

Working Group on the Strengthening of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction

23 August 2023

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Second Session

Geneva, 7-18 August 2023

Agenda item 6

Identifying, examining and developing specific and effective measures, including possible legally-binding measures, and making recommendations to strengthen and institutionalize the Convention in all its aspects within the mandate of the Working Group

Procedural report of the second session of the Working Group on the Strengthening of the Convention¹

I. Opening of the second session of the Working Group

1. In accordance with the decisions of the Ninth Review Conference, the second session of the Working Group was convened at the Palais des Nations in Geneva from 7 to 18 August 2023. The Working Group held 20 meetings during that period under the Chairpersonship of Ambassador Flavio Soares Damico, Special Representative of Brazil to the Conference on Disarmament, Ambassador Camille Petit, Permanent Representative of France to the Conference on Disarmament, and Mr. Irakli Jgenti, Deputy Permanent Representative of Georgia to the United Nations Office in Geneva, served as its Vice-Chairpersons.

2. The Under Secretary-General and High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Ms. Izumi Nakamitsu, addressed the Working Group via a video message.

3. Mr. Daniel Feakes, Chief, Implementation Support Unit, Office for Disarmament Affairs, Geneva, served as Secretary of the Meeting. Mr. Hermann Lampalzer, Political Affairs Officer, Implementation Support Unit, served as Deputy Secretary.

II. Participation at the second session of the Working Group

4. The following 122 delegations participated in the second session of the Working Group: Algeria, Angola, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Belarus, Belgium, Benin, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Estonia, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Gambia, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guyana, Holy See, Honduras, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lesotho, Libya, Lithuania, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands (Kingdom of the), Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Samoa, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Serbia, Sierra Leone,

¹ 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.



Singapore, Slovakia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, State of Palestine, Sudan, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Tunisia, Türkiye, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Zambia, Zimbabwe.

5. In addition, two States that had signed the Convention but had not yet ratified it participated in the second session of the Working Group without taking part in the making of decisions, as provided for in rule 44, paragraph 1 of the rules of procedure: Arab Republic of Egypt; Syrian Arab Republic.

6. Two States, Djibouti and Israel, neither parties nor signatories to the Convention, participated in the second session of the Working Group as observers, in accordance with rule 44, paragraph 2.

7. The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research, the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs and the Group of Experts supporting the Committee established pursuant to Security Council resolution 1540 attended the second session of the Working Group in accordance with rule 44, paragraph 3.

8. The Arms Trade Treaty Secretariat, the European Union, the International Atomic Energy Agency, the International Centre for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology, the International Criminal Police Organization, the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, The World Academy of Sciences, the World Health Organization and the World Organization for Animal Health were granted observer status to participate in the second session of the Working Group in accordance with rule 44, paragraph 4.

9. In addition, at the invitation of the Chairperson, in recognition of the special nature of the issues under consideration at this session and without creating a precedent, experts from international organizations and non-governmental organizations participated as guests in panel sessions organized by the Chairperson as reflected in paragraphs, 14, 16 and 18.

10. Twenty-one non-governmental organizations and research institutes attended the second session of the Working Group under rule 44, paragraph 5.

11. A list of all participants in the second session of the Working Group is contained in documents BWC/WG/2/INF.1 and Rev.1.

III. Identifying, examining and developing specific and effective measures, including possible legally-binding measures, and making recommendations to strengthen and institutionalize the Convention in all its aspects within the mandate of the Working Group

12. In accordance with the indicative schedule of activities as adopted at its first session (see Annex II of BWC/WG/1/2), the Working Group commenced its consideration of agenda item 6 on “Identifying, examining and developing specific and effective measures, including possible legally-binding measures, and making recommendations to strengthen and institutionalize the Convention in all its aspects within the mandate of the Working Group”.

13. At its first meeting, on 7 August 2023, the Chairperson announced that he had decided to appoint Friends of the Chair to assist him in his consultations and negotiations on particular issues as follows:

- International cooperation and assistance under Article X – Mr. Jonelle John S. Domingo (Philippines) and Mr. Thomas Fetz/Mr. Trevor Smith (Canada);
- Scientific and technological developments relevant to the Convention - Ms. Grisselle Rodríguez (Panama), Mr. Vincent Bodson (Belgium), Mr. Ljupčo Gjorgjinski (Canada), Mr. Peter Ahabwe/Mr. Musa Kwehangana (Uganda);

- National implementation of the Convention – Ms. Grisselle Rodríguez (Panama), Ms. Michelle Carr (Australia), Ms. Athikarn Dilongwathana (Thailand), Mr. Reski Ilahi (Indonesia), Ms. Faith Bagamuhunda (Uganda); and
- Organizational, institutional and financial arrangements – Mr. Husham Ahmed (Pakistan), H.E. Mr. Ichiro Ogasawara/Mr. Shigeru Umetsu (Japan) and Mr. Arsen Omarov (Kazakhstan).

14. The Working Group held six meetings from 7 to 9 August 2023 devoted to the issue of “Measures on international cooperation and assistance under Article X”. The following States Parties introduced working papers on this issue: the Philippines (on behalf of Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam) (BWC/WG/2/WP.1), the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (BWC/WG/2/WP.2), the United States of America (on behalf of Australia, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Germany, Japan, Latvia, Romania and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland) (BWC/WG/2/WP.3 and Rev.1), Japan (BWC/WG/2/WP.5), Canada and the Philippines (BWC/WG/2/WP.6), Japan, co-sponsored by Canada and Germany (BWC/WG/2/WP.7), Iran (Islamic Republic of) (BWC/WG/2/WP.11), Pakistan (BWC/WG/2/WP.13), China (BWC/WG/2/WP.14) and the Russian Federation (BWC/WG/2/WP.18). In panel sessions on this issue organized by the Chairperson, technical briefings were provided by Mr. Dumisani Dladla representing the Arms Trade Treaty Secretariat, Mr. Joseph Simmonds-Issler representing the Coalition on Epidemic Preparedness Innovations, Ms. Irina Albrecht representing the Group of Experts in support of the activities of the Committee established pursuant to Security Council resolution 1540, Professor Alessandro Marcello representing the International Centre for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology, Mr. Martin Krause representing the International Atomic Energy Agency, Mr. Adrien Sivignon and Ms. Elodie Liobard representing the International Criminal Police Organization, Mr. Sergey Zinoviev representing the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, Dr. Peter McGrath representing The World Academy of Sciences, Mr. Dima Calovski representing the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, Mr. Takashi Mashiko representing the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs, Ms. Federica Irene Falomi representing the United Nations Technology Bank for the Least Developed Countries, Dr. Michael Ryan and Dr. Sylvie Briand representing the World Health Organization and Ms. Madison Wimmers representing the World Organization for Animal Health. There was also a brief overview of its activities presented by the Implementation Support Unit. There then followed an interactive discussion in which the following States Parties participated: Algeria, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Botswana, Brazil, Canada, China, Colombia, Cuba, Denmark, Dominican Republic, France, Georgia, Germany, India, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Mali, Mexico, Netherlands (Kingdom of the), Niger, Pakistan, Panama, Philippines, Philippines (on behalf of Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam), Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, South Africa, Thailand, Türkiye, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of). The European Union also made a statement.

15. The Working Group held two meetings on 10 August 2023 devoted to the issue of “a mechanism open to all States Parties to facilitate and support the full implementation of international cooperation and assistance under Article X”. The following States Parties introduced working papers on this issue: the Philippines (on behalf of Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam) (BWC/WG/2/WP.1), the United States of America (on behalf of Australia, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Germany, Japan, Latvia, Romania and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland) (BWC/WG/2/WP.3 and Rev.1), Pakistan (BWC/WG/2/WP.13), Iran (Islamic Republic of) (BWC/WG/2/WP.21) and Norway (on behalf of Georgia, Malawi, Norway and the Philippines) (BWC/WG/2/WP.22). There then followed an interactive discussion in which the following States Parties participated: Algeria, Argentina, Australia, Austria, China, Colombia, Cuba, El Salvador, Ethiopia, France, Germany, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Italy, Kazakhstan, Libya, Mexico, Norway, Pakistan,

Panama, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Samoa, South Africa, Switzerland, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of).

16. The Working Group held six meetings on 11 August and from 14 to 15 August 2023 devoted to the issue of “Measures on scientific and technological developments relevant to the Convention”. The following States Parties introduced working papers on this issue: United States of America (BWC/WG/2/WP.4), United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (BWC/WG/2/WP.8), Russian Federation (BWC/WG/2/WP.15) and Azerbaijan (on behalf of the of the Group of the Non-Aligned Movement and other States Parties to the BWC) (BWC/WG/2/WP.27). In panel sessions on this issue organized by the Chairperson, technical briefings were provided by Ms. Maricela Muñoz Zumbado and Dr. Michael Müller representing the Geneva Science and Diplomacy Anticipator, Dr. Nicholas Seidler representing the Geneva Science-Policy Interface, Dr. Peter McGrath representing the InterAcademy Partnership, Mr. Sayed Ashraf representing the International Atomic Energy Agency, Ms. Sarah Clapham representing the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, Dr. John Reeder representing the World Health Organization and Ms. Madison Wimmers representing the World Organization for Animal Health. There then followed an interactive discussion in which the following States Parties participated: Algeria, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Botswana, Canada, China, Colombia, Cuba, Denmark, France, Germany, India, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Mexico, Netherlands (Kingdom of the), Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Peru, Philippines, Russian Federation, Singapore, South Africa, Switzerland, Türkiye, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay. The European Union also made a statement.

17. The Working Group held two meetings on 16 August 2023 devoted to the issue of “a mechanism to review and assess scientific and technological developments relevant to the Convention and to provide States Parties with relevant advice”. The following States Parties introduced working papers on this issue: United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (BWC/WG/2/WP.9), Russian Federation (BWC/WG/2/WP.16), Iran (Islamic Republic of) (BWC/WG/2/WP.19) and Panama (BWC/WG/2/WP.23). There then followed an interactive discussion in which the following States Parties participated: Australia, Austria, Belgium, France, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Kazakhstan, Panama, Portugal, Russian Federation, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of).

18. The Working Group held four meetings from 17 to 18 August 2023 devoted to the issue of “Measures on national implementation of the Convention”. The following States Parties introduced working papers on this issue: United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (BWC/WG/2/WP.10), Russian Federation (BWC/WG/2/WP.17 and BWC/WG/2/WP.25), United States of America (BWC/WG/2/WP.20) and Kenya and Panama (BWC/WG/2/WP.24) and Ukraine (BWC/WG/2/WP.26). In a panel session on this issue moderated by the Chairperson, statements on national implementation efforts in their countries were made by Mr. Song Yajun (China), Ms. Somsanouk Keobounsouk (Lao People’s Democratic Republic), Ms. Melanie Reddiar (South Africa) and Mr. Peter Ahabwe Babigumira (Uganda). In a panel session on this issue organized by the Chairperson, technical briefings were provided by Ms. Irina Albrecht representing the Group of Experts in support of the Committee established pursuant to Security Council resolution 1540 and Dr. Jun Xing representing the World Health Organization. There was also a brief overview of its activities presented by the Implementation Support Unit. There then followed an interactive discussion in which the following States Parties participated: Algeria, Argentina, Austria, Azerbaijan (on behalf of the Group of the Non-Aligned Movement and other States Parties to the BWC), China, Colombia, France, Georgia, Germany, India, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Japan, Kenya, Malaysia, Maldives, Mexico, Netherlands (Kingdom of the), Norway, Pakistan, Panama, Peru, Philippines, Russian Federation, Samoa, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Switzerland, Ukraine, United States, Uruguay. The European Union also made a statement.

19. Following a preliminary exchange of views and to facilitate further discussions, the respective Friends of the Chair circulated the informal papers listed in Annex I (BWC/WG/2/CRP.2 and BWC/WG/2/CRP.5). The preparation and submission of those papers

is without prejudice to the positions of delegations on the issues under consideration in the Working Group and does not imply agreement on the scope or content of the papers.

IV. Documentation

20. A list of official documents of the second session of the Working Group is contained in Annex I to this report. All documents on this list are available on the BWC website at <https://meetings.unoda.org/bwc-/biological-weapons-convention-working-group-on-the-strengthening-of-the-convention-second-session-2023> and through the United Nations Official Document System (ODS), at <http://documents.un.org>.

V. Conclusion of the Meeting

21. At its closing meeting on 18 August 2023, the second session of the Working Group adopted its procedural report by consensus, as contained in documents BWC/WG/2/CRP.1 and Rev.1, as orally amended, to be issued as document BWC/WG/2/1.

Annex I

List of documents of the second session of the Working Group on the Strengthening of the Convention

<i>Symbol</i>	<i>Title</i>
BWC/WG/2/1	Procedural report of the second session of the Working Group on the Strengthening of the Convention
BWC/WG/2/CRP.1 English only	Draft procedural report of the second session of the Working Group on the Strengthening of the Convention
BWC/WG/2/CRP.1/Rev.1 English only	Revised draft procedural report of the second session of the Working Group on the Strengthening of the Convention
BWC/WG/2/CRP.2 English only	Proposed Considerations Related to the Development of an Article X Mechanism - Submitted by the Friends of the Chair on International Cooperation and Assistance
BWC/WG/2/CRP.3 English only	Compilation of Proposals Related to the Development of an Article X Mechanism - Submitted by the Chairperson of the Working Group on the Strengthening of the Convention
BWC/WG/2/CRP.4 English only	Compilation of Proposals Related to the Development of a Science and Technology Review Mechanism - Submitted by the Chairperson of the Working Group on the Strengthening of the Convention
BWC/WG/2/CRP.5 English only	"Food for Thought" Non-Paper by the Friends of the Chair for the development of a Mechanism to Assess Scientific and Technological Developments Relevant to the BWC and Provide States Parties with Relevant Advice – Submitted by the Friends of the Chair on Science and Technology
BWC/WG/2/Misc.1 English/French/Spanish only	Provisional list of participants of the second session of the Working Group on the Strengthening of the Convention
BWC/WG/2/INF.1 English/French/Spanish only	List of participants of the second session of the Working Group on the Strengthening of the Convention
BWC/WG/2/INF.1/Rev.1 English/French/Spanish only	Revised list of participants of the second session of the Working Group on the Strengthening of the Convention
BWC/WG/2/WP.1 English only	ASEAN Member States' Perspective on International Cooperation and Assistance Under the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction (BWC) - Submitted by Member States of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam)
BWC/WG/2/WP.2 English only	Assistance and Cooperation under Article X – Background and Options for Consideration - Submitted by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
BWC/WG/2/WP.3 English only	Proposal for Establishing a Mechanism for Strengthening International Cooperation and Assistance - Submitted by Australia,

<i>Symbol</i>	<i>Title</i>
	Germany, Japan, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and United States of America
BWC/WG/2/WP.3/Rev.1 English only	Proposal for Establishing a Mechanism for Strengthening International Cooperation and Assistance - Submitted by Australia, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Germany, Japan, Latvia, Romania, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and United States of America
BWC/WG/2/WP.4 English only	Advances in Science and Technology: Background for Discussion of Measures to Strengthen the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BWC) - Submitted by the United States of America
BWC/WG/2/WP.5 English only	Related activities and programmes conducted by relevant International Organizations and entities corresponding to possible measures to be discussed by the Working Group - Submitted by Japan
BWC/WG/2/WP.6 English only	Cooperation and Assistance Activities of International and Intergovernmental Organizations in Support of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention - Submitted by Canada and the Philippines
BWC/WG/2/WP.7 English only	Global Partnership Against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction: Assistance, Cooperation and the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC) - Submitted by Japan, co-sponsored by Canada and Germany
BWC/WG/2/WP.8 English only	Advancements in Science and Technology Relevant to the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention: Examples of developments relevant to a new structured science and technology review process - Submitted by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
BWC/WG/2/WP.9 English only	Important Elements for the Establishment of a BTWC Science and Technology Review Process - Submitted by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
BWC/WG/2/WP.10 English only	2023 UK Biological Security Strategy - Submitted by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
BWC/WG/2/WP.11 English only	Proposals for Strengthening the Implementation of Article X of the Biological Weapons Convention - Submitted by the Islamic Republic of Iran
BWC/WG/2/WP.12 English only	Advances in the Field of Biological Science and Technology and Urgent Need to Maximize their Availability to Developing Countries - Submitted by the Islamic Republic of Iran
BWC/WG/2/WP.13 English only	Proposal for Cooperation and Assistance Mechanism under Article X - Submitted by Pakistan
BWC/WG/2/WP.14 Chinese and English only	Promoting International Cooperation on Peaceful Uses under the Framework of the Biological Weapons Convention - Submitted by China
BWC/WG/2/WP.15 English and Russian only	Contemporary Challenges to the Objectives of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their

<i>Symbol</i>	<i>Title</i>
	Destruction (BTWC) Related to the Development of Synthetic Biology Technologies and Practical Approaches to Overcome them - Submitted by the Russian Federation
BWC/WG/2/WP.16 English and Russian only	Strengthening the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction. Proposal for the establishment of a Scientific Advisory Committee - Submitted by the Russian Federation
BWC/WG/2/WP.17 English and Russian only	National Implementation by the Russian Federation of the Obligations under the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction - Submitted by the Russian Federation
BWC/WG/2/WP.18 English and Russian only	International Cooperation of the Russian Federation under Article X of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction - Submitted by the Russian Federation
BWC/WG/2/WP.19 English only	Review mechanism for science and technology developments - Submitted by the Islamic Republic of Iran
BWC/WG/2/WP.20 English only	Measures to Strengthen National Implementation of the Biological Weapons Convention: Information, Expectations, and International Cooperation - Submitted by the United States of America
BWC/WG/2/WP.21 English only	Establishment of a Cooperation Committee to facilitate and support the full implementation of international cooperation and assistance under Article X - Submitted by the Islamic Republic of Iran
BWC/WG/2/WP.22 English only	Considerations regarding an International Cooperation and Assistance (ICA) Action Plan - Submitted by Georgia, Malawi, Norway and the Philippines
BWC/WG/2/WP.23 English only	Enhancing Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment as an Integral Part of the Institutional Strengthening of the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) - Submitted by Panama
BWC/WG/2/WP.24 English only	Engaging the Next Generation Leaders in Global Biosecurity: Proposals for strengthening youth participation in the Biological Weapons Convention - Submitted by Kenya and Panama
BWC/WG/2/WP.25 English and Russian only	Questions of the Russian Federation to the United States and Ukraine regarding the compliance with their obligations under the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction (BTWC) in the context of the activities of biological laboratories in the territory of Ukraine – Submitted by the Russian Federation
BWC/WG/2/WP.26 English only	Improving the National System of Biological Safety and Biological Security as an Element of Strengthening the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BWC) – Submitted by Ukraine

<i>Symbol</i>	<i>Title</i>
BWC/WG/2/WP.27 English only	Measures on Scientific and Technological Developments Relevant to the Convention –Submitted by Azerbaijan on behalf of the Group of the Non-Aligned Movement and Other States to the BWC
