

**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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2019 Meeting

Geneva, 3-6 December 2019

**Meeting of Experts on Cooperation and Assistance,
with a Particular Focus on Strengthening Cooperation
and Assistance under Article X**

Geneva, 29-30 July 2019

Item 11 of the Agenda

**Adoption of the factual report reflecting the deliberations of the meeting,
including possible outcomes**

**Report of the 2019 Meeting of Experts on cooperation and
assistance, with a particular focus on strengthening
cooperation and assistance under Article X***

I. Introduction

1. At the Eighth Review Conference 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 ([BWC/CONF.VIII/4](#)), States Parties decided to hold annual meetings and that the first such meeting, in December 2017, would seek to make progress on issues of substance and process for the period before the next Review Conference, with a view to reaching consensus on an intersessional process.
2. At the Meeting of States Parties in December 2017, States Parties reached consensus on the following:
 - “(a) Reaffirming previous intersessional programmes from 2003-2015 and retaining the previous structures: annual Meetings of States Parties preceded by annual Meetings of Experts.
 - (b) The purpose of the intersessional programme is to discuss, and promote common understanding and effective action on those issues identified for inclusion in the intersessional programme.
 - (c) Recognizing the need to balance an ambition to improve the intersessional programme within the constraints – both financial and human resources – facing States Parties, twelve days are allocated to the intersessional programme each year from 2018- 2020. The work in the intersessional period will be guided by the aim of strengthening the implementation of all articles of the Convention in order to better respond to current challenges. The Meetings of Experts for eight days will be held

* Any entry listed in this document does not imply the expression of any opinion regarding, and is without prejudice to, the legal status of any country or territory or of its authorities.



back to back and at least three months before the annual Meetings of States Parties of four days each. Maximum use would be made of the Sponsorship Programme funded by voluntary contributions in order to facilitate participation of developing States Parties in the meetings of the intersessional programme.

(d) The meetings of the MSP will be chaired by a representative of the EEG in 2018, a representative of the Western Group in 2019 and a representative of the Group of Non-Aligned Movement and Other States in 2020. The annual Chair will be supported by two annual vice-chairs, one from each of the other two regional groups. In addition to the reports of the Meetings of Experts, the Meetings of States Parties will consider the annual reports of the ISU and progress on universality. The Meetings of Experts will be chaired in 2018 by [the Group of the Non-Aligned Movement and Other States Parties to the BWC] (MX 1 and MX 2) and the Western Group (MX 3 and MX4), in 2019 by EEG (MX1 and MX 2) and NAM (MX 3 and MX 4), and in 2020 by Western Group (MX 1 and MX 2) and by EEG (MX 3 and MX 4); MX 5 will be chaired by the regional group chairing the MSP.

	<i>MSP</i>	<i>MX 1</i>	<i>MX 2</i>	<i>MX 3</i>	<i>MX 4</i>	<i>MX 5</i>
2018	EEG	NAM	NAM	WG	WG	EEG
2019	WG	EEG	EEG	NAM	NAM	WG
2020	NAM	WG	WG	EEG	EEG	NAM

All meetings will be subject mutatis mutandis to the rules of procedure of the Eighth Review Conference.

(e) The Meetings of Experts would be open-ended and will consider the following topics:

MX.1 (2 days): Cooperation and assistance, with a particular focus on strengthening cooperation and assistance under Article X:

- Consideration of the reports of the States Parties on their full and comprehensive implementation of all provisions of Article X;
- Review of the report by the ISU on the operation of the assistance and cooperation database established by the Seventh Review Conference and renewed by the Eighth Review Conference and consideration of its further operationalization, including measures to further strengthen the operation of the database, including in the light of BWC/MSP/2017/4;
- Identification of challenges and obstacles to developing international cooperation, assistance and exchange in the biological sciences and technology, including equipment and material, for peaceful purposes to their full potential, and possible ways and means of overcoming these;
- Development of guidelines and procedures for mobilizing resources, including financial resources on a voluntary basis to address gaps and needs;
- Facilitation of education, training, exchange and twinning programs and other means of developing human resources in biological sciences and technology related to implementation of the Convention, particularly in developing countries;
- Promotion of capacity building, through international cooperation, in biosafety and biosecurity and for detecting, reporting and responding to outbreaks of infectious disease or biological weapons attacks, including in the areas of preparedness, response, and crisis management and mitigation;

- Collaboration with international organizations and networks related to combating infectious diseases at all levels, as well as regional and sub-regional cooperation to promote implementation of all articles of the Convention.

[...]

(f) Each Meeting of Experts will prepare for the consideration of the annual Meeting of States Parties a factual report reflecting its deliberations, including possible outcomes. All meetings, both of Experts and of States Parties will reach any conclusions or results by consensus. The Meeting of States Parties will be responsible for managing the intersessional programme, including taking necessary measures with respect to budgetary and financial matters by consensus with a view to ensuring the proper implementation of the intersessional programme. The Ninth Review Conference will consider the work and outcomes it receives from the Meetings of States Parties and the Meetings of Experts and decide by consensus on any inputs from the intersessional programme and on any further action.”

3. By resolution [73/87](#), adopted without a vote on 5 December 2018, the General Assembly, *inter alia*, requested the Secretary-General to continue to render the necessary assistance to the depositary Governments of the Convention and to continue to provide such services as may be required for the conduct and the implementation of the decisions and recommendations of the review conferences.

II. Organization of the Meeting of Experts

4. In accordance with the decisions of the Eighth Review Conference and the 2017 Meeting of States Parties, the 2019 Meeting of Experts was convened at the Palais des Nations in Geneva from 29 to 30 July 2019, chaired by Ambassador Victor Dolidze, Permanent Representative of Georgia to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva.

5. On 29 July 2019, the Meeting of Experts adopted its agenda ([BWC/MSP/2019/MX.1/1](#)) as proposed by the Chair.

6. Following a suggestion by the Chair, the Meeting of Experts adopted as its rules of procedure, *mutatis mutandis*, the rules of procedure of the Eighth Review Conference, as contained in document [BWC/CONF.VIII/2](#).

7. Mr. Daniel Feakes, Chief, Implementation Support Unit, Office for Disarmament Affairs, Geneva, served as Secretary of the Meeting of Experts. Mr. Hermann Lampalzer, Political Affairs Officer, Implementation Support Unit, served as Deputy Secretary and Ms. Ngoc Phuong van der Blij, Political Affairs Officer, also served in the secretariat.

III. Participation at the Meeting of Experts

8. Ninety-six delegations participated in the Meeting of Experts as follows: Afghanistan; Algeria; Angola; Argentina; Armenia; Australia; Austria; Belarus; Belgium; Bolivia (Plurinational State of); Botswana; Brazil; Burkina Faso; Canada; Chile; China; Colombia; Costa Rica; Côte d'Ivoire; Cuba; Cyprus; Czech Republic; Denmark; Dominican Republic; Ecuador; El Salvador; Estonia; Ethiopia; Finland; France; Georgia; Germany; Ghana; Greece; Guatemala; Holy See; Honduras; Hungary; India; Indonesia; Iran (Islamic Republic of); Iraq; Ireland; Italy; Japan; Jordan; Kazakhstan; Kenya; Kyrgyzstan; Lao (People's Democratic Republic); Latvia; Lebanon; Libya; Malaysia; Mali; Mexico; Montenegro; Morocco; Mozambique; Myanmar; Nepal; Netherlands; Nigeria; North Macedonia; Pakistan; Peru; Philippines; Poland; Portugal; Qatar; Republic of Korea; Romania; Russian Federation; Saudi Arabia; Senegal; Serbia; Slovakia; South Africa; Spain; Sri Lanka; State of Palestine; Sweden; Switzerland; Tajikistan; Thailand; Trinidad and Tobago; 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 Zimbabwe.

9. In addition, three States that had signed the Convention but had not yet ratified it participated in the Meeting of Experts without taking part in the making of decisions, as provided for in rule 44, paragraph 1 of the rules of procedure: Egypt; Haiti; and United Republic of Tanzania.

10. One State, Israel neither a party nor a signatory to the Convention, participated in the Meeting of Experts as an observer, in accordance with rule 44, paragraph 2.

11. The United Nations, including the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR), the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI), and the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA), attended the Meeting of Experts in accordance with rule 44, paragraph 3.

12. The European Union (EU), the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the World Health Organization (WHO) and the World Animal Health Organization (OIE) were granted observer status to participate in the Meeting of Experts in accordance with rule 44, paragraph 4.

13. In addition, at the invitation of the Chair, in recognition of the special nature of the topics under consideration at this meeting and without creating a precedent, two independent experts participated in informal exchanges in the open sessions as Guests of the Meeting of Experts: Dr. David Harper of Chatham House and Ms. Mitali Wroczynski of the BMJ.

14. Thirty non-governmental organizations and research institutes attended the Meeting of Experts under rule 44, paragraph 5.

15. A list of all participants in the Meeting of Experts is contained in document [BWC/MSP/2019/MX.1/INF.1](#).

IV. Work of the Meeting of Experts

16. In accordance with the provisional agenda ([BWC/MSP/2019/MX.1/1](#)) and an annotated programme of work prepared by the Chair, the Meeting of Experts had substantive discussions on the issues allocated by the 2017 Meeting of States Parties.

17. Under agenda item 4 (“Consideration of the reports of the States Parties on their full and comprehensive implementation of all provisions of Article X”), the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland introduced a working paper ([BWC/MSP/2019/MX.1/WP.5](#)) and the Implementation Support Unit provided a brief update. There then followed an interactive discussion on the agenda item in which the following States Parties participated: Australia; Botswana; Brazil; China; France; Germany; India; Iran (Islamic Republic of); Iraq; Japan; Kenya; Mali; Morocco; Russian Federation; United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland; and United States of America. Various views were expressed during the consideration of this agenda item.

18. Under agenda item 5 (“Review of the report by the ISU on the operation of the assistance and cooperation database established by the Seventh Review Conference and renewed by the Eighth Review Conference and consideration of its further operationalization, including measures to further strengthen the operation of the database, including in the light of BWC/MSP/2017/4”), the Implementation Support Unit gave a brief update on the Cooperation and Assistance database. There then followed an interactive discussion on the agenda item in which the following States Parties participated: Algeria (on behalf of the Arab States Parties to the BWC); Botswana; Brazil; China; India; Indonesia; Iran (Islamic Republic of); Morocco; Switzerland; United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland; United States of America; and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) on behalf of the Group of the Non-Aligned Movement and Other States Parties to the BWC.¹ The World Health Organization made a brief intervention. Various views were expressed during the consideration of this agenda item.

¹ Notes sent by Colombia, Ecuador and Peru on the statements delivered by the NAM Chair.

19. Under agenda item 6 (“Identification of challenges and obstacles to developing international cooperation, assistance and exchange in the biological sciences and technology, including equipment and material, for peaceful purposes to their full potential, and possible ways and means of overcoming these”), three States Parties, the United States of America, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela on behalf of the Group of the Non-Aligned Movement and Other States Parties and the Islamic Republic of Iran introduced working papers on this topic ([BWC/MSP/2019/MX.1/WP.1](#), [BWC/MSP/2019/MX.1/WP.3](#) and [BWC/MSP/2019/MX.1/WP.4](#) respectively). The United States of America also made a technical presentation.² There then followed an interactive discussion on the agenda item in which the following States Parties participated: Algeria; Brazil; China; Ecuador; Germany; Iran (Islamic Republic of); Kenya; Mali; Pakistan; United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland; United States of America; Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of); and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) on behalf of the Group of the Non-Aligned Movement and Other States Parties to the BWC. Various views were expressed during the consideration of this agenda item.

20. Under agenda item 7 (“Development of guidelines and procedures for mobilizing resources, including financial resources on a voluntary basis to address gaps and needs”), the Implementation Support Unit provided a brief update on the Sponsorship Programme. There was then an interactive discussion on the agenda item in which the following States Parties participated: Botswana; India; Iran (Islamic Republic of); Kenya; Switzerland; United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland; and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) on behalf of the Group of the Non-Aligned Movement and Other States Parties to the BWC. Various views were expressed during the consideration of this agenda item.

21. Under agenda item 8 (“Facilitation of education, training, exchange and twinning programmes and other means of developing human resources in biological sciences and technology related to implementation of the Convention, particularly in developing countries”), the Implementation Support Unit provided a short briefing. There then followed an interactive discussion on the agenda item in which the following States Parties participated: Australia; Canada; Germany; India; Japan; Switzerland; United Arab Emirates; United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland; Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) on behalf of the Group of the Non-Aligned Movement and Other States Parties to the BWC. In accordance with Rule 44.1 of the Rules of Procedure, Haiti, a Signatory State to the Convention, also made an intervention. Various views were expressed during the consideration of this agenda item.

22. Under agenda item 9 (“Promotion of capacity building, through international cooperation, in biosafety and biosecurity and for detecting, reporting and responding to outbreaks of infectious disease or biological weapons attacks, including in the areas of preparedness, response, and crisis management and mitigation”), the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland introduced its working paper on this topic ([BWC/MSP/2019/MX.1/WP.2](#)) and Hungary made a technical presentation. Dr. David Harper from Chatham House and Ms. Mitali Wroczynski from the BMJ made presentations as Guests of the Meeting. There then followed an interactive discussion on the agenda item in which the following States Parties participated: Canada; India; Italy; Japan; Netherlands; Philippines; Qatar; Republic of Korea; Switzerland; Ukraine; Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) on behalf of the Group of the Non-Aligned Movement and Other States Parties to the BWC. The European Union and the World Organization for Animal Health made statements. Various views were expressed during the consideration of this agenda item.

23. Under agenda item 10 (“Collaboration with international organizations and networks related to combating infectious diseases at all levels, as well as regional and sub-regional cooperation to promote implementation of all articles of the Convention”), there was an interactive discussion on the agenda item in which the following States Parties participated:

² Technical presentations posted on the webpage of the Meeting of Experts, with the consent of the presenter.

Italy; Netherlands; Switzerland; Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) on behalf of the Group of the Non-Aligned Movement and Other States Parties to the BWC. Various views were expressed during the consideration of this agenda item.

24. In the course of its work, the Meeting of Experts was able to draw on a number of working papers submitted by States Parties, as well as on statements and presentations made by States Parties, international organizations and Guests of the Meeting, which were circulated in the Meeting.

25. The Chair, under his own responsibility and initiative, has prepared a paper listing considerations, lessons, perspectives, recommendations, conclusions and proposals drawn from the presentations, statements, working papers and interventions on the agenda items under discussion at the Meeting. The Meeting of Experts noted that this paper had not been agreed and had no status. It was the Chair's view that the paper could assist delegations in their preparations for the Meeting of States Parties in December 2019 and those in the remaining year of the intersessional programme and in the succeeding Meeting of Experts on Cooperation and assistance, with a particular focus on strengthening cooperation and assistance under Article X in the intersessional programme in 2020 and also in their consideration of how best to "discuss, and promote common understanding and effective action on" the topics in accordance with the consensus reached at the 2017 Meeting of States Parties. The paper prepared by the Chair, in consultation with States Parties, is attached as Annex I to this report.

V. Documentation

26. A list of official documents of the Meeting of Experts, including the working papers submitted by States Parties, is contained in Annex II to this report. All documents on this list are available on the BWC website at <http://www.unog.ch/bwc> and through the United Nations Official Document System (ODS), at <http://documents.un.org>.

VI. Conclusion of the Meeting of Experts

27. At its closing meeting on 30 July 2019, the Meeting of Experts adopted its report by consensus, as orally amended, as contained in document BWC/MSP/2019/MX.1/CRP.1, to be issued as document BWC/MSP/2019/MX.1/2.

Annex I

Summary report

Submitted by the Chairperson of the 2019 Meeting of Experts on Cooperation and Assistance, with a Particular Focus on Strengthening Cooperation and Assistance under Article X

1. The Chairperson, under his own responsibility and initiative, has prepared this paper which lists considerations, lessons, perspectives, recommendations, conclusions and proposals drawn from the presentations, statements, working papers and interventions on the agenda items under discussion at the Meeting held from 29 to 30 July 2019. The Meeting of Experts noted that this paper had not been agreed and had no status. It was the Chairperson's view that this paper could assist delegations in their preparations for the Meeting of States Parties in December 2019 and for the remaining year of the intersessional programme, including in particular the succeeding Meeting of Experts on Cooperation and Assistance, with a Particular Focus on Strengthening Cooperation and Assistance under Article X in the intersessional programme in 2020.
2. The Chairperson would like to express his gratitude to delegations for their active participation in the Meeting, particularly for the various working papers that were submitted and which, together with oral statements and the constructive debate, as well as the interventions by relevant international organizations, have served as the basis for this summary report. The procedural report of the Meeting details which delegations spoke under the different agenda items, and which delegations introduced working papers, so such information will not be repeated in this summary report.
3. The in-depth and substantive discussions and the large number of proposals indicated the clear interest of delegations in making progress on strengthening cooperation and assistance under Article X. The following sections summarize and synthesize the substantive discussions under agenda items 4 to 10.

Agenda item 4 - Consideration of the reports of the States Parties on their full and comprehensive implementation of all provisions of Article X

4. Following the update provided by the Implementation Support Unit (ISU), which noted that only a very low number of national Article X reports had been submitted so far in the biannual period 2018/2019, States Parties emphasized the usefulness of the reports and discussed how voluntary reporting could be further encouraged and facilitated with a view to strengthening the implementation of Article X. One State Party submitted a working paper containing its report on the implementation of Article X and several other States Parties took the opportunity to orally present a wide range of activities and programmes relevant to the implementation of Article X.
5. Some States Parties noted the added value of the national reports, as many of the activities listed in the reports are illustrative of various approaches that could be taken when implementing Article X; and reviewing them contributed to raising awareness of assistance needs. It was also stated that the reports contributed to enhancing transparency between States Parties, partners or stakeholders. Other States Parties suggested that the reports should also include information on national measures adopted by States Parties to promote the peaceful uses of biology and to avoid hampering legitimate uses.
6. States Parties suggested that the reports should be substantive, practical and meaningful. While discussing the low level of participation, some States Parties suggested that, given the complexity, diversity and range of activities related to assistance and cooperation, it was not always possible to clearly define which activities were general and which activities were directly connected to the BWC and therefore pertinent to be included

in the reports. Other States Parties expressed the view that there is a diverse range of activities that support the aims and objectives of Article X. Furthermore, the structure and content of the reports were not clearly defined and therefore added confusion while completing the reporting process for many States. To overcome these challenges, the idea of using guidelines and templates was suggested by some States Parties, but there was also recognition that each country's experience of Article X was different and so there needed to be flexibility in how information was conveyed in reports.

7. Some States Parties recommended that reports by States that have received assistance would enrich the information available on the implementation of Article X. A number of recipients of assistance also shared their experiences of how assistance received helped to build their national capacities. However, while discussing the low level of participation and its rationale, some States Parties added that some recipient States do not necessarily see a clear connection between receiving assistance and reporting the activities.

8. The idea of using submission dates or deadlines to promote and encourage the submission of reports was suggested by some States Parties, while others considered that these reports were not to be confused with CBMs and therefore dates were not needed.

Agenda item 5 - Review of the report by the Implementation Support Unit (ISU) on the operation of the assistance and cooperation database established by the Seventh Review Conference and renewed by the Eighth Review Conference and consideration of its further operationalization, including measures to further strengthen the operation of the database, including in the light of BWC/MSP/2017/4

9. Following a brief update by the Implementation Support Unit, States Parties welcomed the enhancement of the Cooperation and Assistance Database undertaken by the ISU as requested by the Eighth Review Conference, and the increased number of offers and requests listed in the Database. States Parties also reiterated the need to further harness the potential of the Database as the BWC's online cooperation platform for implementing Article X.

10. While discussing measures to strengthen the operationalisation of the database and looking at the challenges, it was noted by many States Parties that the Database is currently used by only a small proportion of States Parties, and only two successful matching of offers and requests were reported. However, it was pointed out that more matching activities had taken place but were not always reported by States Party. It was pointed out that many States Parties opt for informal channels to request for assistance and cooperation activities rather than formally addressing these issues via the database.

11. It was emphasized that requests and offers were not always well defined and that assisting States Parties with needs identification and assessment will help them to submit specific requests, facilitate the optimal use of the Database by developing States Parties, and increase the prospect of successful matching of requests and offers in the Database.

12. Many States Parties underlined the need to enhance the functionality, visibility and effectiveness of the Database, suggesting that this is critical to strengthening the BWC cooperation mechanism. Furthermore, some delegations suggested the low level of resources (both financial and staffing) provided to the ISU. Possible measures were discussed, including the following: programmes to support needs-assessment activities; a voluntary trust fund and a cooperation and assistance officer within the ISU; allowing and giving the resources to the ISU to play a more prominent role as clearinghouse; review and upgrade of the Database design such that it would be a more user-friendly and resource-rich interface; classify and group similar offers of assistance together such that it would facilitate States research; and would include all pertinent information and references on the full range of partnerships and providers of assistance relevant to BWC implementation. Some delegations proposed to include offers from inter-governmental and non-

governmental organizations and to promote the appropriate engagement of academic, research institutes and the private sector in BWC assistance and cooperation.

13. The idea of regular informal information meetings on the Database, as well as cooperation and assistance activities under Article X, was suggested. Those events could promote the Database and provide the opportunity for States Parties to better understand the range of assistance and cooperation activities available under Article X.

14. While voluntary contributions to support the Database were welcomed, ideas for other ways to mobilize resources to support the Database were also suggested, such as a voluntary trust fund for assistance or including the costs of additional initiatives to improve the Database in the budget for annual assessed contributions by States Parties.

Agenda item 6 - Identification of challenges and obstacles to developing international cooperation, assistance and exchange in the biological sciences and technology, including equipment and material, for peaceful purposes to their full potential, and possible ways and means of overcoming these

15. States Parties shared views on strengthening international cooperation and assistance under Article X, and challenges and obstacles to developing and deepening such cooperation in the fields of biotechnology, genetic engineering, microbiology and other related areas between developed and developing countries. Three working papers were introduced by delegations and one delegation made a technical presentation.

16. Some States Parties suggested that the lack of an institutional mechanism to facilitate the full, effective and non-discriminatory implementation of Article X posed an important challenge to developing international cooperation, assistance and exchange in the biological sciences and technology. They therefore reiterated earlier proposals for the development of an effective institutional mechanism comprising an Article X compliance mechanism and a Cooperation Committee. The Cooperation Committee would consult on, monitor and review international cooperation and assistance activities, coordinate the operationalization of offers and supplies proposed and/or requested by States Parties and also oversee the Cooperation and Assistance Officer, if such a staff post were to be created within the ISU. Other States Parties took the view that such a Committee is not acceptable, given that decisions on assistance are at the discretion of the provider.

17. Some States Parties suggested that another central challenge to developing international cooperation, assistance and exchange in the biological sciences and technology was the existence of multilateral export control regimes which impose restrictions on the legitimate trade in drugs, medicines, vaccines, diagnostics, biological agents, equipment and /or materials for peaceful purposes. They underlined that the provisions of Articles III and IV should not be used to impose restrictions and/or limitations on transfers and exchange of scientific knowledge, technology, equipment and materials for peaceful purposes. Proposals in this regard include the establishment of a non-proliferation export control and international cooperation regime to promote non-proliferation and the peaceful use of biotechnology, and to establish a procedure to settle disputes if a State Party is restricted and/or denied by another State Party. However, other States Parties expressed the view that multilateral export control regimes support the implementation of Article III and that very few transfer requests are actually denied. One State Party provided a presentation on the extensive assistance it provides to about 50 other States Parties in the area of export controls.

18. Other States Parties made reference to practical challenges they have faced when implementing cooperation and assistance programmes which include the following: limited availability of focal points for project implementation; the slow pace of decision-making processes in partner countries; frequent turnover of stakeholders and partners, making it difficult to build lasting working relationships; identifying the appropriate partner agencies in recipient countries; coordination with and among different agencies and sectors within the recipient countries; developing and sustaining expertise of human resources in recipient

countries; capacity gaps between developing and developed states that hinder cooperation; and, administrative hurdles in recipient countries.

19. Some States Parties underlined the important role played by individuals, industry, foundations, universities, and other non-governmental organizations; and suggested that partnerships with these entities were essential to facilitate the fullest possible exchange of scientific and technological information. Furthermore, they underlined the benefits of cooperating with private industry, as innovations in biotechnology and global health were increasingly made in the private sector and outlined steps that States Parties could take to create national environments conducive to these partnerships. Some other States Parties, however recommended care in such approaches, as cooperation and assistance under the BWC should remain a State-driven process, in which the focus should remain on security and non-proliferation.

Agenda item 7 - Development of guidelines and procedures for mobilizing resources, including financial resources on a voluntary basis to address gaps and needs

20. States Parties reiterated the need to explore new approaches and instruments to effectively address gaps and needs in cooperation and assistance under Article X, in a sustainable manner, through resource mobilization guidelines. The Implementation Support Unit provided a brief update on the BWC Sponsorship Programme under which 20 experts from developing countries had been supported to participate in the Meetings of Experts. Some recipient States Parties expressed their appreciation for the BWC Sponsorship Programme as a means to mobilize resources to address gaps and needs for developing States Parties to enable them to participate in the annual meetings of the BWC.

21. Some States Parties reiterated the importance of examples presented during the Meeting of Experts in 2018 of relevant innovative public-private partnerships such as the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization (GAVI) and the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI). It was pointed out that they provide useful templates for collaboration between developing and developed states and with international organizations, NGOs, academia and industry, to address particular gaps and needs in cooperation and assistance under Article X.

22. The idea of setting up a voluntary trust fund was suggested, as well as the idea of establishing the post of Cooperation and Assistance Officer within the ISU.

Agenda item 8 - Facilitation of education, training, exchange and twinning programmes and other means of developing human resources in biological sciences and technology related to implementation of the Convention, particularly in developing countries

23. States Parties considered existing international and regional platforms for education, training, exchange and twinning programmes to support human resource development in the field of biological sciences. They also considered important leading events and took note of the numerous university-based programmes and technology exchanges involving scientists and academe between and among developing and developed States. The Implementation Support Unit briefly informed the Meeting of Experts about a workshop being organized for 20 young biologists from developing countries under the current EU Council Decision 2019/97 in support of the BWC.

24. The Meeting heard examples of successful programmes, and several elements for successful outcomes were identified:

- i) To better improve the capacity of laboratories in developing countries, twinning programmes should be working at the country level and sub-regional level to strengthen capacity to prevent and detect emerging and reemerging infectious

diseases threats with the potential of causing social economic harm at a national, regional or global scale;

ii) Training of scientists in biosafety and biosecurity was highlighted as an important component of twinning programmes; and

iii) While implementing human resources development programmes, and promoting capacity building projects, some States Parties suggested that supporting the development of networking among experts in developing countries is a crucial element; in case of cross-border emergency, timely and accurate information exchange is required.

25. Some States Parties emphasized that bridging the capacity gaps between developing and developed countries is critical for the full and effective implementation of Article X.

Agenda item 9 - Promotion of capacity building, through international cooperation, in biosafety and biosecurity and for detecting, reporting and responding to outbreaks of infectious disease or biological weapons attacks, including in the areas of preparedness, response, and crisis management and mitigation

26. States Parties considered the broad range of activities that are already conducted within the framework of Article X in this regard, reiterated that this area manifests the strongest interface between Article X and Article VII. One delegation introduced a working paper and one delegation and two Guests of the Meeting made technical presentations.

27. Some States Parties highlighted that building health system capacity and resilience through workforce development is a crucial element to disease outbreaks management, as health professionals are the first line of defence when it comes to detecting infectious diseases. A robust and resilient health system will be better prepared to manage outbreaks regardless of their origin, whilst at the same time continuing to maintain core healthcare functions.

28. Some States Parties highlighted that, in crisis situations challenges in developing states included: the limited time available for action; the high level of patient load; as well as the lack of access to the latest medical information.

29. The Meeting heard a presentation by the OIE, which highlighted that OIE's work and the work of the Member Countries for building strong veterinary services and resilience are of fundamental importance for building sustainable biosafety and biosecurity. This is mostly achieved by leveraging cross-cutting activities meant to strengthen animal health and welfare in general, but that at the same time provide indispensable contributions to biological security.

30. The Meeting considered best practices, when implementing sustainable cooperation activities, which included the following considerations:

i) Ownership by partner and recipient countries, to overcome challenges such as finance, human resource, operations, infrastructure and utilities;

ii) Activities could include a prior assessment, comprising a situation analysis to assess existing capacities; a needs assessment, which defines context for operation; and detailed planning, which considers the programme of work, the risk-based approach, the financial planning, and the roles and responsibilities; and

iii) The essential elements for developing a business plan should be considered: finance; staffing; operations; and risks.

Agenda item 10 - Collaboration with international organizations and networks related to combating infectious diseases at all levels, as well as regional and sub-regional cooperation to promote implementation of all articles of the Convention

31. States Parties reiterated that relevant international and regional organizations, such as the World Health Organization (WHO) and the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE), play an important role in disease surveillance, prevention, detection and response and that there is merit in continuing coordination and cooperation with them to implement Article X in accordance with their respective mandates.

32. The Meeting considered regional and sub-regional cooperation fora, such as the Global Health Security Agenda, which can contribute in engaging international stakeholders on issues such as international preparedness or biosafety and biosecurity. States Parties recognized the specific and essential competences brought by international organizations. It was suggested that these specific competences could be compiled and added to the BWC Cooperation and Assistance Database, to provide States Parties with a better overall vision of the range of assistance available. States Parties reiterated that the threats posed by biological weapons are multidimensional and require strong and effective collaboration with all relevant international organizations and networks, citing the vital interface between health and security. States Parties also emphasized that the unique role of the BWC as a Convention dealing with security-related issues should be recognized. Some States Parties suggested that any measures identified within the framework of the Convention to mitigate biological risks should be implemented in a manner to ensure that legitimate peaceful activities would not be hampered.

33. In this regard, some States Parties suggested the need to review national laws and regulations to ensure that they are in full conformity with obligations under Article X, to identify specific measures to ensure national implementation of the Convention is in full conformity with Article X, to identify obstacles and challenges related to national implementation which hamper the fullest possible exchange of equipment, material and technology for peaceful purposes and to identify specific measures to address cases of denials arising from restrictions and/or limitations which hinder the full, effective and non-discriminatory implementation of the Convention. Other States Parties believed that national laws and regulations, as well as decisions on individual export licenses, are sovereign decisions.

Annex II

List of documents

<i>Symbol</i>	<i>Title</i>
BWC/MSP/2019/MX.1/1	Provisional agenda for the Meeting of Experts on Cooperation and Assistance, with a Particular Focus on Strengthening Cooperation and Assistance under Article X - Submitted by the Chair
BWC/MSP/2019/MX.1/2	Report of the 2019 Meeting of Experts on cooperation and assistance, with a particular focus on strengthening cooperation and assistance under Article X
BWC/MSP/2019/MX.1/CRP.1	Draft Report of the 2019 Meeting of Experts on cooperation and assistance, with a particular focus on strengthening cooperation and assistance under Article X - Submitted by the Chair
BWC/MSP/2019/MX.1/MISC.1	Provisional list of participants
BWC/MSP/2019/MX.1/INF.1	List of participants
BWC/MSP/2019/MX.1/WP.1	Facilitating the fullest possible exchange of science and technology under Article X - Submitted by the United States of America
BWC/MSP/2019/MX.1/WP.2	Capacity Building through International Cooperation: The British Medical Journal's Clinical Decision Support Training Initiative - Submitted by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
BWC/MSP/2019/MX.1/WP.3	Institutional Mechanism for International Cooperation and Compliance with Article X - Submitted by the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela on behalf of the Group of the Non-Aligned Movement and Other States Parties to the Biological Weapons Convention
BWC/MSP/2019/MX.1/WP.4	Cooperation and Assistance, with a particular focus on Strengthening Cooperation and Assistance under Article X - Submitted by the Islamic Republic of Iran
BWC/MSP/2019/MX.1/WP.5	Report on Implementation of Article X of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention - Submitted by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
BWC/MSP/2019/MX.1/WP.6	Cooperation and Assistance, with a particular Focus on Strengthening Cooperation and Assistance under Article X - Submitted by the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and other States Parties to the BWC