

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

6 December 2023

English only

Third Session

Geneva, 4-8 December 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

United States Right of Reply to the Russian Federation

Submitted by the United States of America

Special Representative Kenneth D. Ward, 5 December 2023

The United States notes interventions made by the Russian Federation and wishes to exercise our right of reply.

During the Article V Formal Consultative Meeting, the United States, jointly with Ukraine, fully addressed the unfounded concerns raised by the Russian Federation. However, it was clear from the outset of the Article V process that Russia never intended to engage constructively with Ukraine and the United States. It came to our attention on the very first day of the meeting that the Russian delegation had already made up its mind and circulated a draft of a proposed “joint statement” to select delegations regarding the outcome of this Article V Consultation. In this draft joint statement, the Russian Federation explicitly concluded that Ukraine and the United States had failed to answer questions regarding the activities of biological laboratories in Ukraine – a conclusion it reached before the United States and Ukraine even began our joint presentation.

Clearly, Moscow was not interested in hearing our responses, not interested in working in good faith with us. This was the most striking example, but it was only one of several actions through which the Russian Federation clearly signaled its lack of sincerity.

Russia then unsuccessfully escalated its false claims to the UN Security Council, requesting an investigation pursuant to Article VI of the BWC. Russia garnered only two of the nine votes required for adoption of its draft resolution – one of which was its own vote.

We consider this consultation process with Russia to be completed and closed, and we do not intend to engage any further on this matter.

In this regard, the Russian Federation has submitted working papers and other documents related to these false allegations as official documents. In no way should the participation of the United States in this Meeting or our consent to a Procedural Report be construed or understood to be an acknowledgement or approval of such documents or the falsehoods they contain.

I request that this statement be submitted as an official meeting document.

Thank you.

