical guidance for preparing for and responding to alleged use of biological or toxin weapons* which summarizes sources of existing technical guidance for measures to prepare for and respond to the use of biological or toxin weapons. This information is taken from the UN Secretary-General's investigative mechanism (1989), the WHO document *Public Health Response to Biological and Chemical Weapons: WHO Guidance (2004)*, the WHO draft guidance *National Capacity to Manage Health Risks of Deliberate Use of Biological and Chemical Agents and Radionuclear Material: WHO Draft Guidance for Capacity Assessment (2005)* and Interpol's *Bioterrorism Incident Preplanning and Response Guide (BIRG) (2007)*.

The Chairman noted that, as usual, all Working Papers submitted would be reproduced in the language of submission only and would be made available on the website [www.unog.ch/bwc](http://www.unog.ch/bwc) as soon as possible. He then moved on to consider the Rules of Procedure, and proposed that, as at previous meetings, these meetings should operate under the Rules of Procedure of the Sixth Review Conference applied *mutatis mutandis*. However, he pointed out that formal accreditation would not be required for the annual meetings; registration would be sufficient. These Rules of Procedure were agreed.

It was agreed that the following four Signatory States should participate in the Meeting of Experts: Burundi, Cote d'Ivoire, Haiti and the Syrian Arab Republic. In addition, it was agreed that two States neither Party nor Signatory should participate as an observer: Angola and Israel. Eight intergovernmental organizations also participated as observers; The European Commission, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL), the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), the World Health Organization (WHO) and the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE). In addition, at the invitation of the Chairman, in recognition of the special nature of the topics under consideration at this Meeting and without creating a precedent, two scientific, professional, and academic experts participated in informal exchanges in the open sessions as guests of the Meeting of Experts: Dr. Irma Makalinao (University of the Philippines College of Medicine) and Dr. Randall Murch (Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University). This was a similar arrangement to that which had applied at the Meeting of Experts in 2008 and 2009.

It was also agreed that, as at previous meetings, this meeting would be suspended on Monday 23 August at 16.30 and resume in informal session — with the Chairman remaining in the Chair — to hear statements from a number of NGOs. The Chairman then concluded the procedural matters by

noting that there had been positive results from the sponsorship of experts, as this had enabled some 20 experts from twelve States Parties to be present. He expressed his gratitude to Canada, United Kingdom, United States and the European Union for providing such sponsorship, which helped to broaden the reach of the work on this year's topic around the world. He asked any State Party that wished to make a statement or presentation during the Meeting of Experts to contact the ISU to arrange a suitable time. The Chairman asked that any statements be limited to 5 minutes and any presentations be limited to 15 minutes so as to allow some time for discussion.

The Chairman also said that on Thursday afternoon a panel discussion was planned along the same lines as last year on the subject of *Scientific and technological advances relevant to responding to alleged use of biological weapons*.

Eighty-nine States Parties to the Convention participated in the Meeting of Experts as follows: Algeria, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belarus, Belgium, Benin, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Holy See, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Lithuania, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mexico, Morocco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Pakistan, Panama, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Switzerland, Tajikistan, Thailand, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), and Yemen. This was seven fewer States Parties than had participated in the Meeting of Experts in August 2009. Five States Parties — Benin, Cambodia, Madagascar, Panama and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia — participated in MX 2010 but not MX 2009, whilst twelve States Parties — Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brunei Darussalam, Burundi, Equatorial Guinea, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Philippines, Singapore, Swaziland and Zambia — who had participated in MX 2009 did not attend MX 2010.

There were close to 450 participants at the Meeting of Experts of whom over 385 came from States Parties, including some 200 participants from capitals. Although total numbers were less than at the Meeting of Experts in 2009 — when there were just over 500 participants of which over 420 came from States Parties — the number of participants in 2009 from capitals was only slightly more at 205.

The Chairman then made his introductory remarks, saying that he would like to share three ideas and two challenges. The first idea was *the need to reaffirm the value of the Convention on Biological Weapons as an instrument for multilateral cooperation*. He went on to emphasize that cooperation is key in a multilateral system and added that *A common understanding has been established with a view to adopting effective actions in areas pertaining to the implementation of the BWC. We need to continue to open spaces in which mutual trust can be established between*

*States Parties.* The second idea is linked to the participation of the experts, because such *participation defines a work that goes beyond the community on disarmament. This gives sense and purpose to the concept of multidimensionality, as it were, which enables us to face the biological risks in an interconnected fashion. The participation of academics of the scientific community, of professional associations of the productive sector of international organizations, and of the civil society must contribute towards developing coordinated answers to the matters we discuss. This is the sense and purpose of an effective, transparent and legitimate multilateral system and this Convention was generated following a multilateral instrument or coordination mechanism.* The third idea is *the need for us to be effective and efficient at a time when areas of disarmament and non-proliferation are meeting a complicated phase. We will, in a number of weeks, be embarking on a reflection process in New York and the process we undergo here will be useful for that week. We can also make a contribution to the Seventh Review Conference. It is clear that we must resolve a number of complicated topics, such as verification and enforcement and compliance, but I am convinced that, beyond the natural differences we have here, the work we do will contribute to ensure that States Parties can find areas of convergence and necessary consensus. This is necessary for our multilateral approach.*

The Chairman then went on to set out two challenges for the possible use of biological weapons. He said that *The first challenge is first to work to reach an agreement on the regulatory and promotional requirements of the Convention. These two concepts mutually strengthen each other. If we address these two issues, we will contribute towards strengthening national capacities to respond to the objectives of security of the Convention and this is linked of course to the application of Article X of the Convention which encourages us to have the greatest level of exchange of equipment, material and scientific and technological information for the peaceful use of bacteriological (biological) agents. So we need to work towards this shared understanding between developed and developing countries to promote effective actions. And we also need to combine security in development and that is key for us to make progress in the area of multilateral disarmament. The second challenge is that we must act to ensure that States are better prepared individually and collectively in the area of the use of biological weapons. Efforts have been made in the area of verification. Given that we do not have a protocol, the issue that brings us together, that mobilizes us to be able to contribute to the Review Conference, is for us to ask the following question: What can we do in a critical situation of use of weapons? It is now time for us to look at the coherent and gradual development of a set of options and procedures which States could adopt if we were to be confronted by the use or the threat of use of biological or toxic weapons. Let us work this week by exchanging regional, national and global experiences, because this will enable us to more easily seek for the common understanding of the topics we work with but with regards also to technical criteria to understand what our policy responsibilities are.*

He concluded by looking forward to *a productive and stimulating discussion. I encourage all delegations to contribute freely to the debate, and I hope we will see a continuation of the very constructive and creative spirit States Parties displayed at our previous intersessional meetings.*

**Cuba** then spoke on behalf of the **NAM and Other States**, saying that *The Group would like to reiterate its deep concern about the potential use and/or threats of use of biological agents and toxins as an instrument of war and terror. In this regard, the Group feels that there is an urgency for all States Parties to the BTWC to work towards the universal adherence, as well as the strengthening and improving of the effectiveness of implementation of this Convention, in order to be in a position to really address this concern. Regrettably the long sought aspiration of member states for resumption of the negotiation for convening a legally binding instrument to comprehensively strengthen the convention was rejected again during the last December meeting. We urge those responsible for that situation to reconsider its policy towards this convention in the light of persistent request of other parties.*

The statement went on: *The Group of Non-Aligned States Parties and other States Parties to the BTWC recognizes the particular importance of strengthening the Convention. We strongly believe that the only sustainable method to reach this goal is through multilateral negotiations aimed at concluding a non-discriminatory, legally-binding agreement, dealing with all the Articles of the Convention in a balanced and comprehensive manner that can not exclude the negotiation and establishment of a verification mechanism. The adoption of such a mechanism could minimize the possibility of the use of bacteriological (biological) agents as weapons.*

Cuba then pointed out the differences between States Parties regarding the level of development and their national capabilities and resources, saying that *Although one of the main purposes of Article X of the Convention is precisely to narrow these gaps, the BTWC lacks an adequate mechanism for effective implementation of Article X. The statement concluded by recalling that At the 2009 Expert Meeting our Group introduced a Working Paper on the establishment of a mechanism for an effective implementation of Article X (BWC/MSP/2009/MX/WP.24). We consider that its content is directly related with the topic we will discuss, and contains several proposals that could be good basis for future agreements.*

**Belgium** then spoke on behalf of the **European Union**, noting that the Candidate Countries Turkey, Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Iceland, the Countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidates Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia as well as Ukraine, Moldova, Armenia and Georgia align themselves with this declaration. The statement then reiterated that *The European Union strongly supports the BTWC as a key component of the international non-proliferation and disarmament framework. The BTWC is the cornerstone of international efforts to prevent biological agents from ever being developed and used as weapons. We actively promote the universalisation and national implementation*

of and full compliance with the Treaty. The European Union also remains committed towards identifying effective mechanisms to strengthen and verify compliance with the Convention.

Belgium then set out the EU framework for responding to an alleged use of a biological weapon. The statement noted that *the risks and threats of CBRN incidents could be of natural, accidental or intentional origin, including terrorist act. Mitigating the effects of CBRN incidents require early detection and diagnosis, followed by the prompt activation of an effective response.* It added that *International cooperation involving and supporting international organisations like WHO, FAO, OIE and Interpol as well as with non-governmental actors working on infectious diseases will also in the future be the key to strengthening structures and capacities in disease surveillance, detection, diagnostics, and containment of infectious diseases. Such cooperation is both consistent with the BTWC, and serves to support and strengthen the Convention.*

The statement then set out what the EU is doing to support the Convention in several areas: *The European Union is committed to promote the international non-proliferation and disarmament conventions and to provide assistance to third countries with a view to improving regulatory and legal frameworks as well as to strengthening and building local capacities. In addition, The European Union is also contributing to enhance bio-safety and bio-security in third countries, through comprehensive projects aiming at reinforcing local capacities in a sustainable manner. Furthermore, over the past year, the EU has been active in particular on Confidence-Building Measures because the EU considers the CBM as a useful and important tool for the implementation of the BTWC. A CBM guide was launched during the States Parties meeting in December 2009. The EU carried out demarches to all States Parties which have never submitted CBM declarations or have not done so since 2006.* The statement then noted that the EU were holding a one-day CBM workshop on Thursday 26 August which would be open to all States Parties and observer delegations.

**Australia** then spoke on behalf of the **Western Group**, saying *Delegations will be aware that in accordance with the principle of rotation of functions in the BWC, the Western Group has the honour to nominate the Chair for the seventh BWC Review Conference in 2011. As coordinator of the BWC Western Group, Australia has the honour to inform the Meeting of Experts that the group met on 28 July and endorsed Ambassador Paul van den IJssel of The Netherlands as its nominee. This nomination will be formally presented to the BWC Meeting of States Parties in Geneva in December.*

Following these three group statements, there were a number of statements made by individual States Parties.

**The United States of America** spoke, saying that *The topic of our discussions this week is “effective action on the provision of assistance and coordination with relevant organizations upon request in the case of alleged use of biological or toxin weapons.” Confidence that such*

*assistance will be available strengthens the Biological Weapons Convention. If commitments to provide assistance are real, credible, and effective, they can serve as an incentive for States to join the Convention, and a deterrent to those who might consider using biological weapons. The United States takes this issue very seriously. International partnerships are central to the U.S. National Strategy for Countering Biological Threats issued in November of last year. We work on a number of fronts to build both national and international capacity for effective response to an actual or suspected biological attack, including effective coordination and assistance, and most importantly we work to ensure that such attacks never happen.*

The statement went added that *effective action on the provision of assistance cannot begin with a case of use or alleged use. In our domestic efforts, the United States has come to appreciate that the key to effective response to a biological event – whether we are dealing with an event on our own territory or assisting others – is preparedness. It is the steps that we take before an event that determine how successful we will be in dealing with an attack, or other disease outbreak, should it take place. But that idea needs to be taken one step further. It is not only our preparedness that is important, but also the preparedness of other nations. We first learned this lesson in our efforts to design a federal response to an attack on U.S. soil, where it quickly became apparent that for our national response to be rapid and effective, entities at the state and local level also needed to be prepared. As a result, we have launched major domestic efforts to build capacity and preparedness at the state and local levels across the United States. It went on to note *Effective international response to a biological attack depends to a significant extent on the preparedness of the State Party seeking assistance. The more rapidly and accurately a state can identify a threat, assess its needs, and communicate with the international community, the more effective international assistance and response can be.**

**The Russian Federation** then spoke, saying that *Consideration and adoption of necessary measures to prevent and eliminate the outbreaks of infectious diseases are the domestic prerogative of States. The statement went on to say that *If a State Party to the BTWC has serious reasons to suspect that the cause of an outbreak in its territory is biological weapons, it can:**

- *consult under Article V of the BWC, with any State Party regarding the implementation of the provisions of the Convention by a country whose violation of the BWC would cause biological weapons getting into the environment;*
- *under Article VI, lodge a complaint with the UN Security Council ...;*
- *appeal to the UN Secretary-General with a request to investigate an alleged use of biological weapons against it by another country in war.*

It pointed out that *The use of biological or toxin weapons is a violation of the Convention, as it was reaffirmed by States Parties at the 4th BWC Review Conference.*

The statement continued: *Despite the existence of the above-mentioned mechanisms, we believe that the existing international legal framework for providing assistance*

to a State in case of alleged use against it of biological or toxin weapons is not sufficient. There is no full understanding of how to act in case there is a necessity to investigate a possible use of bioweapons. There are no clear procedures for submitting requests and providing assistance. We believe that these issues are extremely important and should be discussed at the VII BWC Review Conference and, in case a relevant decision is adopted, be included in the agenda of the meeting during the next intersessional period.

**Chile** then spoke, saying that Chile condemns the military use of biological, chemical, nuclear and radiological weapons by any country and in any place or in any circumstance; we support a total disarmament thereof and the non-proliferation of CBR and weapons and their means of delivery; we defend the rights of States to benefit from the peaceful use of the scientific developments of chemistry, biology and nuclear energy through exchange of information and international cooperation. The statement continued: we are aware in our country of having the appropriate legal provisions that support the full application of the Convention which prohibits the use of WMDs and guarantees the achievement of its objectives and, as such, we are working with the scientific community and the industrial sector and other related private and public agencies to achieve as soon as possible the targets we have set ourselves. In this respect, we have developed a bill, a draft law, for the prohibition of weapons of mass destruction which considers the application of the Convention on the Prohibition of Biological Weapons; it also contemplates the Convention on the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and the Treaties on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons and for this bill we have enjoyed the valuable cooperation of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and also the NGO called VERTIC whom we would like to publicly thank for their support. We hope that the intense work of coordination that this legal initiative requires will occur with the least amount of delay and will be brought towards our Parliament as soon as possible for its adoption and we hope that this will occur this year or next year at the latest.

**Indonesia** then spoke, saying that Indonesia believes that the continuing existence of biological weapons and the potential for them to be illegally acquired and used by irresponsible parties constitutes a growing threat to global peace and security. From the past to present day, governments, laboratories and industries have faced, and continue to face, a number of serious diseases such as avian influenza, rabies, salmonella, anthrax and, most recently swine flu. Unfortunately, it is unlikely that swine flu will be the last we see of these potentially deadly diseases. The statement went on to note We believe that every individual state should assume responsibility for the safety and security of all biological materials and facilities, related to both humans and animals, in their respective countries. We must all work to ensure that such materials and facilities are safe and secure from theft, sabotage, unauthorized release and other illicit activities. Indonesia went on to outline what has transpired recently

in Indonesia vis-à-vis efforts to enhance international cooperation. We do hope others would follow suit, for the sake of transparency and exchange of information in order to improve capacity building efforts and effective action in pursuant of the objective of the Convention. We can learn from each other. Being well prepared is certainly a virtue.

**China** then spoke, saying that:

- I. States Parties bear primary responsibilities in response to and investigation of alleged use of biological weapons. Therefore States Parties should take appropriate measures to establish and improve response and investigation mechanisms according to their own circumstances and enhance their capacity building in disease surveillance, anti-bioterrorism, public health response and investigation.
- II. China supports States Parties carry out assistance according to Article VI of the Convention.
- III. The relevant international organizations such as the World Health Organization, World Organization for Animal Health, and Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations can play an active role in helping States Parties enhancing their capacity building in the field of disease surveillance, control and response.
- IV. Investigation of alleged use of biological weapons is a complicated and sensitive issue. Any State Party may lodge a complaint with the Security Council according to Article VI of the Convention.

China then outlined its two working papers (WP.8 and WP. 9) to the Meeting of Experts. The statement went on to say that *The Seventh Review Conference of the Convention will be held in Geneva next year. States Parties should take full advantage of this opportunity and explore ways to further enhance the authority, effectiveness and universalization of the Convention under new circumstances so that the Convention can keep pace with the time and play a greater role.* China then added that China, Canada and the ISU would co-host an international workshop on *Strengthening International Efforts to Prevent the Proliferation of Biological Weapons: the Role of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention in Beijing, China this November.* The workshop will provide a forum for preparation for the incoming Review Conference and for discussion of full range of issues surrounding the Review Conference such as objectives and outcomes of the Review Conference and the future for the biological arms control process etc.

**Saudi Arabia** then spoke, saying that *the Convention ... unquestionably constitutes an important requirement for an international order in which security and stability prevail.* The statement went on to outline the steps that Saudi Arabia has taken to implement the Convention and the recent international workshop to raise awareness of the Convention which was attended by members of the ISU and of VERTIC. The statement concluded by *urging all States who have not yet acceded to the Convention to take the necessary steps to do so. The Kingdom also trusts that all the States Parties to the Convention will participate diligently in the preparation for the Seventh Review Conference.*

**Malaysia** then spoke, saying that *We ... hope at this Meeting, States Parties will renew their commitments and undertakings towards promoting and enhancing international cooperation as enshrined in Article X of the Convention. We hope to hear offers made by States Parties in regard to the sharing of expertise and technical assistance in the areas of BWC implementation. This is in line with Article X of the Convention, which calls for the fullest possible exchange of equipment, technical, scientific and technology for the prevention of diseases and other peaceful uses which we feel is pivotal to fulfil the main mandate of the theme of our discussion this year.* The statement went on to say that Malaysia has enacted a new comprehensive law on export control, known as the Strategic Trade Act 2010, and added that Malaysia is also finalizing the draft Biological Weapons Bill. The statement concluded by outlining various activities that Malaysia had participated in during the past year *to promote coordination and improve national capabilities with regard to disease surveillance, detection and diagnosis and public health systems.*

**Pakistan** then spoke, saying that *the BWC is an important and critical part of the global security architecture. As the first multilaterally negotiated legal instrument to proscribe and eliminate an entire category of weapons of mass destruction, BWC has enhanced and strengthened international peace and security. This instrument is a landmark in the field of arms control and disarmament. It has served the international community well so far. The absence of a verification protocol, however, leaves a vacuum. This gap should be filled sooner rather than later.*

In regard to the topic for this year, the statement went on to say that *Pakistan ... strongly believes that States with advanced knowledge in the field of biological sciences must share it with other States. We should not treat this issues as part of the North versus South divide. Rather this should be pursued as a joint venture to ensure global safety and security. Effective implementation of Article X of the Convention should form a key facet of this joint venture, whereby, states can benefit from the technological advances in the biological field in order to enhance national capacities and improve public health systems for better surveillance, effective detection and appropriate diagnosis.* Pakistan then outlined various steps that had been taken for the effective implementation of the BWC which include *Important progress has been made towards the enactment of enabling legislation for the implementation of the BWC. In this regard the draft BWC Implementation Act 2010, after approval in principle by the federal cabinet, has been submitted to the Parliament for its approval. It is currently going through the legislative process. In addition, Pakistan intends to prepare and then submit our BWC related CBMs to ISU. Moreover, the statement added that Following a broad based inter-ministerial process, draft 'Guidelines for Development of Codes of Conduct for the Life Scientists' have been drafted and will be finalized soon.* The statement concluded by noting: *Next year we will hold the seventh Review Conference. This is an important moment in BWC history. The mechanism of Review Conferences has enabled the*

*BWC to remain in step with the changes in the fields of life sciences as well as the transformed global strategic landscape. The Review Conference must positively address the issue of verification protocol, seek enhanced implementation of the Convention, particularly Article X and promote universalization.*

**Iran** then spoke, saying that *The BWC has a pivotal role to play in combating and eradicating the threat of biological weapons. We hope the multilateral negotiations would be resumed on a legally binding instrument to comprehensively strengthen the convention including in the area of international cooperation for peaceful purposes. During our previous meeting in last December we witnessed once more the rejection of multilateralism by a certain State Party that re-emphasized its refusal of such negotiations. My delegation strongly urges the above-mentioned Party to revisit its position and to abide by the wish of international community for concluding a multilaterally negotiated legally binding instrument to strengthen the Convention.*

Iran went on to speak about the topic being considered this year and noted that *Iran would like to underline the necessity to consider the detailed procedure for assistance in order to ensure that States Parties, if requested, would provide timely emergency assistance. Should a request for assistance be made, the procedure shall facilitate the prompt response by States Parties in order to dispatch timely emergency and humanitarian assistance to the requesting State Party which has been exposed to danger as a result of the threat or use of biological weapons. The next Review Conference would be an excellent opportunity to further discuss this issue and to make a decision on developing such a procedure and in this context to mandate the United Nations relevant body to establish an inventory of the types of assistance that the States parties could provide pursuant to Article VII if requested.* The statement went on to say that *strengthening national preparedness of States Parties, in particular that of the developing countries is a matter of high importance. No need to say that enhancing the national capabilities of the States Parties requires international cooperation as it is provided for, in Article X of the BWC. It is a source of concern and a matter of regret that lack of proper implementation of Article X prevents the less developed and developing States Parties from fulfilling their programs in this regard, including their plans to improve the effectiveness of national capability and preparedness for diagnosis, surveillance, prevention, control and treatment of diseases as referred to by Article VII of the Convention. Turning a blind eye to this issue has previously caused inter alia the outbreak and spread of emerging and reemerging diseases such as Swine Flu at the international level ....* The statement concluded by saying that *As we are approaching the seventh BWC Review Conference, my delegation would also like to seize this opportunity to strongly encourage States Parties to prepare and submit their reports on the implementation of Article X of the Convention pursuant to paragraph 54 of the Final Document of the Sixth BWC Review Conference at the earliest possible before the next Review Conference.*



**Mexico** then spoke, saying that *Mexico would like to add its voice to what was said by Cuba on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement. My country is an observer to the NAM and we would also like to reiterate our commitment to the full fulfilment of this Convention.* The statement then outlined steps that had been taken by Mexico in relation to the topic being considered in 2010. It noted that *Since 2002, Mexico has had a National Plan for Preparedness and Responsiveness for terrorist attacks and we also have a Handbook for Healthcare which includes biological weapons as a threat before which the Government of Mexico must be prepared in an ongoing fashion and continuously. From the point of view of public health, Mexico has a response capacity which is sufficient to counter terrorist attacks on the national territory. We need however programmes and strengthening programmes to guarantee more effectively our response capacity in this sensitive area of national security.*

**Morocco** then spoke, saying that *The Convention on Biological Weapons is one of the three pillars of the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and it must be tackled with particular attention given the rapid development of the life sciences and the multiplication of the double-use risk. We welcome therefore the choice of the theme of this meeting this week, which is organized around the provision of assistance and coordination with the other competent organizations for all those States that request it in the case of the alleged use of biological weapons, including the strengthening of national capacity in terms of screening and diagnosis of illnesses as well as the improvement of the public health system. My delegation is convinced that the promotion of assistance and coordination in the context of the Convention will be a key factor to strengthen the universality thereof. Indeed, the States Parties would be better inclined to accede to the Convention if they knew that they can rely on the support and assistance of the States Parties in the case of alleged use of biological weapons by another party. The statement added that An effective use against the proliferation of viral pandemics must be led in a coordinated fashion regionally and internationally. In the light of this, it is key for the States to strengthen the capabilities of their health systems in general and the capabilities of their laboratories in the areas of surveillance screening and diagnosis of illnesses. This can only occur, especially for developing countries, through the assistance of those countries that are able to provide assistance and through regional cooperation and international cooperation. Therefore, there is the need for implementation of effective application of Article X of the Convention.* The statement then outlined steps that had been taken by Morocco.

**India** then spoke, saying that *India attaches the highest importance to the full implementation of all provisions of the BWC. The topic of this year's meetings i.e. assistance and coordination in case of alleged use of biological weapons is especially relevant. We note that Articles VI and VII of the BWC provide the mechanism for investigation into alleged use of biological and toxin weapons*

*and to provide assistance in such cases. The statement went on to say that India has formulated national guidelines on biological disasters in consultation and active participation of experts drawn from various Government departments and institutions. These guidelines cover management of epidemics and pandemics and bioterrorism including agro-terrorism. It continued: International cooperation is an imperative both in cases of investigating alleged use of biological weapons and mitigation and control of the effects of the attack. In this context India would like to stress the importance of full and effective implementation of Article X of the Convention.* The statement then outlined steps that have been taken by India and concluded by saying *I would like to reiterate that India attaches the highest priority to the further strengthening of the BWC, ensure its full implementation by all States Parties and make it universal. We believe that only a multilaterally agreed mechanism for verification of compliance can provide the assurance that all States Parties to the Convention are in compliance with their obligations under the BWC.*

**Algeria** then spoke, saying that *Our delegation fully endorses the statement by Cuba delivered on behalf of the Non-Aligned Group and, in particular, with respect to those aspects that pertain to the implementation of Article X and the socioeconomic development dimension of the Convention on Biological Weapons. The Convention on Biological Weapons, despite its drawbacks, is still a multilateral expression of the determination of the international community to prevent the proliferation of biological weapons and to eliminate them. Indeed, progress made by life sciences and microbiology, as well as their applications in various areas, opens up both military and civilian options and thus worsens the risks of having these arms used, risks which are already omnipresent. Algeria is deeply attached to the Convention and considers that only the effective, complete and balanced implementation of its provisions and its universality in a global disarmament approach can remove the threat that these weapons pose to humanity. The statement noted that National ownership of necessary capacities to respond to possible allegations are an essential element of the Convention and in this connection the Algerian delegation attaches great importance to the provisions of Article X of the Convention relating to allowing developing countries to acquire the necessary resources to implement the Convention. It concluded by saying *The Algerian delegation believes that the goal of the process of our intersessional meetings ought to be to enable us to strengthen the normative framework for the Convention, including via a verification mechanism, because in the absence of such a mechanism the scope of the Convention will remain limited. On the eve of the Seventh Review Conference, it is our hope that States Parties will be able to reach a compromise in order to envisage relaunching negotiations on this subject.**

**Australia** then spoke, providing some information on behalf of the Philippines, the United States and Australia — the three countries that will co-chair an ASEAN Regional Forum

Workshop on *Biorisk Management and Strengthening Biosecurity* in Manila from 28 to 30 September 2010. The workshop will focus on the implementation of best practice biorisk management for the prevention of accidental release or intentional misuse of human and animal pathogens. This workshop will build on the first ASEAN Regional Forum Workshop on Biological Threat Reduction, held in 2009, which covered the basic concepts of biosecurity and biosafety in preventing bioterrorism. This will be a significant contribution to the biosecurity core area of the counter-terrorism work plan of the ASEAN Regional Forum. The statement then outlined the topics to be covered in the workshop programme.

**The Philippines** then spoke, saying *The Philippines fully supports the statement made by ... Cuba ... on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, and reiterates its call for the enhancement of mechanisms for the implementation of Article X, a vital pillar for the BWC, and the advancement of both North-South and South-South biosafety and biosecurity cooperation.* The statement went on to express thanks for assistance provided by several bodies, including the EU Joint Action on the BWC, the US National Strategy on Countering Biological Threats, the G-8 Global Partnership Program and other bilateral initiatives.

The morning session then finished. In the afternoon, further statements were made.

**Armenia** spoke first, saying that *Integrity of the BWC with all elements equally considered is one of the key deliberations by the States Parties while implementing the Convention. We fully realize bringing together diverging interpretations may require significant efforts and certain time. Yet we are encouraged by the commitment by the States Parties to the goals of the Convention, which we believe will enable to set common ground and establish practical approaches to address the challenges we face.* The statement went on to say that whilst not wishing to diminish the significance of the challenge of responding to possible biological attack, *we believe that cooperative approach in prevention of that threat through strengthening confidence between States Parties, particularly at regional level, is of no less importance.*

**Argentina** then spoke, saying that *The need to give a coordinated response on the part of Member States Parties to the Convention so as to prevent and combat the possible use of biological weapons cannot but take into account the role played by existing organizations. In this context, both from the viewpoint of security (so as to investigate the origins of the alleged use as well as to identify and prosecute the culprits) and also from the viewpoint of the health response – that is, mitigating and monitoring the effects of a possible attack – we have at our disposal a significant number of tools which need to be identified so as to strengthen our national, regional and global capacities. These capacities are of fundamental importance for us to be able to achieve in a comprehensive way the objectives of this Convention.* The statement continued, noting that *The investigating mechanism*

*established within the framework of the United Nations General Secretariat is the method of investigating cases concerning the presumed use of biological weapons which, at the same time, makes it possible to channel international aid, allowing for a rapid response and to contain the attack. This mechanism, taken together with what is provided for in Article VI of the Convention, ensures that these investigations are carried out in a systematic, scientific and objective way. The statement concluded by saying that Argentina will continue its work concerning the integration and joining of interdisciplinary teams so as to strengthen activities so as to raise awareness about the mechanisms established by the United Nations for the investigation and containment of the effects of the supposed use of chemical, biological and toxin weapons.*

**Brazil** then spoke in regard to this year's topic, saying that *Although events of this kind are not common, it is vital for a country to be prepared in the form of an effective national plan of action which it can put into place in a swift manner. Under Article VI of the Biological Convention, it is also relevant for there to be efficient coordination between States and the relevant international organizations in the cases of assistance and investigation in particular. In this respect, the delegation of Brazil advocates an initiative to strengthen technical capacities, training of specialists, and this is particularly in the area of forensic science, and also assessing the strengths and weaknesses of laboratory networks.* The statement continued: *In the same way, we are interested in enhancing cooperation involving the transfer of technology and the strengthening of national controls by competent authorities and also the exchange of information among States. I would like to also state that the delegation of Brazil would like to see a strengthening, institutionally speaking, of the way in which we deal with the topic before the present meeting of the BWC. Brazil supports the strengthening of the Implementation Support Unit, which is a unit which should and must be strengthened so as to promote the coordination of activities between States and international organizations.*

**Norway** then spoke, saying in regard to this year's topic that *The topic emphasises the need for developing response mechanisms based on assistance from States Parties and cooperation with relevant international institutions as WHO, FAO, OIE as well as humanitarian relief agencies. It is important to bear in mind that there are an increasing number of multilateral response mechanisms available, and under development, in cases of outbreak of diseases. For us it must be essential to identify possible gaps and consider how these could be overcome. In addition to response mechanisms, I would like to emphasise that preventive measures related to different forms of capacity building should be highlighted through the implementation of article X. One example would be the introduction of training programmes to developing countries.* The statement went on to note that *Norway has engaged in a Laboratory Biorisk Management awareness training in developing countries together with WHO and DNV. The*



*purpose is to give biosafety personnel and scientific staff the required skills, aptitudes and network necessary to effectively manage biorisk by providing the necessary tools and expertise needed, also covering areas relating to pandemic preparedness and business continuity planning. We are ready to consider other approaches to enhance Article VII and Article X of the Convention, and will follow carefully the discussion during this week to learn from other experiences. Norway then added that We would also use the opportunity to highlight that Norway, Switzerland and Germany in cooperation with Geneva Forum have conducted a series of workshops on the promotion of Confidence Building Measures in 2009-2010. This is motivated by our desire to have a discussion on a possible revision of the existing CBMs in the Meeting of State Parties and next years Review Conference in order to increase the universality, transparency and functionality of the CBMs. We would also hope to see the CBMs as a legally binding obligation after the Review Conference in 2011. This might be difficult to achieve, but at least we should look seriously into steps on how to encourage all State Parties to provide an annual report, containing all relevant information in relation to compliance of the BWC.*

**Belarus** then spoke, saying [we] would like to associate ourselves with the statement made by the delegation of Cuba on behalf of the States of the Group of Non-Aligned countries. The statement noted that the topic for this year opens up the possibility for us to exchange information of a broad nature and information which is relevant in terms of ensuring the biosecurity and safety of States. The statement then outlined the relevant capabilities within Belarus.

**The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia** then spoke, saying that the Republic of Macedonia has undertaken comprehensive activities to fully implement the obligations related to the BTWC. The statement went on to say that Having adopted many laws and regulations nationally, provides me with the opportunity to state that we constructed significant and comprehensive measures in prevention of nonproliferation of the bio-toxins and biological agents, as it is set out in the Convention. I am very pleased to inform that we have enjoyed the support of the EU Joint Action against proliferation of the WMD through the Program between the EU and UNODA, i.e. the ISU of the BWC in Geneva. We have hosted the visit of two EU experts in July 2010, that have assisted us with their observations and their valuable recommendations for the final stage of preparation of the CBMs report that we will submit to the ISU of BTWC during this week. We do believe that by making these efforts we are directly contributing for further universalization of the provisions of the Convention that we have all committed to implement.

This completed the opening plenary session of statements by States Parties. As there was some time available before the planned informal session for the statements by NGO's, the Chairman invited the **World Organization for Animal Health** to make its statement. (This and later presentations

and statements made on Tuesday and later in the week are available on the unog.ch/bwc website).

After suspending the session to hear the statements from NGOs as reported below, the formal session was resumed to enable one further opening statement by a State Party:

**Kenya** then spoke saying that *In Kenya we continue to experience a high burden of communicable diseases such as malaria, HIV/AIDS, TB, diarrhea and sporadic outbreaks of infectious diseases such as anthrax, influenza a (H1N1) 2009 (swine flu), cholera, flatotoxicosis, among others. This underlines the need for capacity development in terms of human resources, infrastructure and financial resource mobilization. My delegation welcomes the priority this meeting has placed on exchange of information aimed at enhancing the capacities that facilitate the necessary intervention measures. These capacities will also be essential for an effective response to bioterror attack.* The statement then outlined six measures that Kenya has initiated to face these dangers and added that *In addition to the to the above measures the Government has established a national biological & toxin weapons committee, to fast track the implementation of Biological Weapons Convention.*

Prior to the statement by Kenya the formal meeting had been suspended and resumed with the Chairman remaining in the chair to hear statements — which are available at unog.ch/bwc — from seven NGOs who spoke in the following order:

- a. **The University of Bradford.** Graham S Pearson.
- b. **VERTIC (Verification Research, Training and Information Centre).** Rocío Escauriaza Leal.
- c. **Pax Christi International.** Trevor Griffiths.
- d. **Landau Network, Italy, Defence Medical College of Japan and University of Bradford.** Simon Whitby.
- e. **London School of Economics of the University of London.** Filippa Lentzos.
- f. **University of Exeter.** Brian Rappert.
- g. **Biosecurity Working Group of the InterAcademy Panel on International Issues.** Jo Husbands.

The Chairman then invited independent expert Anupa Gupte to make a presentation. As already noted above, the formal meeting then resumed to allow Kenya to make its statement and the meeting was then closed for the day.

In addition, it should be noted that, as at the Sixth Review Conference and at the Meeting of Experts 2007, 2008 and 2009, and the Meeting of States Parties 2007, 2008 and 2009, Richard Guthrie in association with the BioWeapons Prevention Project provided daily reports on the Meeting of Experts that were made available in hard copy to the delegations as well as electronically. These reports are available at <http://www.bwpp.org/reports.html>.

## Side Events

During the Meeting of Experts there were side events at lunchtime each day from Monday to Thursday, an evening event on Monday 23 August, as well as breakfast events at 0900am each day from Tuesday 24 to Friday 27 August.

The first lunchtime event on **Monday 23 August** was a launch by Graham Pearson and Malcolm Dando of the University of Bradford of three Review Conference Papers: No.21 *Preparing for the BTWC Seventh Review Conference in 2011*; No.22 *An Annual Meeting for the BTWC*; and No.23 *An Accountability Framework for the BTWC*. The evening event on Monday 23 August was an ISU *Speed Networking* occasion.

On **Tuesday 24 August**, the breakfast event was a WHO Workshop on the Implementation of the International Health Regulations (IHR) which was chaired by Stella Chungong, Presentations by Max Hardiman and Helge Hollmeyer focused on the requirements of the IHR that all States to establish national core public health capacities to detect, assess and respond to public health events and to notify or otherwise communicate them to the WHO, regardless of the event's origin or source.

Tuesday's lunch-time event was organized by the InterAcademy Panel on International Issues in conjunction with the University of Exeter and entitled *Strengthening the Prohibition through Education: Experiences, Resources and Models*. It was chaired by Ambassador Sergiy Komisarenko of the Ukraine and had a panel consisting of Brian Rappert (Exeter), Francois Garraux (Switzerland), Masamichi Minehata (Bradford), Michael Barr (Newcastle), David Friedman (Institute for National Security Studies), Ake Forsberg (Swedish Defence Research Agency), Simon Whitby (Bradford) and Ben Rusek (National Academy of Sciences).

On **Wednesday 25 August**, the breakfast event was organized by the Governments of Germany, Norway and Switzerland in conjunction with the Geneva Forum to launch a report, *Preparing for a Comprehensive Review of the CBM Mechanism at the Seventh BWC Review Conference*, derived from three workshops sponsored by the three governments. The event was chaired by Silvia Cattaneo (Geneva Forum) with presentations given by Riccarda Torriani (Switzerland), Jon Erik Stromo (Norway), Filippa Lentzos (LSE) and Volker Beck (Germany).

Wednesday's lunch-time event was organized by the BWC ISU in conjunction with the Geneva Forum and with sponsorship from the Government of Canada. It was entitled *Synthetic Biology: Engineering a Safer Future*, chaired by Piers Millett (ISU) with presentations given by Jane Calvert (Edinburgh), Markus Schmidt (Organisation for International Dialogue and Conflict Management) and Eleonore Pawels (Woodrow Wilson International Center).

On **Thursday 26 August**, the breakfast event was organized by the US Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and entitled *Global Efforts to Enhance Health and Law Enforcement Cooperation*. The meeting was co-chaired by Kristine Beardsley (FBI) and Lisa Rotz (CDC) with presentations being given by Scott Sheppard (Royal Canadian Mounted Police), Anthony Kessel (Health Protection Agency, UK) and Alan King (Metropolitan Police, UK).

Thursday's lunch-time event was organized by the International Security and Biopolicy Institute (ISBI) and entitled *The 7th BWC Review Conference – Three Proposals for Progress*. Presentations were given by Robert Kadlec (ISBI), Randall Murch (Virginia Tech) and Barry Kellman (ISBI).

Also during Thursday, throughout the day from 08.45 to 17.30, there was a parallel event entitled the *First European Union Joint Action Workshop on Confidence-Building Measures (CBMs)*. This began with a Keynote Address by Ambassador Pedro Oyarce of Chile and was followed by presentations by Bruno Hanses (EU), Richard Lennane (ISU), Kiichiro Iwase (Japan), Lela Bakanidze (Georgia), Dirk Dons (Belgium), Vincent Storimans (The Netherlands), Ake Forsberg (Sweden), Daniel Omondi (Kenya), Andrew Halliday (Canada), Marie-Gaelle Robles (France), Karin Hjalmarsson (EU), Dusko Uzonovski (Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia), Jose Embang (The Philippines), Volker Beck (Germany) and Lorna Miller (UK). The workshop was aimed at helping States Parties to understand the processes involved in compiling CBM submissions.

On **Friday 27 August**, the breakfast event was a presentation by Anupa Gupte entitled *International Cooperation Mechanisms for Scientific, Technical and Technological Matters of BWC Implementation*.

## Tuesday 24 August 2010

The Meeting of Experts resumed on the morning of Tuesday 24 August 2010 with a session of presentations by States Parties on *National efforts for assistance and coordination*. Presentations in working session 1 were given in the following order: Japan, UK, Canada, European Union, Ukraine, UK, France, Nigeria, and Turkey. In the afternoon session (working session 2), further presentations were made by USA, UK, Canada, Kenya, Pakistan, Canada and India. Many of these are available on the unog.ch/bwc website. The Tuesday afternoon session was adjourned at 16.30 for the Poster Session. There were some 15 posters:

1. *Preventing the Misuse of Dual-Use Science through Education: Applied Dual-Use Biosecurity Education: Online Distance learning Train-the-Trainer Module*, Simon Whitby, University of Bradford.
2. *Biosecurity, Education and Life Sciences; Towards a Plan of Action 2011*, Masamichi Minehata, University of Exeter.
3. *Pakistan Public health: Surveillance and Response*. Aamer Ikram, Ministry of Health, Pakistan.
4. *A Networking Approach Towards CBRN Risk Mitigation*. Mike Thornton, European Commission Joint Research Committee.
5. *Bio-Risk Management, Enhancing National Bio-Preparedness*. Bruno Hanses, European Union.
6. *National Capacities of Alert and response for Infectious Diseases under the IHR[2005]*. Chile, 2010. Andrea Olea, Government of Chile.
7. *The Challenge of Evidence*. Didier Hilaire, Ministry of Defence, France.

8. *High-Containment Laboratory Spiez*. Cedric Invernizzi, Spiez Laboratory, Switzerland.
9. *Dual Use Biosecurity Education Module Resource*. Malcolm Dando, National Defence Medical College, Japan.
10. *National Capabilities for Disease Surveillance, Detection and Diagnosis and Global Cooperation Network in the Republic of Korea*. Hei Chan Lee, Sun Moon University.
11. *How to Conduct an Epidemiological Assessment of Outbreaks*. George Christopher, U.S. Army Medical Research Institute of Infectious Diseases.
12. *Joint Public Health and Law Enforcement Investigations "Enhancing Relationships to Improve Biothreat Readiness"*. Kris Beardsley, US Federal Bureau of Investigation and Lisa Rotz, US Centers for Disease Control.
13. *Bio-Security 2007 Table Top Exercise in Japan*. Mitsuyoshi Urashima, Jikei University School of Medicine.
14. *Public Health and Medical Response to Natural Occurrence, Accidental Release, or Deliberate Use of Biological Agents*. Dana Perkins, US Department of Health and Human Services.
15. *eHealth-Online Training for Healthcare Professionals*. Emma Blake, Health Protection Agency, United Kingdom.

### **Wednesday 25 August 2010**

The Meeting of Experts continued on the morning of Wednesday 25 August in working session 3 for *Presentations from international organizations and States Parties on provisions of assistance and coordination with relevant organizations (health aspects)*. Presentations were given by the World Health Organization (WHO), the UN Office of Disarmament Affairs (UNODA), Sweden, the UK, Republic of Korea, Georgia and the USA, China, Germany and the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) and, after lunch, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). The UNODA presentation was made by Nikita Smidovitch and outlined the ongoing steps to update the rosters of experts and laboratories in support of the Secretary-General's mechanism to investigate alleged use of chemical, biological or toxin weapons.

In the afternoon, working session 4 considered *Presentations from international organizations and States Parties on provisions of assistance and coordination with relevant organizations (security aspects)*. Presentations were given by Germany, the UK, Nigeria, Switzerland and the USA, Interpol and the Netherlands, Canada and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW). The Chairman indicated that three further presentations under this topic would be made on Thursday morning.

### **Thursday 26 August 2010**

The Meeting of Experts resumed on the morning of Thursday 26 August with the further presentations by the OPCW and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) which were carried over from the previous day.

The meeting then went on to consider the topic for working session 5: *Presentations from States parties on improving national capabilities for disease surveillance, detection and diagnosis and public health systems*. Presentations were given by Chile, South Africa, Republic of Korea, Japan, China and Germany.

After lunch there was an informal panel discussion entitled *Scientific and Technological Advances Relevant to Responding to the Alleged use of Biological Weapons*. This was chaired by Ambassador Sergiy Komisarenko of the Ukraine and had a panel made up of the two invited guests of the meeting, Irma Makalinao (University of the Philippines College of Medicine) and Randall Murch (Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University). The third member of the panel was Anwar Nasim (OIC [Organisation of the Islamic Conference] Standing Committee on Scientific and Technological Cooperation).

Following the panel discussion, working session 6 on *Presentations from States Parties on improving national capabilities to conduct criminal enquiries and for a security response* took place with presentations from France, Czech Republic, Iraq, Indonesia, Switzerland, France and Mexico. Some of these were contributions to the working session 5 on Thursday morning.

### **Friday 27 August 2010**

On Friday morning, there were carried over presentations from the Thursday working sessions from the European Union (as an international organization), Mexico, Romania, the UK and Brazil. Then before considering the report of the Meeting of Experts, the Chairman gave a verbal report on progress towards universalization of the Convention. He regretted that no countries had acceded to the BWC since the Meeting of States Parties in December 2008, when on the last day of that meeting the accession of the Cook Islands had brought the total of States Parties to 163. Ambassador Oyarce reported that both Cameroon and Malawi had indicated that they had completed the internal procedures required for accession. Other States, such as Angola and Tanzania had started internal procedures and the Chairman said there were positive signs from Côte d'Ivoire. A formal report on universalization will be given to the Meeting of States Parties in December.

The meeting then considered the report of the Meeting of Experts which had been circulated on Thursday afternoon, later updated as CRP.2. together with its appendix. The appendix consisted of a compilation of the *Considerations, Lessons, Perspectives, Recommendations, Conclusions and Proposals Drawn From the Presentations, Statements, Working Papers and Interventions on the Topics Under Discussion at the Meeting* which had been circulated at 13.00 on Thursday afternoon as CRP.1, together with a first update circulated on the Friday morning and a second update circulated later the same day. States Parties were encouraged, as at previous Meetings of Experts, to review the appendix and to let the ISU have any suggestions for amendment early in the following week.

The report of the meeting was adopted. Following adoption of the report, the Chairman noted that 150 of the 450 delegates

present at the meeting had flown in from their countries – which he considered to be a high proportion for such a meeting. He described this as showing commitment. Looking toward the 2011 Review Conference, he noted a need to discuss issues with *no preconceived ideas* and a need to strengthen the ISU as part of enhancing the effectiveness of the Convention. There were then some concluding remarks on behalf of the regional groupings. Belgium on behalf of the EU said that *the EU ... commends the fact that this year has seen a record in the number of CBM submissions with some 70 states parties. The EU underlines the need to continue our efforts in this direction. In this regard, in the context of the EU Joint Action in support of the BTWC, the EU organized yesterday, in co-operation with the ISU, a successful workshop on CBMs which provided an opportunity to further discuss how to improve participation in the CBM mechanism.* The statement went on to conclude by saying *Finally, we are pleased to see that this week's experts meeting, in addition to addressing the specific topics on its agenda, has also given an impulse to starting preparations for the BTWC Review Conference in 2011. We look forward to further opportunities, in particular the Meeting of States Parties in December, for exchanging views and ideas with our international partners on the BTWC review process.*

### Outcome of the Meeting of Experts

During the Meeting of Experts, 15 Working Papers were submitted by 9 States Parties with the numbers submitted by individual States Parties ranging from one to three: Belgium (on behalf of the EU) (3, 4, 5), China (8, 9), Georgia (2), Germany (10, 11, 12), Japan (13), Republic of Korea (14), Switzerland (15), United Kingdom (6, 7), and the United States (1, 2, 15).

On the Thursday afternoon and on Friday morning, a preliminary compilation (CRP.2 and updates 1 and 2 to CRP.2) of the proposals made at the Meeting of Experts was circulated. An updated version was subsequently issued as Annex 1 to the report of the meeting (MX.3). Unlike in previous years, the proposals were not grouped under subheadings.

An analysis of the proposals in the tabulation below shows that they came from 32 States Parties, and 7 international organizations. The largest number of proposals came from Belgium on behalf of the EU (38 proposals). Other major contributors were the United States (26 together with Georgia and Switzerland), the United Kingdom (22), China (16), Brazil (13), Indonesia (13), Pakistan (11), and India (10). From the intergovernmental organizations, the largest number of proposals came from INTERPOL (10). No proposals came from the guests of the meeting.

As in previous years, the Chairman has said that, for the Meeting of States Parties, he will create a synthesis paper that distills the essence of the many ideas and proposals contained in Annex I to the report of the Meeting of Experts.

State Party	Number of proposals
Algeria	4
Argentina	6
Australia	7
Belgium on behalf of EU	38
Brazil	13
Canada	3
Chile	4
China	16
Cuba on behalf of NAM	7
France	8
Georgia & USA	9
Germany	8
India	10
Indonesia	13
Iran	8
Iraq	1
Japan	2
Kenya	2
Malaysia	1
Mexico	8
Morocco	3
Nigeria	4
Pakistan	11
Republic of Korea	1
Romania	3
Russian Federation	7
South Africa	12
Sweden	1
Switzerland	11
Switzerland & USA	3
Turkey	2
United Kingdom	22
United States	14
<b>Total (No. of States Parties)</b>	<b>262 (32)</b>

The analysis by international organization and guests of the meeting is provided below.

International organization	Number of proposals
FAO	3
ICRC	1
INTERPOL	10
OIE	9
OPCW	3
UNODA	2
WHO	7
Sub-Total	35
Guests of the meeting	Nil
<b>Overall Total (including States Parties)</b>	<b>297</b>

## Reflections

The Meeting of Experts had a good participation with close to 450 participants from 89 States Parties, of whom 200 came from capitals, 4 Signatory States, 2 States non-Party as well as from IGOs, guests of the meeting and NGOs.

The poster session was held on the Tuesday afternoon from 16.30 to 18.00. Participation was encouraged further by the fact that a reception was held at the same time and in the same place as the posters by courtesy of the delegation of Japan and its Ambassador, Yasunori Hakayama. Also, this time, the ISU provided a helpful listing of the posters.

There was one panel discussion on Thursday afternoon which considered *Scientific and Technologic Advances Relevant to Responding to the Alleged Use of Biological Weapons*. This was chaired by Ambassador Sergiy Komisarenko of the Ukraine rather than by the Chairman of the Meeting of Experts. It appears that, as at the Meeting of Experts in 2009, the panel discussion was regarded as an informal session and it is not explicitly mentioned in the report of the meeting, although the Chairman in his opening remarks stated that the panel discussions would take place in an open session; however, unlike the suspension of the formal meeting prior to the statements by NGOs there was no similar suspension prior to the discussion panel. In addition, some of the points made during the panel discussion are recorded in the list in Annex I. The panel discussion nevertheless provided useful wider insights and will have helped the States Parties to appreciate some additional issues relating to the topic for 2010.

It is noted that at this Meeting of Experts, whilst the EU again made a group statement and presented both coordinated working papers and working papers by individual members of the EU, neither the JACKSNNZ group nor the group of 12 Latin American States made a group statement or coordinated any working papers. Although the JACKSNNZ group (Japan, Australia, Canada, Republic of Korea, Switzerland, Norway and New Zealand) had had a group statement at MSP 2009, two member States (Australia, and Norway) did make opening statements at MX 2010. In addition, the group of twelve Latin American States (Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Mexico, Peru and Uruguay) did not continue the practice that they had successfully adopted at the Sixth Review Conference of having a group statement and of coordinating their working papers. Such group statements at the annual meetings are valuable as they show that the issues under consideration are being addressed both nationally and within the group.

On the subject of preparation for the Review Conference, as the then Chairman pointed out in February 2010: *Preparation for the Review Conference is not formally on our agenda for 2010, and is not part of my mandate as Chairman. Nevertheless, it is natural and welcome that States Parties should wish to start informal discussions on the Review Conference in the course of this year. I encourage delegations to consider holding seminars and other events to begin considering options for 2011, including on the margins of the Meeting of Experts and Meeting of States Parties.*

It was therefore excellent that in the opening statements

eleven (Cuba (NAM), Belgium (EU), Australia (WG), Russian Federation, China, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, Iran, India, Algeria and Norway) of the 24 States Parties who spoke looked ahead, either explicitly or indirectly, to the Seventh Review Conference in 2011. **Cuba** (on behalf of the NAM) said *The Group of Non-Aligned States Parties and other States Parties to the BTWC recognizes the particular importance of strengthening the Convention. We strongly believe that the only sustainable method to reach this goal is through multilateral negotiations aimed at concluding a non-discriminatory, legally-binding agreement, dealing with all the Articles of the Convention in a balanced and comprehensive manner that can not exclude the negotiation and establishment of a verification mechanism.* It went on to add that *the BTWC lacks an adequate mechanism for effective implementation of Article X.* **Belgium** (on behalf of the EU) said that *The European Union ... remains committed towards identifying effective mechanisms to strengthen and verify compliance with the Convention.* **Australia** (on behalf of the Western Group) said that the Western Group had endorsed Ambassador Paul van den IJssel of The Netherlands as its nominee to be President of the Seventh Review Conference. **The Russian Federation** said that in regard to alleged uses of biological weapons *There are no clear procedures for submitting requests and providing assistance. We believe that these issues are extremely important and should be discussed at the VII BWC Review Conference.* **China** said that *The Seventh Review Conference of the Convention will be held in Geneva next year. States Parties should take full advantage of this opportunity and explore ways to further enhance the authority, effectiveness and universalization of the Convention under new circumstances so that the Convention can keep pace with the time and play a greater role.* **Saudi Arabia** said that *The Kingdom also trusts that all the States Parties to the Convention will participate diligently in the preparation for the Seventh Review Conference.* **Pakistan** said that *Next year we will hold the seventh Review Conference. ... The Review Conference must positively address the issue of verification protocol, seek enhanced implementation of the Convention, particularly Article X and promote universalization.* **Iran** said that *We hope the multilateral negotiations would be resumed on a legally binding instrument to comprehensively strengthen the convention including in the area of international cooperation for peaceful purposes.* and went on to add that *As we are approaching the seventh BWC Review Conference, my delegation would also like to seize this opportunity to strongly encourage States Parties to prepare and submit their reports on the implementation of Article X of the Convention pursuant to paragraph 54 of the Final Document of the Sixth BWC Review Conference at the earliest possible before the next Review Conference.* **India** said that *India attaches the highest priority to the further strengthening of the BWC, ensure its full implementation by all States Parties and make it universal. We believe that only a multilaterally agreed mechanism for verification of compliance can provide the assurance that all States Parties to the Convention are in compliance with their obligations under the BWC.* **Algeria** said that

*The Algerian delegation believes that the goal of the process of our intersessional meetings ought to be to enable us to strengthen the normative framework for the Convention, including via a verification mechanism, because in the absence of such a mechanism the scope of the Convention will remain limited. On the eve of the Seventh Review Conference, it is our hope that States Parties will be able to reach a compromise in order to envisage relaunching negotiations on this subject. Norway* said (referring to the workshops on CBMs held by Norway in association with Germany and Switzerland) that *This is motivated by our desire to have a discussion on a possible revision of the existing CBMs in the Meeting of State Parties and next years Review Conference in order to increase the universality, transparency and functionality of the CBMs. We would also hope to see the CBMs as a legally binding obligation after the Review Conference in 2011. This might be difficult to achieve, but at least we should look seriously into steps on how to encourage all State Parties to provide an annual report, containing all relevant information in relation to compliance of the BWC.*

There were also several proposals regarding the Seventh Review Conference made by NGOs in their statements on

Monday afternoon and in the side sessions during the week.

When preparing for the Meeting of States Parties in Geneva in December 2010, there is much to be said for States Parties taking the opportunity of looking ahead to the Seventh Review Conference and setting out the outcomes that they seek to achieve. It is also to be recommended that States Parties – or groups of States Parties – should take the opportunity to submit Working Papers elaborating their ideas for the Seventh Review Conference to the December 2010 Meeting of States Parties. It is evident from the experience at past Review Conferences that novel ideas submitted for the first time at the Review Conference itself are too late to be given the consideration that they merit. The success of the Seventh Review Conference will largely reflect the extent to which the States Parties – and groups of States Parties – submit their proposals for the Review Conference well in advance of the Conference itself.

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*This review was written by Graham S. Pearson, HSP Advisory Board.*

The Harvard Sussex Program (HSP) is an inter-university collaboration seeking to insert the traditions, practice and benefits of scholarship into the formation of public policy on issues involving chemical and biological weapons. It supports efforts to eliminate these weapons globally and to promote effective governance of 'dual use' technologies applicable to them. University-based research and publication, other forms of international communication, constructive association with people in policy-making and policy-shaping circles, and training of young people are the means HSP uses to these ends. HSP has accordingly nurtured widespread networks for information, discourse, study and consensus-building on CBW that engage scientists and other scholars with one another and with officials of governmental and intergovernmental bodies.

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