
The Biological Weapons Convention Meeting of Experts August 2009

As reported in *Bulletin* 74 (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 2009 when the mandate is 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:

(v) *With a view to enhancing international cooperation, assistance and exchange in biological sciences and technology for peaceful purposes, promoting capacity building in the fields of disease surveillance, detection, diagnosis, and containment of infectious diseases: (1) for States Parties in need of assistance, identifying requirements and requests for capacity enhancement; and (2) from States Parties in a position to do so, and international organizations, opportunities for providing assistance related to these fields.*

It was also agreed at the Sixth Review Conference that the Meetings in 2009 should be chaired by the Western Group and as reported in *Bulletin* 81 (December 2008) it was announced at the Meeting of States Parties in December 2008 that Ambassador Marius Grinius of Canada would be the Chairman for the Meeting of Experts on 24 to 28 August 2009 and for the Meeting of States Parties on 7 to 11 December 2009.

Meeting of Experts, 24 to 28 August 2009: Opening Plenary Session

The Meeting of Experts began on Monday 24 August 2009 in a plenary session with Ambassador Marius Grinius in the Chair. He welcomed all those present before turning to procedural matters. In regard to the adoption of the Agenda, he noted that BWC/MSP/2009/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/2009/MX/2) had likewise been circulated. The Chairman said that he envisaged open and closed sessions – with closed sessions for representatives of States Parties and Signatory States only. He suggested that whether a session should be open or closed should be adjusted as necessary depending on the content of the session and the availability of experts. He sought to make good use of open sessions but would consult with States Parties on the status of each session. In regard to the programme of work he said that he had had a last-minute consultation with one State Party which led to the proposal to add an additional working session to address opportunities for international cooperation after working session 3. The orally amended programme of work was adopted and was subse-

quently issued as BWC/MSP/2009/MX/2/Rev. 1.

The Chairman noted that the Implementation Support Unit (ISU) had prepared five background papers (BWC/MSP/2009/MX/INF.1, INF.2, INF.3, INF.4 and INF.5) and said that these are to provide background information on current circumstances relating to the topic being considered, so that the Meeting can concentrate its discussion not on what the situation is now, but rather on what States Parties might do.

MX/INF.1 is a 16-page document entitled *Recent Developments in Intergovernmental Organizations Relevant to Disease Surveillance, Detection, Diagnosis and Containment*, summarizing recent key developments by intergovernmental organizations, and placing particular focus on efforts to build capacity in these fields.

MX/INF.2 is a 6-page document entitled *Recent International, Regional and Non-Governmental Developments Relevant to Disease Surveillance, Detection, Diagnosis and Containment*, summarizing recent key developments by international bodies and regional initiatives in these fields, and again placing particular focus on capacity-building efforts.

MX/INF.3 is a 5-page document entitled *Previous Agreements and Understandings under the Convention Relevant to Capacity Building in the Fields of Disease Surveillance, Detection, Diagnosis and Containment* which collects texts drawn from the Convention itself, the Final Declaration of the Sixth Review Conference in 2006, and the reports of the Meetings of States Parties in 2004 and 2008.

MX/INF.4 is a 6-page document entitled *Provision of Assistance and Capacity Building in Other International Settings* which summarizes a selection of assistance and capacity-building activities undertaken in other international settings which may be relevant as examples or models for capacity building in the fields of disease surveillance, detection, diagnosis and containment. The paper takes examples of assistance *provided* by formal organizations, and assistance that is *brokered or coordinated* by organizations or networks. Where appropriate, the examples in each category are further divided into four types of assistance: needs assessment; training and education; technical guidance and cooperation; and building networks. The organizations included are the IAEA (International Atomic Energy Agency), the OPCW (Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons), the IMO (International Maritime Organisation), the CBD (Convention on Biological Diversity) Clearing House Mechanism, and the Security Council Committee established pursuant to SCR 1540.

MX/INF.5 is an 8-page document entitled *Provisional Contact Details for Organisations Building Capacity in the Fields of Disease Surveillance, Detection, Diagnosis, and Containment* which provides the contact details for organisations that build capacity relevant to the work of the BWC in 2009. It is designed to complement the other background papers and provide a quick reference guide for obtaining assistance to strengthen arrangements in the fields

of disease surveillance, detection, diagnosis, and containment of infectious diseases.

The Chairman noted that 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 as soon as possible.

He then moved on to consider the Rules of Procedure, proposing that, as at previous annual meetings, the present 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: Haiti, Myanmar, the Syrian Arab Republic and the United Republic of Tanzania. In addition, it was agreed that three States neither Party nor Signatory should participate as an observer: Angola, Cameroon and Israel. Seven intergovernmental organizations also participated as observers; The European Commission (EC), the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the International Science and Technology Center (ISTC), 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, ten scientific, professional, academic and industry bodies and one independent expert participated in informal exchanges in the open sessions as guests of the Meeting of Experts: Amyris Biotechnologies, the Biosafety and Biosecurity International Conference Series, the European Biosafety Association, HealthMap, the International Council for Life Sciences, the International Security and Biopolicy Institute, the International Vaccine Institute, the National Center for Security and Crisis Management (Jordan), the NTI Global Health Security Initiative, ProMED-mail, and Ms. Anupa Gupte. This was a similar arrangement to that which had applied at the Meeting of Experts in 2008.

It was also agreed that, as at previous meetings, this meeting would be suspended on Monday 24 August at 16.30 and resume in informal session with the Chairman remaining in the Chair to hear statements from a number of NGOs. Nine NGOs made statements and a further seven attended the meeting bringing the total to 16 NGOs.

The Chairman 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 nine States Parties to be present. He expressed his gratitude to the United States, the United Kingdom and Canada for providing such sponsorship. He asked any State Party that wished to make a statement or presentation during the Meeting of Experts to contact the ISU. Because of time constraints, 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 two panel discussions were planned: the first, on Thursday morning, on integrating responses to human, animal and plant diseases and the second on Thursday afternoon on public-private partnerships as a

tool for dealing with disease. He said that these discussion panels would be modelled on those at the Meeting of States Parties in 2008.

Ninety-six States Parties to the Convention participated in the Meeting of Experts as follows: Albania, Algeria, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belarus, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Equatorial Guinea, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Holy See, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Lithuania, Malaysia, Mexico, Moldova, Morocco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Romania, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Tajikistan, Thailand, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Yemen and Zambia. This was same number of States Parties as had participated in the Meeting of Experts in August 2008. Nine States Parties: Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Equatorial Guinea, Estonia, Lebanon, Uganda and the United Arab Emirates participated in MX 2009 whilst nine States Parties: Benin, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Honduras, Malta, Oman, Sudan, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Viet Nam who had participated in MX 2008 did not in MX 2009.

There were just over 500 participants at the Meeting of Experts of which almost 420 came from States Parties including over 205 participants from capitals. This compared very well with the participation at the Meeting of Experts in 2008 when there were just over 500 participants of which over 420 came from States Parties including over 220 participants from capitals.

The Chairman then made his introductory remarks saying that his aim was *to continue the successful pattern established by previous meetings and ensure that we make best use of existing precedents and current working practices. The intersessional process has delivered good, practical results in a constructive atmosphere of collaboration and common purpose, and it is in the interests of all States Parties that we continue in this spirit. So there will be no changes or surprises this year: all our work will be done in accordance with our mandate, and our decisions will be taken by consensus.* He said that *The report of the Meeting of Experts will follow the format and pattern of previous years.* He went on to point out that *The meetings of the intersessional process have a reputation for being non-political and focused on concrete proposals rather than abstract debate.* He then noted that *Our topic this year reaches to the heart of one of the fundamental aims of the BWC: ensuring that the peaceful applications of biological science and technology can safely and securely reach their full potential, and that developments in these fields are used only for the benefit*

of humanity. Building capacity in disease surveillance, detection, diagnosis and containment is in the interests of all States Parties: it strengthens the Convention both by enhancing international cooperation, assistance and exchange for peaceful purposes, and by improving capabilities for preventing and responding to illicit uses of biological agents and toxins. He urged that delegations should in particular consider:

- Problems or challenges in national disease surveillance or diagnostic capability;
- Specific projects planned or underway that are in need of funding or technical assistance;
- Assistance projects successfully undertaken which may be repeated elsewhere or provide a model for others;
- Resources, facilities, expertise, personnel, technical advice, etc, that may be made available to other States Parties to help build capacity.

The Chairman concluded by expressing the hope that our discussion this week will generate new initiatives, ones that might not otherwise have been developed, ensuring that our meeting tangibly enhances capacity and makes a genuine contribution to enhancing international cooperation, assistance and exchange in biological sciences and technology for peaceful purposes.

Cuba then spoke on behalf of the **NAM and Other States**, by recalling the XVth Summit of the Non Aligned Movement held in Sharm el Sheikh, Egypt, from 15 to 16 July 2009, at which the leaders of the Non-Aligned Movement agreed a Final Document which included two paragraphs relating to the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention:

The Heads of State and Government of the States Parties to the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC) reaffirmed that the possibility of any use of bacteriological (biological) agents and toxins as weapons should be completely excluded, and the conviction that such use would be repugnant to the conscience of humankind. They recognised the particular importance of strengthening the Convention through multilateral negotiations for a legally binding Protocol and universal adherence to the Convention. They reiterated their call to promote international cooperation for peaceful purposes, including scientific-technical exchange. They underlined the importance to maintain close coordination among the NAM States Parties to the Convention and highlighted that the Convention on Biological and Toxin Weapons forms a whole and that, although it is possible to consider certain aspects separately, it is critical to deal with all of the issues interrelated to this Convention in a balanced and comprehensive manner.

The Heads of State and Government of the States Parties to the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention stressed the importance of the active participation by NAM States Parties to the BTWC in this year's Experts and Annual Meeting in the framework of the Convention, in August and December 2009, respectively, on enhancing international cooperation, assistance and exchange in biological sciences and technology for peaceful purposes, promoting capacity building in the fields of disease surveillance, detection, diagnosis, and containment of infectious diseases, which are items of utmost interest not only to the NAM States Parties to the BTWC but also to

all developing countries. They further encouraged the BTWC States Parties to provide information, as set forth in paragraph 54 of the Final Document of the Sixth BTWC Review Conference, on how Article X of the BTWC on the issue of international assistance and cooperation is being implemented.

The statement went on to note that *The Biological Weapons Convention is an indisputable achievement of humankind. However, it lacks, inter alia, a verification mechanism. This is a pending issue, interrupted in 2001, which we have to re-evaluate. The strengthening of the Biological Weapons Convention cannot exclude the verification of the complete elimination of biological and toxin weapons as was highlighted by the NAM leaders in Sharm el Sheikh. It then went on to make the following remarks in regard to Article X of the Convention:*

The BWC can neither disregard one of the characteristics of its membership: the differences between its States Parties regarding the level of development and their national capabilities and resources. Although one of the main purposes of the implementation of Article X of the Convention is precisely to narrow these gaps, the BWC lacks an adequate mechanism for effective implementation of Article X.

Therefore our Group is presenting a Working Paper [WP.24] in this meeting on the establishment of such a mechanism, whose main elements are the following:

- *The mechanism should be open to participation of all States Parties to the Convention;*
- *Overcome the obstacles hampering the full implementation of Article X of the Convention;*
- *Mobilize the necessary resources, including financial resources, to facilitate the widest possible exchange of equipment, material and scientific and technological information regarding the use of bacteriological (biological) and toxin agents for peaceful purposes, in particular from developed to developing States Parties.*
- *Facilitate the development of human resources in developing States Parties in the implementation of the Convention, taking into account the special situation faced by them;*
- *Coordinate cooperation with other relevant international and regional organizations for the financial and technological support of activities for the use of bacteriological (biological) and toxin agents for peaceful purposes;*
- *Establish sponsorship programme in the BWC to support participation of developing States Parties in the meetings and other activities of the Convention. This sponsorship programme could also be utilized, depending upon the availability of resources, to enhance participation of non States Parties in order to promote the goal of universalization of the Convention.*

The statement went on to say that *The Group of NAM and other States parties is ready to initiate discussion on this mechanism as part of negotiations to strengthen the Convention.*

Sweden then spoke on behalf of the **European Union**, noting that the Candidate Countries Turkey, Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the Countries of the

Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidates Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia, and the EFTA country Iceland, member of the European Economic Area, as well as Ukraine, Moldova, Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia align themselves with this declaration. The statement said that *The European Union 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 to working with a long term view to develop measures to verify compliance with the BTWC.*

Sweden then pointed out that *Lately the bio-risk spectrum has often been described in international fora as ranging from natural disease outbreaks via accidents and negligence to vandalism/sabotage to the deliberate use of biological weapons. It was highlighted recently at the workshop in Oslo 18-19 June this year, "The Biological Weapons Convention Supporting Global Health: Reducing Biological Risk by Building Capacity in Health Security" that it is more appropriate than ever to focus on international cooperation and support to strengthen national structures and capabilities for preventing, detecting and treatment of infectious human, animal and plant diseases. It is therefore very timely that we gather here to discuss the themes for this year's BTWC Meeting of Experts. The statement went on to note that Diseases and pests do not respect territorial boundaries. Therefore, maximum cooperation and assistance in areas concerning disease surveillance, detection, diagnosis, and containment of infectious disease would benefit global health and ultimately the entire BTWC norm. Therefore, it is of extreme importance to enhance international cooperation, assistance and exchange in biological sciences including biotechnology for peaceful purposes.*

Finally, Sweden outlined the basis for EU action in this area and noted the Joint Actions being implemented relevant to the BTWC which show our political and financial commitment:

- *In April 2008, the EU Council adopted a Joint Action in support of WHO activities in the area of bio-safety and bio-security. There will be one in-country project and different other workshops and assistance activities.*
- *As a follow up to our first Joint Action supporting the BTWC, in November 2008, the EU Council adopted a second Joint Action in Support of the BTWC, with projects and activities related to the universalisation of the Convention, national implementation, promotion of CBMs and support to the BTWC inter-sessional process.*

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

Turkey then spoke, saying that *On the road to the Seventh Review Conference in 2011, we have already addressed very important topics in 2007 and 2008. It was then noted that This year's topic is also key to full implementation of the BWC regime and the statement went on to say that When the inter-sessional program is hopefully completed at the end of 2010, we shall have accomplished our goal to*

strengthen and advance the implementation of the Convention, on the eve of the Review Conference of 2011. Turkey then outlined its contribution to a later session during the week and went on to add Today, I wish to take this opportunity to briefly reiterate the following:

We share the broad understanding within the BWC community that further efforts have to be devoted to strengthening and improving the implementation of the Convention.

States Parties may wish to make use of the 2007-2010 inter-sessional period to consider new ideas in the next Review Conference for an implementation mechanism to enhance the new effectiveness of the Convention.

The Russian Federation then spoke, saying *I would like to stress once again that Russia complies with all provisions of the BWC. The statement went on to note that Considering the unfortunate epidemiological situation in the world, the issues on our agenda today are as relevant as ever. Separate states can no longer adequately prevent the spread of infectious diseases, even if they possess the capabilities to diagnose and control infectious diseases. We believe it important to develop and strengthen the Convention's potential for international cooperation in the peaceful uses of advances in bioscience. The statement then observed that We believe that successful implementation of Article X will help to increase confidence, promote universality of the Convention, as well as development of national, regional and global capabilities to prevent and control the infectious diseases among humans, animals and plants. We are of the view that scientific and technological cooperation, as well as implementation of joint projects will help to reduce the risk of using biological materials, equipment and technologies for purposes prohibited by the Convention.*

The statement then went on to say that *As for the exchange of information on national experiences concerning the prevention, diagnosis and control of dangerous infectious diseases, we view it as an important tool that builds confidence among States Parties in relation to the implementation of the BWC. We believe that such exchange complements the annual national CBMs on biological facilities and activities relevant to the BWC. It then added that We attach great importance to declarations in the framework of CBMs, especially taking into account that, without an effective mechanism to verify the Convention in place, CBMs represent the only instrument allowing to assess how states comply with their obligations under the BWC.*

Whilst Russia has submitted its CBM for 2008, the statement observed that *Unfortunately, participation in the CBMs among States Parties is far from being universal. We call upon those states that do not submit their declarations to review their attitude towards this mechanism. It adds that At the same time we welcome the efforts of some States Parties to the BWC aimed at making CBMs universal. Success achieved here may facilitate substantive discussions on the elaboration of an effective verification mechanism for this Convention. The Russian Federation remains committed to the establishment of such mechanism. The statement concluded by stressing the importance of the expansion of the Convention's membership to strengthening the regime and noting that in 2009 no state has acceded to the Convention.*

China then spoke, saying that *Traditional and non-traditional security threats are intertwined as the world entered into a new century. In today's world where globalization and biotechnology are developing more rapidly than ever, the non-traditional security threats such as pandemic disease and public health emergencies pose a threat to human health and social economic development and constitute a serious challenge to global security. Proper measures against pandemic disease and effective disease surveillance and control mechanisms are critical to public health and social stability. They are also of great significance to the protection against and combating of bioterrorism, and to the enhancement of global bio-security. The subject of our meeting is therefore closely related to the objectives of the Convention.* The statement went on to say that *China believes that the international cooperation needs to be further strengthened in the following areas: Firstly, epidemics information sharing. Continue to strengthen and improve the existing disease notification mechanisms. Information about any outbreak of acute infectious diseases should be shared in accordance with the current practice of relevant international organizations. Secondly, science and technology exchange and cooperation. States Parties that are better off are encouraged to share their knowledge and experience with other States Parties through exchange of bacteria (virus) samples, provision of vaccines and equipment, and joint development of research project. Thirdly, personnel exchange. States Parties are encouraged to promote contact and experience sharing between professional institutions. Fourthly, global outreach. Efforts are to be made to strengthen exchange and cooperation between States Parties and international organizations such as the World Health Organization (WHO), World Organization for Animal Health (OIE), Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO), so as to make full use of their available resources and services.* The statement concluded by noting that China has submitted two Working Papers (WP.19 & WP.20).

Indonesia then spoke, saying that *The threat of use of biological weapons as well as the spread of infectious diseases spreading beyond boundaries is common challenge to all nations. The spread of infectious diseases in the recent years also prove that no country is immune from this threat, and no single country is able overcome this problem by itself. Therefore, Indonesia is of the view that the international cooperation is the most effective way to ensure adequate response to these challenges.* The statement went on to recognize the differing capabilities of different States Parties and to point out that *The enhancement of capacity, especially for developing countries is imperative if we are committed to resolve these threats globally.* It also noted that *as one of the main pillars of the convention, international cooperation provides incentive for non state parties to join the Convention and support our universalization efforts.*

The **United States** then spoke saying *The Obama Administration strongly supports the work taking place under the BWC Work Program.* The US representative (Dr. Scott Dowell of CDC) then said *I have been asked to make*

this address to emphasis this support. He went on to say *I commend the foresight of BWC States Parties in tackling the global need for increased surveillance and the critically important effort towards capacity-building.* The statement then noted that *the U.S. has a strong interest in promoting the safe, secure and sustainable expansion of national disease surveillance capabilities, the sharing of pertinent outbreak information consistent with the revised International Health Regulations, and the prevention, containment and mitigation of the consequences of human and animal diseases for both human health and international security. We believe it is important to mobilize and integrate international security and health resources to build capacity for disease surveillance, detection, diagnosis and response at the national, regional and international levels.* The statement then outlined the US contributions to be made to the Meeting of Experts and noted that *We believe that the many efforts underway support our collective Article Ten goals.* It went on to say that *We see this meeting as a rare opportunity to update each other on national efforts to counter biological threats – whether deliberate or natural – and as importantly, to discuss ways to ensure we have the collective capacity to safely and securely handle disease threats.*

Saudi Arabia then spoke, emphasizing the importance of the Convention, urging all non-States Parties to accede, and announcing Saudi Arabia's intention to hold a workshop in Riyadh in October 2009, in conjunction with the ISU and with VERTIC to promote greater awareness of the Convention.

Algeria then spoke, saying that *our meeting today will be called upon to look at the subject of strengthening cooperation, assistance and international exchanges under Article X of the Convention on the prohibition of biological weapons.* The statement went on to say that *This Convention is a cornerstone in the system of international security. It demands that States Parties take the necessary measures to prevent the use of biology for harmful purposes as well as protecting and encouraging quite justifiably the development of peaceful applications of biological science. These applications are vital for the implementation of development programmes, particularly in the area of public health.* It then recalled the working paper prepared by the NAM on implementation of Article X and noted that *These meetings today are, from this viewpoint, a further opportunity to consider the status of the implementation of one of the pillars of the Convention, that is, Article X. It is particularly relevant to do this against the backdrop of the holding of the Review Conference planned for 2011. This is also a good opportunity to recall that the scope of the Convention continues limited because it is not endowed with a verification mechanism and to stress once again resumption of multilateral negotiations on a legally binding instrument in this area.*

Senegal then spoke, summarizing the situation in regard to the BWC in Senegal, and going on to say that *The States Parties to BWC have different levels of scientific and technological capacity. Given the situation, it is important to work to strengthen the capacities of developing countries in the area of epidemiological surveillance*

*through promoting international cooperation, including South-South cooperation. The statement then said that Senegal fully endorsed the proposal put forward by Cuba on behalf of the NAM, and noted that *By ratifying the BWC, the States Parties to this instrument, including Senegal, have undertaken the commitment under Article X of promoting exchanges for peaceful purposes. This aspect of the Convention, that is, scientific cooperation and transfer of technology, is a clear way of stimulating universalization of the Convention and its effective implementation.**

The Philippines then spoke, saying that *This year's theme, which highlights Article X of the BTWC and international cooperation in biological science, disease surveillance, detection, diagnosis and containment, is indeed a timely and vital one. It went on to support the statement and document issued by Cuba on behalf of the NAM and urged the BTWC Community to develop an effective mechanism for the implementation of Article X. The statement continued by outlining the steps being taken by the Philippines in regard to the Convention as well as biosafety and biosecurity and biological threat reduction.*

Nigeria then spoke saying that *Nigeria attaches particular importance to the implementation of Article X of the BWC, which provides for assistance and protection, technical cooperation to States Parties against biological weapons attacks. The implementation of this Article is important to ensure practical capacity building as well as transfer of material and equipment to deal with biological weapons incidents on a regional and sub-regional basis. The statement then thanked the EU for its continuing assistance in this area of capacity building and went on to identify a number of areas in which Nigeria would welcome assistance.*

Peru then spoke, saying that currently *Peru is working on a draft bill to implement the most relevant provisions of the Convention on Biological Weapons. and thanking the EU and the ICRC for their support in this activity. The statement went on to note the dangers from non-State actors and to say that *It is therefore necessary to continue with bilateral, regional and international efforts to identify ways and means to reduce or avoid these threats through better cooperation on the scientific level and also technological transfer.**

Pakistan then spoke, saying that this year's theme is *important and urgent particularly in view of the increasing prevalence of some infectious diseases in the recent past. Communicable diseases and public health threats pose major challenges to humanity. The statement went on to point out that *There are huge gaps in terms of national resources, both financial and technological, and capabilities. Therefore, it is important to bridge these gaps. The best and durable solution is to share resources, enhance capacities and assist each other in realizing this objective. We believe that implementation of Article X of the Convention is the right framework for cooperation and assistance in this regard. The statement concluded by summarizing the steps being taken by Pakistan.**

Republic of Korea then spoke, taking note of the previous intersessional meetings and saying *it is the sincere hope of my delegation that the planned intersessional work program will make a significant contribution to the success of the 7th Review Conference in 2011. It then went on to outline two presentations to be made later in the week by the Republic of Korea.*

India then spoke, saying that *India attaches the highest priority to the further strengthening of the BWC as it was the first disarmament treaty that eliminated an entire category of weapons of mass destruction. We believe that only a multilaterally agreed mechanism for verification of compliance can provide the assurance of observance of compliance obligations by States Parties and act as a deterrent against non compliance. The statement went on to say *India believes that the promotional aspects of Article X are a crucial element in strengthening the BWC and in achieving universal adherence. It added that *The BWC States Parties should facilitate the fullest possible exchange of equipment, materials and scientific and technological information for the uses of bacteriological (biological) and toxin weapons for peaceful purposes consistent with their obligation under the Convention. This would help developing countries to meet their development needs, including improving public health and in building a robust biotechnology industry. It would also promote universality of the Convention and would be instrumental in establishing linkages amongst States parties leading to a higher level of confidence in the Convention. The strengthened implementation of the provisions of Article III would ensure that the cooperation envisaged under Article X is not abused. Effective export controls are an essential component of international cooperation to ensure that disease causing organisms and pathogens do not fall into the hands of terrorists and are used only for peaceful purposes.***

Morocco then spoke, saying *The holding of this Meeting of Experts of States Parties at the BWC devoted to the implementation of Article X of the Convention comes at just the right time; in fact, it coincides with a period when the entire world has been compelled to combine efforts so as better to prepare to cope with one of the biggest pandemics of recent years, the virus A/H1N1. It went on to add that *In this context, the relevance of Article X of the BWC is clearer than ever before. States Parties which have committed themselves under Article X of the Convention to facilitating the widest possible exchange of equipment, materials and scientific and technical information related to the use of bacteriological (biological) agents and toxins for peaceful purposes, are duty bound to implement this provision The statement then noted that *International cooperation and exchange of information and technology for peaceful purposes are among the most important pillars of the Convention. However, this area does not have an appropriate mechanism yet for this purpose. In this framework, my delegation would appeal to States Parties to adopt and implement the recommendation of the Movement of Non-aligned Countries and other States Parties calling for the establishment of a mechanism for the full implementation of Article X.***

Norway then spoke, saying *The topic is closely related to Article X of the BWC. We all know that it has not been easy to address this important article in the past. There have been different perspectives on how to reconcile aspirations for the fullest possible cooperation in life sciences with legitimate non-proliferation concerns. At the same time, we all gain from enhanced international cooperation to combat diseases and limit biological risk.* The statement went on to describe the workshop held in Oslo on 18-19 June 2009, at which more than 70 representatives from over 25 countries discussed and shared experiences on practical steps to implement Article X. Although the workshop did not produce a negotiated outcome document, the conveners of the event made a number of observations, which are reflected in the working paper submitted by Indonesia and Norway. [WP.5].

Ukraine then spoke, saying *The themes of this year's meeting are very important. Among other they are aimed at providing assistance to the States Parties in need of cooperation not only to strengthen and increase the effectiveness of the BWC regime but also to diminish as much as possible most of the biothreats both intentional and not intentional – including those arising from revolutionizing biological technologies, which have to serve for peaceful purposes only.* The statement went on to outline steps being taken by Ukraine.

Chile then spoke, saying *Our country will always support any effort which is aimed at disarmament, non-proliferation and the prohibition of the manufacture and use of any weapon of mass destruction, including bacteriological (biological) and toxin weapons, and also we would like to express our total willingness to become involved in any multilateral initiatives aimed at ensuring the elimination of this type of weapon.* The statement went on to outline steps being taken by Chile including work on a bill to implement the Convention.

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

Iran then spoke, saying that *Iran attaches great importance to multilaterally negotiated instruments on Weapons of Mass Destruction including BWC which are essential for the maintenance of international and regional peace and security. We hope that a decision can be adopted in the Seventh BWC Review Conference in 2011 to let the negotiations be resumed on a legally binding instrument to comprehensively strengthen the Convention including in the area of international cooperation for peaceful purposes.* The statement went on to say *We have a very important issue on the agenda of this year's meetings, i.e. international cooperation which we strongly believe, due to the high importance of Article X as the main pillar of the BWC, the deliberation on this Article should regularly be on the agenda of the intersessional meetings.* It also noted that *the full and comprehensive implementation of Article X, on an equal and non-discriminatory basis should be underlined.* The statement continued: *It should be noted that the States Parties have a legal obligation to refrain from imposing restrictions or limitations for*

transfers of relevant equipment and technology that would hamper economic and technological development of States Parties or international cooperation for peaceful applications in the field of biotechnology. Therefore the States Parties should undertake to review their national regulations governing international exchanges and transfers in order to ensure its consistency with the objectives of the Convention and specifically the provisions of Article X. It went on to say a mechanism should be established to deal with the issue of settlement of disputes of transfer denial. In this regard a standing committee could be established under the Convention to consider the cases of transfer denials.

Kenya then spoke, saying *The topic of this year's meeting of experts is of great concern to us as it addresses capacity building in the areas of disease surveillance, detection, diagnosis and containment which continues to be a challenge not only to Kenya, but to many developing countries.* The statement continued by outlining steps being taken by Kenya to addressing perennial outbreaks of communicable disease, and concluded by listing identified gaps on which Kenya would welcome technical assistance.

Bangladesh then spoke, saying *We fully subscribe to the proposal submitted by NAM and other States Parties on the 'Establishment of a Mechanism for the Full Implementation of Article X of the Convention'. We hope that the constructive proposals set out in the document will contribute to further discussions on strengthening the implementation of the Convention, including in the area of fostering greater international cooperation in the use of biological and toxin agents for peaceful purposes.* The statement went on to outline steps being taken by Bangladesh and concluded by saying *A number of Least Developed Countries continue to remain on the list of non-States Parties. We should consider enhanced international cooperation to expedite their accession to the Convention. The ongoing Confidence Building Measures can serve as useful incentives to the process, and should be further strengthened. The ultimate objective of the Confidence Building Measures should be to achieve an effective verification regime. My delegation looks forward to significant developments in this regard during the lead up to and at the Seventh Review Conference in 2011. We hope that the renewed vigour and optimism that we have witnessed in our recent work on disarmament will also provide impetus for further negotiations on an enabling instrument for the full and verifiable implementation of the BWC.*

Yemen then spoke, outlining the steps taken by the Yemen and saying that a national committee is working actively to develop national legislation on the improvement of safety and security of biological materials. It went on to identify areas in which the Yemen would welcome assistance.

Mexico then spoke saying that Mexico would like to reaffirm our commitment to the full implementation of the Convention and, on this particular occasion, our commitment to the implementation of Article X of that instrument given the importance it has in terms of

exchanging equipment, material and scientific and technological information and so as to be in accordance with Article 89 of our Constitution which stipulates that international cooperation for development should be a leitmotiv for Mexico's foreign policy. The statement went on to outline the steps being taken by Mexico to combat the pandemic resulting from the new pandemic 'flu virus, A/H1N1.

This completed the opening plenary session. As there was some time available before the planned informal session for the statements by NGO's, the Chairman brought forward from Tuesday morning the first working session on *National disease surveillance arrangements* by inviting the United States, Sweden (on behalf of the EU), Turkey and the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) to make their presentations. (These and later presentations and statements are available on the unog.ch/bwc website).

The meeting was then suspended and resumed with the Chairman remaining in the chair to hear statements from nine NGOs who spoke in the following order:

- a. **The University of Bradford.** Graham Pearson spoke saying consideration should be given to how best to implement the agreement at the Sixth Review Conference to provide information on the implementation of Article X to the UNDDA, and to whether this should be put forward as a new CBM to the Seventh Review Conference.
- b. **VERTIC (Verification Research, Training and Information Centre).** Scott Spence outlined the status of VERTIC's National Implementing Measures Project that is assisting States Parties in their implementation of the Convention including legislation, regulations and measures to strengthen biosafety and biosecurity.
- c. **Pax Christi International.** Trevor Griffiths urged effort on the health-related Millennium Development Goals. Pax Christi noted with regret that the number of States Parties making annual CBM submissions appears to be declining to about one-third of the States Parties and urged the other two-thirds to demonstrate their commitment to the Convention by submitting their annual CBMs.
- d. **Center for Biosecurity of the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center (UPMC).** Brooke Courtney offered recommendations for strengthening national and global biosurveillance capacity and effectiveness, emphasizing that response capabilities should drive the evolution of surveillance networks, that collaboration is critical and that such surveillance networks depend on qualified personnel.
- e. **The Center for Arms Control and Non-Proliferation/Scientists Working Group on Biological and Chemical Weapons.** Marie Chevrier outlined the achievement of ProMed Mail in regard to effective disease surveillance and also reported on a successful meeting in 2008 to promote international cooperation to ensure that all government programmes are in compliance with all aspects of the BWC.

- f. **BioWeapons Prevention Project (BWPP).** Kathryn McLaughlin described some of the activities carried out by BWPP to enhance international cooperation in the biological sciences, including conferences in Kenya and Malawi and two publications which would be distributed following the poster session on Thursday afternoon.
- g. **National Defence Medical College of Japan and Bradford University.** Masamichi Minehata noted that improving capabilities for disease surveillance, diagnosis and containment requires the building up of biotechnology facilities and the number of people with capacities in biotechnology. However, there is a very low level of awareness of biosecurity and dual-use issues among the life science community worldwide, and this deficiency needs to be addressed.
- h. **Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI).** Peter Clevestig spoke about the enhancement of international cooperation for disease surveillance and response, noting that SIPRI had in June published a handbook on applied biosecurity for life sciences laboratories. He suggested that CBM 'D' on 'active promotion of contacts' might be modified to promote capacity building and improvement of the operation of life sciences laboratories.
- i. **Center for Defense, Law & Public Policy of the Texas Tech University School of Law.** Victoria Sutton described the Global Biosecurity Law Project aimed at providing the optimum regulatory balance. She also noted that achievement of international consensus on a Code of Ethics for Biosecurity would help to find agreed principles among the international community.

The Chairman thanked the NGOs for their valuable inputs and said that their succinct statements were appreciated. He then resumed the formal session and said that consideration of the first topic, *National disease surveillance arrangements*, would continue on Tuesday morning. He also announced that there would be a side event at 0900am in Room XXIII, at which there would be the official *Launch of the European Union Joint Action in Support of World Health Organisation Activities in the Area of Laboratory Biosafety and Biosecurity*.

In addition it should be noted that, as at the Sixth Review Conference and at the Meeting of Experts 2007 and 2008 and the Meeting of States Parties 2007 and 2008, 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 www.bwpp.org/reports.html.

Side Events

During the Meeting of Experts there were side events at lunchtime each day from Monday to Thursday as well as breakfast events at 0900am on Tuesday, Wednesday Thursday and Friday 25 August 2009.

The first lunchtime event on Monday 24 August was a launch by the EU of the *EU Joint Action in Support of the*

Biological Weapons Convention. Statements were made by Andreas Strub, Deputy to the Personal Representative of the High-Representative on Non-Proliferation of WMD, General Secretariat of the Council of the EU; Richard Lennane, Head, ISU; and Ambassador Marius Grinius of Canada. This was followed at 1430 by a BWC Implementation Support Unit event on *Speed Networking*.

On Tuesday 25 August the breakfast event was a launch by the EU of the *EU Joint Action in support of World Health Organisation Activities in the Area of Laboratory Bio-safety and Biosecurity*. Statements were made by Andreas Strub (EU Council General Secretariat); May Chu (WHO); and Ambassador Marius Grinius (Canada). Ambassador Magnus Hellgren (Sweden) was in the chair. The lunchtime event was a discussion on *Disease Surveillance Networks* organized by the International Council for Life Sciences, at which presentations were made by Tim Trevan of ICLS and Brooke Courtney of the Center for Biosecurity of the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center (UPMC).

On Wednesday 26 August, the breakfast event was organized by VERTIC so as to provide an opportunity for informal discussions with delegates regarding VERTIC's *National Implementing Measures* project. The lunchtime event hosted by the United States was a Panel Discussion on *National Experiences and Response to H1N1* with presentations given by Lalit Kant, Senior Deputy Director-General, Indian Council of Medical Research; Ethel Palacios Zavala, Ministry of Health, Mexico; and Andrea Olea, Head of the Surveillance Unit, Department of Epidemiology, Ministry of Health, Chile. José Fernández, US Department of Health and Human Services, was in the chair.

On Thursday 27 August, the breakfast event was a presentation by Anupa Gupte on *Biorisks and Ecohealth Implications for BWC Implementation: Tools for Governance*. The lunchtime event was a discussion on *Stockpiling and Delivery of Medical Countermeasures* organized by the International Security & Biopolicy Institute (ISBI) with presentations given by Al Shofe, Senior Vice-President of Emergent BioSolutions, Inc. (ISBI Chairman) on stockpiling issues associated with anthrax preparedness; Leslie Platt of Daylight Forensic, Inc. (ISBI Vice-President) on a proposal for global biopharmaceutical preparedness in the event of a pandemic catastrophe; and Barry Kellman (ISBI President), outlining an 8-Step strategy for global medical countermeasures stockpiling and delivery.

On Friday 28 August, the final side event was a breakfast event, which considered the *Political Implications of the Possible De Novo Synthesis of Smallpox*, organized by the International Security & Biopolicy Institute, with presentations given by Robert Drillen, Director of Research, INSERM, Strasbourg, on *Could Chemical Synthesis and Genetic Engineering of the Smallpox Virus Enable Recreation?*, and Barry Kellman (ISBI President) on *Chemical Synthesis of Smallpox*.

Tuesday 25 August 2009

The Meeting of Experts resumed on the morning of Tuesday 25 August 2009 with further presentations on *National Disease Surveillance Arrangements* by Bulgaria, India, Senegal, Chile, China, the United States, Pakistan, Italy, Algeria, Kenya, Australia, Russia, Nigeria, France and the

UK. The afternoon session moved on to the next topic of *International Disease Surveillance Arrangements*, when three presentations were delivered by the World Health Organization entitled *Biological Weapons Convention Supporting Health: Reducing Biological Risk by Building Capacity in Health Security; From Global to Local - WHO Global Alert and Response Mechanisms* and the *Laboratory Twinning Initiative*. This was followed by two presentations by the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) on *Good Governance for Early Detection and Rapid Response* and *Laboratory Twinning*. Finally the Food and Agriculture Organization made a presentation on *International Disease Surveillance Arrangements: PlantHealth*.

Wednesday 26 August 2009

The Meeting of Experts continued on the morning of Wednesday 26 August 2009. It was decided to combine consideration of the next two topics: *Opportunities for international cooperation* and *Specific capabilities and experiences in providing assistance for capacity-building; sources of assistance and mechanisms for promoting capacity-building*. Presentations were made in the following order: Canada & Mexico, Argentina, Georgia & United States, Canada, Japan, Germany, Republic of Korea (x2), China, United Kingdom, and the United States. Presentations continued in the afternoon by Canada (x2), Georgia & United Kingdom, India, France and Australia. Consideration then moved on to *Specific needs for capacity-building and challenges in dealing with disease* with presentations by Japan, Germany, Kyrgyzstan & Canada, Iran, Indonesia and France. Wednesday also saw a presentation at the end of the morning on the topic *The role of international, regional and non-governmental organizations*, which had been brought forward from the further discussion of this topic on Thursday, by a guest of the meeting, Barry Kellman of IBSI, who spoke on *Surveillance and Detection for Promoting Compliance with the Prohibition Against BW*.

Thursday 27 August 2009

Although a discussion panel had been planned for Thursday morning on *Integrating responses to human, animal and plant diseases*, it had been decided during Wednesday to drop this in order to return to the schedule set down in MX.2/ Rev.1, as this subject had received substantial coverage in presentations. It was also decided for the same reason to drop the discussion panel planned for Thursday afternoon on *Public-private partnerships as a tool for dealing with disease*. Thursday morning started with a continuation of the Wednesday afternoon topic *Specific needs for capacity-building and challenges in dealing with disease* with presentations by China, Senegal, United Kingdom, Germany, Pakistan, Philippines and Nigeria. Thursday morning then moved on to resume consideration of the topic *The role of international, regional and non-governmental organizations* with presentations by ProMED [the Programme for Monitoring Emerging Diseases], Health Map, the Global Health Security Initiative, Amyris Biotechnologies, the European Biosafety Association, the International Council of the Life Sciences, Biosafety & Biosecurity International

Conferences, and the International Vaccine Institute. This topic continued in the afternoon with presentations by the International Science and Technology Center, Anupa Gupte and the Robert Koch Institute, Berlin.

Following the afternoon session, there was a poster session when 27 posters were mounted on stands outside the main conference room. They were prepared by a number of States Parties, agencies, associations and NGOs on subjects relevant to this year's topic. There were posters from Canada (3), China (1), European Union (1), Indonesia (1), Italy (1), Japan (1), Kenya (1), Norway (1), Pakistan (1), Republic of Korea (1), Sweden (1), United Kingdom (3), United States (3), together with posters from the Grupo Americano (Canada, Mexico & US), Center for Biosecurity (UPMC), European Biological Safety Association, Global Health and Security Initiative (NTI), International Council for Life Sciences, National Defence Medical College, Japan & University of Bradford, UK, Research Group for Arms Control (Hamburg), and Texas Tech University. During the afternoon, the draft report of the Meeting (CRP.2) was circulated, as well as an initial draft (CRP.1) 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*.

Friday 28 August 2009

On Friday morning, the meeting considered the report of the Meeting of Experts which had been circulated on Thursday afternoon as CRP.1 and its appendix, the 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 on Thursday afternoon as CRP.2 together with an addition containing material submitted up to 1900 on Thursday.

Before the report of the meeting was adopted, the Chairman gave a report on progress towards universalization in which he said that he was sorry not to be able to report any new accessions since the Meeting of States Parties last December. The number of States Parties remains at 163, with the Cook Islands being our newest member. But this is not for lack of trying: I am pleased to report that efforts on universality have been underway in various quarters over the past months, and it seems reasonable to expect that these efforts will result in further accessions, possibly by the end of the year. He went on to say that there had been a coordinated campaign to increase membership among the Pacific island states and that he had written to the foreign ministers of these states urging them to accede. In Africa, there were encouraging indications from a number of States – Cameroon, Mozambique, Comoros and Tanzania along with Angola were all mentioned. In the Americas, progress was being made in Haiti and Guyana and he understood that steps were being taken in Europe in regard to Andorra. He concluded his report on universalization by saying that he would like to acknowledge, on behalf of all States Parties, the excellent work being done on universalization by the BioWeapons Prevention Project

(BWPP). *This report is a very helpful and practical contribution to our campaign, and is yet another demonstration of the valuable role that can be played by civil society in advancing the aims of the BWC.*

The report of the meeting was then adopted. Following adoption of the report, Iran made a statement noting that consensus on the report should not imply that Iran recognised the state of Israel which is mentioned as an observer. Six further States Parties made brief statements thanking the Chairman and the other participants: Sweden (on behalf of the European Union), Ukraine, Cuba (on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement), China, Australia (on behalf of the Western group), and Slovakia (on behalf of the Eastern group). Cuba took the opportunity to emphasize the Non-Aligned Movement Working Paper (W.P. 24) proposing a formal mechanism for Article X implementation.

The Chairman then made some closing remarks saying *we have had a focused, positive and constructive meeting. We have heard a huge range of material related to our topic of promoting capacity building in the areas of disease surveillance, detection, diagnosis and containment.* He then went on to say that *Although we have heard a great number of perspectives this week, there are a few common themes that ran through many of the presentations and working papers. One was the need for sustainability: if we are to build enduring capacity, we need to do more than just provide resources and equipment. We need an integrated approach that involves both the donor and recipient in making the necessary decisions and investment in planning, training and long-term commitment.*

Another common theme was the need for an integrated approach to human, animal and plant diseases, pooling information and resources, and coordinating efforts and institutions. I was particularly struck by the FAO presentation on plant diseases, and the terrible lack of resources and attention applied to this field. Greater integration with efforts on human and animal diseases may help to remedy this, but it clearly an area which would benefit from greater attention, both in the BWC and in other forums.

Perhaps the most commonly emphasised theme this week was the need to coordinate assistance, cooperation and capacity building activities – nationally, regionally and internationally. There is clearly a lot of very positive activity across the world, undertaken by a wide range of actors, aimed at building capacity in disease surveillance, detection, diagnosis and containment. But there is evidently great scope for better coordination of these activities, greater sharing of information, and improved integration in planning, implementation and follow-up.

Finally, we heard many statements and presentations outlining specific needs and requirements, as well as those that offered assistance and cooperation. I thank all those delegations which spoke openly and candidly about the challenges they face, and which listed their needs in a thoughtful, structured and realistic manner. I also thank those who extended specific offers of assistance, and who provided examples of projects aimed at building capacity. I hope that this Meeting will lead to a successful matching of at least some of these requests and offers.

He concluded by saying that he would be writing to all

States Parties about his plans for the Meeting of States Parties in December and that he would consult closely on this. He added that *As in previous years, I will prepare a synthesis paper that distills the essence of the many ideas and proposals we have annexed to our report. As I have said in the past, I think it is important that the Meeting of States Parties produces an outcome that is of practical assistance to States Parties in their efforts in capacity building for disease surveillance, detection, diagnosis and containment.*

Outcome of the Meeting of Experts

During the Meeting of Experts, 28 Working Papers were submitted by 15 States Parties with the numbers submitted by individual States Parties ranging from one to five: Canada (6), China (19, 20), Cuba on behalf of NAM (24), Germany (13, 14, 15, 25), Indonesia (5), Iran (21, 22), Iraq (7, 8, 28), Japan

(9), Norway (5), Republic of Korea (17), United Kingdom (1, 2, 3, 4), and the United States (10, 11, 12, 16, 23).

On the Thursday afternoon and on Friday morning, a preliminary compilation (CRP.1 and an addition to CRP.1) 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). The proposals were grouped under the following sub headings: I Aims, II Mechanisms, III Infrastructure, IV Human Resources, V Standard Operating Procedures and VI Problems, Challenges and Needs.

An analysis of the proposals in the tabulation below shows that they came from 29 States Parties, 4 international organizations and 5 guests of the meeting. The largest number of proposals came from Indonesia with 35 (including with Norway). Other major contributors were the United Kingdom (25), the United States (22), Iran (21), China (18), India (16) and Norway (with Indonesia) (16).

State Party	I Aims	II Mechanisms	III Infrastructures	IV Human Resources	V SOPs	VI Problems, Chal- lenges & Needs
Algeria						1
Bangladesh	1					
Bulgaria		1	2			
Canada	1	4	1	2	1	2
Canada & Kyrgyzstan			2			
China	4	5	4	3		2
Cuba on behalf of NAM	2	2	1	2		
France		4		1		
Georgia & UK			1	2		
Georgia & USA	1	3				
Germany		2	1	1	2	4
India	6	6	1		1	2
Indonesia	3	8	1	3	3	1
Indonesia & Norway	5	10			1	
Iran	3	7	5	4	1	1
Iraq	2	4	1			
Italy			1			
Japan	2	4		4	1	
Kenya	1	1	2	2		1
Mexico		2				
Nigeria		4	4	1	1	2
Pakistan	2	2	4		1	1
Philippines		1				
Republic of Korea	1	4			1	
Russian Federation	2	9	1			
Senegal		1				
Sweden on behalf of EU	5	5		1		
Turkey			4	1		
United Kingdom	5	14		2	1	
United States	5	7	3	2	1	
Total (No. of States Parties)	51 (18)	110 (24)	39 (18)	31 (15)	15 (12)	16 (10)

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

International organization	I Aims	II Mechanisms	III Infrastructures	IV Human Resources	V SOPs	VI Problems, Chal- lenges & Needs
ECDC		1				
FAO	1					1
OIE	1	3	1		1	1
WHO	1	5	1	1	2	1
Sub-Total	3	9	2	1	3	3

Guest of the meeting	I Aims	II Mechanisms	III Infrastructures	IV Human Resources	V SOPs	VI Problems, Chal- lenges & Needs
A. Gupte	4			2		
GHSI					1	
HealthMap		2				
ISBI	1		1			
IVI	3	1		1		
Sub-Total	8	3	1	3	1	--
Overall Total (including States)	62	122	42	35	19	19

As already noted, 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.

Reflections

The Meeting of Experts had an excellent participation with just over 500 participants from 96 States Parties, 4 Signatory States, 3 States non-Party as well as from IGOs, guests of the meeting and NGOs. It was a one-week meeting addressing a single topic and although the programme had been planned to cover all the aspects identified prior to the meeting it had been necessary to amend the schedule in the light of the statements and presentations being made. As a consequence the two panel discussions that had been planned for the Thursday on integrating responses to human, animal and plant diseases and on public-private partnerships as a tool for dealing with disease had to be dropped. The meeting was held in open session throughout, as had been the case at the Meeting of Experts in 2008, thereby enabling the guests of the meeting and the NGO representatives to be aware of all the contributions and the discussion thereon, which can only increase understanding around the world of the issues being addressed. The poster session at the end of Thursday afternoon again appeared to have been a successful event, although with hindsight, such poster sessions would be more effective in bringing experts together if they were scheduled for much earlier in the week – preferably on the Monday or Tuesday.

Whilst the European Union and the NAM and Other States had group statements and had also submitted Working Papers, it was noted that the JACKSNNZ group (Japan, Australia, Canada, Republic of Korea, Switzerland, Norway and New Zealand) had neither a group statement nor coordinated Working Papers as they had in previous years, although two member States had made opening statements (Republic of Korea and Norway). The same was true for the group of twelve Latin American States (Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Mexico, Peru and Uruguay). Such group statements and coordinated Working Papers are valuable as they show that the issues being considered are being addressed both nationally and within the group.

It is noted that in the opening statements five countries, Algeria, Bangladesh, Iran, the Republic of Korea and Turkey looked ahead to the Seventh Review Conference in 2011. Algeria noted that *These meetings today are, from this viewpoint, a further opportunity to consider the status of the implementation of one of the pillars of the Convention,*

that is, Article X. It is particularly relevant to do this against the backdrop of the holding of the Review Conference planned for 2011. This is also a good opportunity to recall that the scope of the Convention continues to be limited because it is not endowed with a verification mechanism and to stress once again the need for a resumption of multilateral negotiations on a legally binding instrument in this area. Bangladesh said that *We should consider enhanced international cooperation to expedite their accession to the Convention. The ongoing Confidence Building Measures can serve as useful incentives to the process, and should be further strengthened. The ultimate objective of the Confidence building Measures should be to achieve an effective verification regime. My delegation looks forward to significant developments in this regard during the lead up to and at the Seventh Review Conference in 2011. We hope that the renewed vigour and optimism that we have witnessed in our recent work on disarmament will also provide impetus for further negotiations on an enabling instrument for the full and verifiable implementation of the BWC.* Iran said that *Iran attaches great importance to multilaterally negotiated instruments on Weapons of Mass Destruction including BWC which are essential for the maintenance of international and regional peace and security. We hope that a decision can be adopted in the Seventh BWC Review Conference in 2011 to let the negotiations be resumed on a legally binding instrument to comprehensively strengthen the Convention including in the area of international cooperation for peaceful purposes.* The Republic of Korea noted that *it is the sincere hope of my delegation that the planned intersessional work program will make a significant contribution to the success of the 7th Review Conference in 2011.* Turkey said that *On the road to the Seventh Review Conference in 2011, we have already addressed very important topics in 2007 and 2008. It then noted that This year's topic is also key to full implementation of the BWC regime and went on to say that When the inter-sessional program is hopefully completed at the end of 2010, we shall have accomplished our goal to strengthen and advance the implementation of the Convention, on the eve of the Review Conference of 2011. It then added that States Parties may wish to make use of the 2007-2010 inter-sessional period to consider new ideas in the next Review Conference for an implementation mechanism to enhance the new effectiveness of the Convention. It is commendable that States Parties are increasingly showing signs that they are looking ahead to the Seventh Review Conference in 2011*

and are preparing and submitting Working Papers during the intersessional period to prepare the ground for the Review Conference.

In this respect, the Working Paper (WP.24) submitted by Cuba on behalf of the NAM and Other States is welcomed. This Working Paper entitled *The Establishment of a Mechanism for the Full Implementation of Article X of The Convention* notes in its second paragraph that *we hope that a decision can be adopted in the Seventh BWC Review Conference in 2011 recommending negotiations on a legally binding Protocol to comprehensively strengthen the implementation of the Convention including in the area of international cooperation for peaceful purposes*. It then goes on to recommend *a plan with concrete actions for the full implementation of article X of the Convention*. Whilst the Working Paper focuses on how to achieve full implementation of Article X it needs to be recognized that other articles in the Convention also need to be addressed. For example, as India noted in its statement *The strengthened implementation of the provisions of Article III would ensure that the cooperation envisaged under Article X is not abused. Effective export controls are an essential component of international cooperation to ensure that disease causing organisms and pathogens do not fall into the hands of terrorists and are used only for peaceful purposes*.

The Cuba (NAM) working paper expresses the hope that the Seventh Review Conference in 2011 will adopt a decision recommending negotiations on the comprehensive strengthening of the implementation of the Convention. This aspiration is reflected in the statement made by Sweden on behalf of the EU that *the EU remains committed to working with a long term view to develop measures to verify compliance with the BTWC*. The Russian Federation also expressed support by saying that *At the same time we welcome the efforts of some States Parties to the BWC aimed at making CBMs universal. Success achieved here may facilitate substantive discussions on the elaboration of an effective verification mechanism for this Convention. The Russian Federation remains committed to the establishment of such mechanism*. Several other States Parties have made similar statements as noted earlier in this report.

A further proposal was submitted by Iran in its Working Paper (WP.22 and WP.22/Corr.1) which addresses transfer denials by proposing that a standing committee should be established under the Convention to consider the cases of transfer denials. It proposes that *the members of the committee should be duly experienced and competent, composed of well qualified governmental individuals and appointed on the basis of balanced geographical distribution*. The WP focuses solely on Article X of the Convention saying that *The imposition of restrictions on dual use application of know-how, materials and equipment necessary for promoting capacity building in the fields of disease surveillance, detection, diagnosis, and containment of communicable diseases including production of some vaccines and other biological material*

is considered as a blatant discriminatory action in gross violation of Article X. No mention is made in the WP of the obligation on States Parties under Article III of the Convention in relation to dual-use information, technology and materials.

There is much to be said for other States Parties responding to the ideas proposed in the Cuba (NAM) WP and also in the WP by Iran, by submitting working papers that further elaborate what issues and steps should be considered in approaching a decision at the Seventh Review Conference to resume negotiations aimed at improving implementation of the Convention and building confidence in compliance. It would also be helpful to reflect upon concrete measures that the Seventh Review Conference might adopt in regard to the topics considered during the intersessional process. The time to develop ideas and to share them internationally is now, during the remaining fifteen months before the intersessional process ends in 2010..

In looking ahead to the Meeting of States Parties in December 2009, the Chairman has undertaken to prepare a synthesis paper that distills the essence of the many ideas and proposals in Annex I to the report of the Meeting of Experts. This paper is likely to include language that can be incorporated into the substantive paragraphs of the report of the Meeting of States Parties. It is also to be hoped that the paper will include concrete proposals that can be developed by States Parties for consideration at the Seventh Review Conference. In addition, the Meeting of States Parties can be expected to give some consideration to the promotion of universality as well as to the annual report on the Implementation Support Unit. At the Meeting of States Parties in December 2009 the Non-Aligned Movement should advise who is to be Chairman for the intersessional meetings in 2010. In addition, the dates for meetings in 2010 will be decided. It would be very helpful if the Chairman for the 2010 intersessional meetings could take the opportunity at the Meeting of States Parties in December 2009 to set out his/her approach to the topic for 2010:

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

so that the States Parties could start their preparations then instead of having to wait until they receive a letter sometime in 2010. Overall, the Meeting of States Parties can be expected to continue the momentum created by the successful outcome of the Sixth Review Conference and the intersessional meetings in 2007 and 2008.

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