

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

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Item 6 of the agenda

**Respective outstanding questions by the Russian Federation
to the United States and to Ukraine concerning the fulfilment
of their respective obligations under the Convention in the context
of the operation of biological laboratories in Ukraine**

**Statement by H.E Dušan Matulay, Ambassador,
Permanent Representative of the Slovak Republic to
the UN Office and other International Organisations in
Geneva at the Formal Consultative Meeting pursuant
to Article V of the Biological Weapons Convention**

Submitted by Slovakia

Mr. Chair,

1. At the outset allow me to congratulate you on your chairmanship of the Consultative Meeting pursuant to Article V of the Biological Weapons Convention. Let me assure you of the support of Slovakia in guiding the discussions during these consultations.

Mr. Chair,

2. Slovakia reaffirms its strong support for the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC), which is the key pillar of disarmament and non-proliferation architecture and a fundamental instrument to counter the threats of acquisition and use of biological weapons.

3. It is important to maintain integrity of the Convention, including through the operationalisation of its consultative mechanism under Article V, which serves as important tool for solving problems which may arise in relation to the objective, or in the application of the BTWC.

4. The experience with the COVID19 pandemics raised awareness of biological risks and vulnerabilities. It highlighted that international cooperation and assistance is crucial to deal with the risks of spread of dangerous pathogens. States need to cooperate and exchange knowledge, samples and data to support pandemic preparedness broadly. Such peaceful cooperation is in line with the Article X. of the Convention.

Mr. Chair,

5. These consultations are taking place in the situation of the unprovoked, unjustified and illegal aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine. We perceive presented assertions made by the Russian Federation in this context as part of disinformation allegations and we consider them as unsubstantiated and unfounded. We are further concerned that such efforts may undermine legitimate biosafety and biosecurity research and capacity building and hence, weaken the Convention.



6. In our view and based on the US and Ukrainian response to Russian allegations, the US cooperation with Ukraine is fully consistent with the BWC and provisions of Article X on international cooperation and assistance. Despite the false allegations, the US and Ukraine are taking their BWC obligations seriously. We highly appreciate that they participate fully and constructively in this consultative meeting. We also recall their transparency regarding the activities in Ukraine, including through providing the information through several working papers in the past, as well as at the side-event on the margins of the Preparatory Committee in April this year.

Mr. Chair,

7. My delegation is convinced, that the US and Ukraine credibly demonstrated to States Parties that their cooperation and assistance has been for legitimate peaceful purpose and in accordance with Article X. We can now concentrate on the important task ahead of BWC State Parties to ensure successful Review Conference.

Thank you for your attention.
