

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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Report of the 2019 Meeting of States Parties*

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 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

* 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.



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.

[...]

(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 States Parties

4. In accordance with the decisions of the Eighth Review Conference and the 2017 Meeting of States Parties, the 2019 Meeting of States Parties was convened at the Palais des Nations in Geneva from 3 to 6 December 2019, chaired by Mr. Yann Hwang, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of France to the Conference on Disarmament. Mr. Adrian Vierita, Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Romania to the United Nations Office at Geneva and Mr. Andreano Erwin, Ambassador, Deputy Permanent Representative of the Republic of Indonesia to the United Nations, World Trade Organization and other International Organizations in Geneva, served as the two Vice-Chairs.

5. At its first meeting, on 3 December 2019, the Meeting of States Parties adopted its agenda ([BWC/MSP/2019/1](#)), as contained in Annex I to this report, and its programme of work ([BWC/MSP/2019/2](#)) as proposed by the Chairman. The Chairman drew the attention of delegations to three reports: a report on universalization activities prepared by the Chairman ([BWC/MSP/2019/3](#)); the report of the Implementation Support Unit ([BWC/MSP/2019/4](#)); and a report on the overall financial situation of the Convention prepared by the Chairman ([BWC/MSP/2019/5](#)).

6. At the same meeting, following a suggestion by the Chairman, the Meeting of States Parties 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, served as Secretary of the Meeting of States Parties. Mr. Hermann Lampalzer, Political Affairs Officer, Implementation Support Unit, served as Deputy Secretary and Ms. Ngoc Phuong van der Blij, Political Affairs Officer, Implementation Support Unit, also served in the secretariat.

III. Participation at the Meeting of States Parties

8. 122 delegations participated in the Meeting of States Parties as follows: Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Belarus, Belgium, Bhutan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Estonia, Eswatini, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, 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, Lebanon, Libya, Lithuania, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Montenegro, Mozambique, Myanmar, Nepal, Netherlands, Nicaragua, Nigeria, North Macedonia, Norway, Pakistan, Panama, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, State of Palestine, Sudan, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, 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), Yemen and Zambia.

9. In addition, four States that had signed the Convention but had not yet ratified it participated in the Meeting of States Parties without taking part in the making of decisions, as provided for in rule 44, paragraph 1 of the rules of procedure: Egypt, Haiti, Somalia and the Syrian Arab Republic.

10. Two States, Israel and South Sudan, neither parties nor signatories to the Convention, participated in the Meeting of States Parties as observers, in accordance with rule 44, paragraph 2.

11. The United Nations, including the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research, United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute, United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs and the Group of Experts of the Committee established pursuant to United Nations Security Council resolution 1540 attended the Meeting of States Parties in accordance with rule 44, paragraph 3.

12. The African Union, Caribbean Community, European Union, International Centre for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology, International Committee of the Red Cross, International Criminal Police Organization, International Plant Protection Convention, International Science and Technology Centre, Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, World Organization for Animal Health and the World Health Organization were granted observer status to participate in the Meeting of States Parties in accordance with rule 44, paragraph 4.

13. Twenty-seven non-governmental organizations and research institutes attended the Meeting of States Parties under rule 44, paragraph 5.

14. A list of all participants in the Meeting of States Parties is contained in document [BWC/MSP/2019/INF.1/Rev.1](#).

IV. Work of the Meeting of States Parties

15. In accordance with the programme of work ([BWC/MSP/2019/2](#)), the Meeting of States Parties held a general debate in which the following 63 States Parties made statements: Algeria, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Azerbaijan (on behalf of the Group of the Non-Aligned Movement and Other State Parties to the BWC), Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador, Fiji, Germany, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Iraq (on behalf of the Arab Group), Ireland, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Malaysia, Mexico, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, Netherlands, Nigeria, Norway, Pakistan, Panama, Peru, Philippines, Philippines (on behalf of the Member Countries of ASEAN),

Poland, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Romania, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Turkey, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of).

16. In addition, the following three signatory States made statements: Egypt, Haiti and Somalia. Nine observer organizations, the African Union, Caribbean Community Secretariat, European Union, Interpol, International Science and Technology Centre, Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute, World Animal Health Organization and the World Health Organization, also made statements. Following the general debate, during an informal session, the Meeting heard a joint statement endorsed by a number of non-governmental organizations and individuals and statements by nine individual non-governmental organizations.

17. Between 3 and 6 December 2019, the Meeting of States Parties held sessions devoted to each of the items on its agenda. The opening formalities, agenda items 1 to 4, were considered on 3 December. A message from the United Nations High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Ms. Izumi Nakamitsu, was delivered by Ms. Anja Kaspersen, Director of the Geneva Branch of the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs. The General Debate (agenda item 5) took place on 3 and 4 December. Agenda item 6 was considered on 4 and 5 December, as was agenda item 7. On 5 December, a session was devoted to progress with universalization of the Convention (agenda item 8) and the annual report of the Implementation Support Unit (agenda item 9). The arrangements for the Ninth Review Conference and its Preparatory Committee in 2021 (agenda item 10) were also considered on 5 December.

18. In the course of its work, the Meeting of States Parties 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 the Implementation Support Unit, which were circulated in the Meeting.

19. The Meeting of States Parties reviewed progress towards obtaining universality for the Convention and considered the report from the Chairman on universalization activities ([BWC/MSP/2019/3](#)), as well as reports from States Parties on their activities to promote universalization. South Sudan made a statement as an Observer State. The Meeting welcomed the increase in the number of ratifications of and accessions to the Convention. The States Parties reaffirmed the particular importance of the universality of the Convention and in this regard urged signatory States to ratify the Convention without delay and also urged those States that have not signed the Convention to accede without delay. In this context, the Meeting took note of the reports from States Parties and called on all States Parties to continue to promote universalization, and to support the universalization activities of the Chairman with support from the Implementation Support Unit, in accordance with the decisions of the Seventh and Eighth Review Conferences.

20. The Meeting of States Parties considered the report of the Implementation Support Unit ([BWC/MSP/2019/4](#)). The Meeting took note of the report and expressed its satisfaction with the work of the Unit. The Meeting called on States Parties to continue working closely with the Implementation Support Unit in fulfilling its mandate, in accordance with the decision of the Eighth Review Conference.

21. States Parties took note of the proposal from the Implementation Support Unit regarding a 8-4-4 week submission pattern for pre-session documents for future Meetings of States Parties, Meetings of Experts or Review Conferences as this conforms to the working procedures of the Convention and encouraged States Parties to follow this pattern.

V. Management of the intersessional programme: Budgetary and financial matters

22. The Meeting reviewed a report prepared by the Chairman on the overall financial situation of the Convention ([BWC/MSP/2019/5](#)). Mr. Daniel Feakes, Chief of the

Implementation Support Unit, presented the status of contributions and financial outlook of the Convention on 5 December 2019.

23. States Parties noted the report prepared by the Chairman and the briefing provided by the Implementation Support Unit. They welcomed the improvement of the financial situation this year, following the measures endorsed by the MSP in 2018, including the establishment of the working capital fund. They stressed the need to continue monitoring the financial situation of the Convention and requested the Chair of the 2020 Meeting of States Parties, in close consultation with the States Parties, the Implementation Support Unit, the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs and the United Nations Office at Geneva, to report on the overall financial situation of the Convention, implementation of the measures endorsed in 2018, and possible further measures, in a transparent way and taking into account outstanding credits for those States Parties who paid their contribution in full to bring about timely payment as required, for consideration by the 2020 Meeting of States Parties.

VI. Consideration of the factual reports of the Meetings of Experts reflecting their deliberations, including possible outcomes

24. In accordance with the decision of the 2017 Meeting of States Parties, States Parties continued at the Meetings of Experts to seek common understandings and effective action on the topics regarding the strengthening of the Convention.

25. No consensus was reached on the deliberations including any possible outcomes of the Meetings of Experts.

26. The Meetings of Experts took place in Geneva and considered the topics assigned to them by the 2017 Meeting of States Parties. The Meeting of Experts on Cooperation and Assistance, with a Particular Focus on Strengthening Cooperation and Assistance under Article X was chaired by Ambassador Victor Dolidze of Georgia from 29 to 30 July 2019. The Meeting of Experts on Review of Developments in the Field of Science and Technology Related to the Convention was chaired by Mr. Yury Nikolaichik of Belarus on 31 July and 2 August 2019. The Meeting of Experts on Strengthening National Implementation was chaired by Ms. Lebogang Phihlela of South Africa on 5 August 2019. The Meeting of Experts on Assistance, Response and Preparedness was chaired by Mr. Usman Iqbal Jadoon of Pakistan from 6 to 7 August 2019. The Meeting of Experts on Institutional Strengthening of the Convention was chaired by Mr. Laurent Masméjean of Switzerland on 8 August 2019.

27. The Meeting of States Parties expressed its gratitude to the Chairs of the Meetings of Experts and noted the reports of the Meetings of Experts, as contained in documents [BWC/MSP/2019/MX.1/2](#), [BWC/MSP/2019/MX.2/2](#), [BWC/MSP/2019/MX.3/2](#), [BWC/MSP/2019/MX.4/2](#) and [BWC/MSP/2019/MX.5/2](#). The Meeting of States Parties noted the value of the work of the Meetings of Experts and the discussions that took place.

VII. Arrangements for meetings in 2020

28. The Meeting of States Parties considered the arrangements for the Meetings of Experts and Meeting of States Parties in 2020. The Meeting decided that the Meetings of Experts would be held in Geneva from 25 August to 3 September 2020 and that the Meeting of States Parties would be held in Geneva from 8 to 11 December 2020, taking into account the availability of resources.

29. The Meeting approved the nomination by the Group of the Non-Aligned Movement and Other States of H.E. Mr. Aliyar Lebbe Abdul Azeez, Ambassador, Permanent Representative of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka to the United Nations Office and other International Organizations in Geneva, as Chair of the Meeting of States Parties in 2020 and approved the nominations by the Eastern European Group of Mr. Robertas Rosinas, Deputy Permanent Representative of Lithuania, and by the Western Group of H.E. Mr. Peter Beerwerth, Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Germany to the Conference on Disarmament, as the two Vice-Chairs.

30. The Western Group will nominate the Chairs of MX1 and MX2 in 2020, the Eastern European Group will nominate the Chairs of MX3 and MX4 and the Group of the Non-Aligned Movement and Other States will nominate the Chair of MX5.

VIII. Arrangements for the Ninth Review Conference and its Preparatory Committee in 2021

31. Exceptionally, and without creating a precedent for future Review Conferences, the Meeting of States Parties considered the arrangements for the Ninth Review Conference, to be held in Geneva in November 2021.

32. On this basis, and without prejudice to the decision of the Meeting of States Parties in 2020 on the exact dates for the Ninth Review Conference in 2021 and its Preparatory Committee, the Meeting of States Parties requests the United Nations Secretariat, for sound planning purposes, to invoice States Parties for 22 days of fully-serviced meetings and other requirements in line with the decision of the Meeting of States Parties in 2018, on the basis of the adopted cost estimate (BWC/MSP/2019/6), while noting that any credits will be returned. The Meeting of States Parties requested the United Nations Secretariat to provide an updated cost estimate for adoption, should it be needed, by the Meeting of States Parties in 2020.

IX. Documentation

33. A list of official documents of the Meeting of States Parties, 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 Convention's website at <http://www.unog.ch/bwc> and through the United Nations Official Document System (ODS), at <http://documents.un.org>.

X. Conclusion of the Meeting of States Parties

34. At its closing meeting on 6 December 2019, the Meeting of States Parties adopted its report by consensus, to be issued as document BWC/MSP/2019/7.

Annex I

Agenda of the 2019 Meeting of States Parties

1. Opening of the meeting.
2. Adoption of the agenda.
3. Adoption of the programme of work.
4. Adoption of the rules of procedure.
5. General debate.
6. Consideration of the factual reports of the Meetings of Experts reflecting their deliberations, including possible outcomes:
 - (a) Meeting of Experts on Cooperation and Assistance, with a Particular Focus on Strengthening Cooperation and Assistance under Article X;
 - (b) Meeting of Experts on Review of Developments in the Field of Science and Technology Related to the Convention;
 - (c) Meeting of Experts on Strengthening National Implementation;
 - (d) Meeting of Experts on Assistance, Response and Preparedness;
 - (e) Meeting of Experts on Institutional Strengthening of the Convention.
7. Management of the intersessional programme: Budgetary and financial matters.
8. Progress with universalization of the Convention.
9. Annual report of the Implementation Support Unit.
10. Arrangements for the Ninth Review Conference and its Preparatory Committee in 2021.
11. Adoption of the report of the meeting.
12. Closing of the meeting.

Annex II

List of documents of the Meeting of States Parties

<i>Symbol</i>	<i>Title</i>
BWC/MSP/2019/1	Provisional agenda for the 2019 Meeting of States Parties - Submitted by the Chairman
BWC/MSP/2019/2	Provisional programme of work - Submitted by the Chairman
BWC/MSP/2019/3	Report on universalization activities - Submitted by the Chairperson
BWC/MSP/2019/4	Annual report of the Implementation Support Unit - Submitted by the Implementation Support Unit
BWC/MSP/2019/4/Amend.1	Annual report of the Implementation Support Unit - Submitted by the Implementation Support Unit -Amendment
BWC/MSP/2019/5	Report on the Overall Financial Situation of the Biological Weapons Convention - Submitted by the Chairman
BWC/MSP/2019/6	Estimated costs of the Preparatory Committee and Ninth 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 - Note by the Secretariat
BWC/MSP/2019/7	Report of the 2019 Meeting of States Parties
BWC/MSP/2019/CRP.1	Aide Mémoire - Submitted by the Chairperson of the 2019 Meeting of States Parties and the Chairpersons of the 2019 Meetings of Experts to the Biological Weapons Convention
BWC/MSP/2019/CRP.2	Draft report of the 2019 Meeting of States Parties
BWC/MSP/2019/CRP.2/Rev.1	Revised draft report of the 2019 Meeting of States Parties
BWC/MSP/2019/MISC.1	Provisional list of participants
BWC/MSP/2019/INF.1	List of participants
BWC/MSP/2019/INF.1/Rev.1	Revised list of participants
BWC/MSP/2019/WP.1	Difficulties and obstacles faced by Cuba for the full implementation of Article X of the Biological Weapons Convention - Submitted by Cuba
BWC/MSP/2019/WP.2	Institutional Strengthening of the Biological Weapons Convention - Submitted by Cuba
BWC/MSP/2019/WP.3	Report on Germany's Implementation of Article X with a special focus on the "German Biosecurity Programme" - Submitted by Germany
BWC/MSP/2019/WP.4	Investigating alleged use of biological agents against agriculture, livestock and the natural environment: A practical approach - Submitted by Portugal
BWC/MSP/2019/WP.5	Implementation of Articles IV and X of the Biological Weapons Convention - Submitted by the Republic of Korea