
**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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Geneva, 10–14 December 2012

Report of the Meeting of States Parties

I. Introduction

1. The Final Document of the Seventh 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.VII/7), in the Decisions and Recommendations section, contained the following decision:

“5. Reaffirming the utility of the previous intersessional programmes from 2003–2010, the Conference decides to retain previous structures: annual Meetings of States Parties preceded by annual Meetings of Experts.

6. 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 by this Seventh Review Conference.

7. Recognizing the need to balance an ambition to improve the intersessional programme within the constraints — both financial and human resources — facing States Parties, the Conference decides to continue to allocate ten days each year to the intersessional programme.

8. The Conference decides that the following topics shall be Standing Agenda Items, which will be addressed at meetings of both the Meeting of Experts and Meeting of States Parties in every year from 2012–2015:

(a) Cooperation and assistance, with a particular focus on strengthening cooperation and assistance under Article X;

(b) Review of developments in the field of science and technology related to the Convention;

(c) Strengthening national implementation.

9. The Conference decides that the following other items will be discussed during the intersessional programme in the years indicated:

(a) How to enable fuller participation in the CBMs (2012 and 2013);

(b) How to strengthen implementation of Article VII, including consideration of detailed procedures and mechanisms for the provision of assistance and cooperation by States Parties (2014 and 2015).

10. The restructured Meetings of Experts will last five days, and Meetings of States Parties five days.

11. The first year's meetings will be chaired by a representative of the Group of the Non-Aligned Movement and Other States, the second by a representative of the Eastern European Group, the third by a representative of the Western Group, and the fourth by a representative of the Group of the Non-Aligned Movement and Other States. The annual Chair will be supported by two annual vice-chairs, one from each of the other two regional groups.

12. Each Meeting of Experts will prepare for the consideration of the Meeting of States Parties a factual report reflecting its deliberations. This report will reflect work on the three Standing Agenda Items, as well as a report on the other item scheduled for discussion during that year.

13. In addition to the report of the Meeting of Experts, the Meetings of States Parties will also consider — on an annual basis — progress with universalization of the Convention and the annual reports of the Implementation Support Unit. In 2012 and 2013, the Meeting of States Parties will also consider the Meeting of Experts report on CBMs, and in 2014 and 2015, the Meeting of States Parties will consider the Meeting of Experts report on Article VII.

14. All meetings, both of experts and of States Parties, will reach any conclusions or results by consensus.

15. The Eighth Review Conference will consider the work and outcome of these meetings and decide on any further action.”

2. By resolution 67/77, adopted without a vote on 3 December 2012, the General Assembly, *inter alia*, requested the Secretary-General to continue to render the necessary assistance to the depositary Governments of the Convention, to provide such services as may be required for the implementation of the decisions and recommendations of the review conferences, and to render the necessary assistance and to provide such services as may be required for the meetings of experts and meetings of States Parties during the 2012–2015 intersessional programme.

3. The 2012 Meeting of Experts convened in Geneva from 16 to 20 July 2012. At its closing meeting on 20 July 2012, the Meeting of Experts adopted its Report by consensus (BWC/MSP/2012/MX/3).

II. Organization of the Meeting of States Parties

4. In accordance with the decision of the Seventh Review Conference, the 2012 Meeting of States Parties was convened at the Palais des Nations in Geneva from 10 to 14 December 2012, under the chairmanship of Ambassador Boujemâa Delmi of Algeria, with Ambassador Urs Schmid of Switzerland and Dr. Cezary Lusiński of Poland serving as Vice-chairs.

5. At its first meeting, on 10 December 2012, the Meeting of States Parties adopted its agenda (BWC/MSP/2012/1/Rev.1) and programme of work (BWC/MSP/2012/4) as proposed by the Chairman. The Meeting also took note of the Report of the Meeting of Experts (BWC/MSP/2012/MX/3). The Chairman drew the attention of delegations to two reports: the report of the Implementation Support Unit (BWC/MSP/2012/2, and Add.1) and

a report on universalization activities prepared by the Chairman (BWC/MSP/2012/3, and Add.1).

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 Seventh Review Conference, as contained in Annex III of the Final Document of the Review Conference (BWC/CONF.VII/7).

7. Mr. Richard Lennane, Head of the Implementation Support Unit, served as Secretary of the Meeting of States Parties. Mr. Piers Millett, Political Affairs Officer, Implementation Support Unit, served as Deputy Secretary. Ms. Ngoc Phuong Huynh, Associate Political Affairs Officer, Implementation Support Unit, served in the Secretariat.

III. Participation at the Meeting of States Parties

8. One hundred and one States Parties to the Convention participated in the Meeting of States Parties as follows: Albania, Algeria, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belarus, Belgium, Bhutan, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Holy See, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Libya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mexico, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen.

9. In addition, three 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: Haiti, Myanmar, Nepal.

10. Two states, Israel and Mauritania, neither parties nor signatories to the Convention, participated in the Meeting of States Parties as observers, in accordance with rule 44, paragraph 2 (a).

11. The United Nations, including the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs, attended the Meeting of States Parties in accordance with rule 44, paragraph 3.

12. The European Union, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), the World Health Organization (WHO) and the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) were granted observer status to participate in the Meeting of States Parties in accordance with rule 44, paragraph 4.

13. Twenty-one 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/2012/INF.2 and Add.1.

IV. Work of the Meeting of States Parties

15. At its opening session, at the invitation of the Chairman, the Meeting of States Parties was addressed by the Director-General of the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE), Dr. Bernard Vallat, and the Deputy Director-General of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), Mrs. Grace Asirwatham. In accordance with the programme of work (BWC/MSP/2012/4), the Meeting of States Parties held a general debate in which the following 31 States Parties made statements: Algeria, Argentina, Australia, Bangladesh, Brazil, Canada (on behalf of JACKSNNZ¹), Chile, China, Cuba, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of) (on behalf of the Group of the Non-aligned Movement and Other States), Iran (Islamic Republic of) (in national capacity), Japan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Latvia, Libya, Malaysia, Mexico, Morocco, Nigeria, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Russian Federation, South Africa, Turkey, Ukraine, and the United States of America. Two observer organizations, the European Union and the World Health Organization, also made statements in the general debate. Following the general debate, during an informal session the Meeting heard statements from 11 non-governmental organisations and research institutes.

16. Between 11 and 13 December, the Meeting of States Parties held sessions devoted to each of the standing agenda items on: cooperation and assistance, with a particular focus on strengthening cooperation and assistance under Article X; review of developments in the field of science and technology related to the Convention; and strengthening national implementation (agenda items 6 to 8); and sessions devoted to the biennial item on how to enable fuller participation in the Confidence-building Measures (agenda item 9). On 13 December, a session was devoted to progress with universalization of the Convention (agenda item 10) and the annual report of the Implementation Support Unit (agenda item 11). On 14 December, the Meeting considered arrangements for the Meeting of Experts and Meeting of States Parties in 2013 (agenda item 12).

17. 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.

18. In accordance with the decision of the Seventh Review Conference, and recalling the common understandings reached during the 2003-2005 and 2007-2010 intersessional work programmes, States Parties developed common understandings on each of the three standing agenda items and the biennial item.

A. Standing agenda item: cooperation and assistance, with a particular focus on strengthening cooperation and assistance under Article X

19. States Parties recalled their legal obligation to facilitate and their right to participate in the fullest possible exchange of equipment, materials and scientific and technological information for the use of bacteriological (biological) agents and toxins for peaceful purposes and not to hamper the economic and technological development of States Parties.

20. States Parties agreed on the importance of taking full advantage of the 2012–2015 intersessional process, as well as the other outcomes of the Seventh Review Conference, to

¹ An informal grouping comprising Japan, Australia, Canada, Republic of Korea, Switzerland, Norway and New Zealand.

strengthen international cooperation and assistance. States Parties recognized the value of elaborating further the existing common understandings related to Article X.

21. States Parties agreed to work together to further enhance the functioning of the database system to facilitate requests for and offers of exchange of assistance and cooperation, and continue to assess the utility of the database in view of its intended purpose.

22. States Parties agreed to continue to work together to target and mobilize resources, including financial resources, to address gaps and needs for assistance and cooperation, including in particular from developed to developing States Parties, and from international and regional organizations and other relevant stakeholders. In this regard, States Parties agreed on the value of improving coordination with relevant international and regional organizations and other relevant stakeholders, in full conformity with their respective mandates.

23. In addressing 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 means of overcoming these, States Parties noted the specific value of:

(a) Improving coordination of key activities in order to enhance synergy and avoid duplication.

(b) Continuing discussion on the challenges associated with the provision of sustainable biosafety and biosecurity capabilities, including in low-resource settings;

(c) Identifying and addressing specific impediments to the provision or receipt of international assistance in response to an attack or unusual disease outbreak;

(d) Continued consideration of challenges and obstacles to developing international cooperation under Article X and possible means of overcoming these.

24. In addressing a range of specific measures for the full and comprehensive implementation of Article X taking into account all of its provisions, including facilitation of cooperation and assistance, including in terms of equipment, materials and scientific and technological information for peaceful purposes, and identification of critical gaps and needs in these areas, States Parties recognized the value of ensuring that cooperation and assistance:

(a) Meets differing national circumstances;

(b) Promotes sharing of best practices and lessons learned;

(c) Facilitates the fullest possible exchange of equipment, materials and scientific and technological information for peaceful purposes;

(d) Furthers information exchange and cooperation;

(e) Enables technical exchange and cooperation, including developing national capacity to address biorisk management;

(f) Contributes to building human resources;

(g) Contributes to preventing the proliferation of biological weapons, including through building national capacity.

25. States Parties agreed on the importance of strengthening national capacity through international cooperation to prevent accidental or deliberate releases of biological agents, as well as for detecting, reporting, and responding to outbreaks of infectious disease or biological weapons attacks, including through:

(a) Identifying and addressing gaps and needs for facilitating the relevant exchange of equipment, materials, and scientific and technological information;

(b) Promoting collaborative research and development including through exchange of scientists and providing training opportunities in advanced laboratories;

(c) Building regional partnerships to enhance disease surveillance and containment initiatives;

(d) Reinforcing defences against new and emerging diseases through stronger national capacity for detection, surveillance, and diagnosis, as well as containing outbreaks at their source, and decontaminating them.

26. In light of rapid developments in the life sciences, States Parties identified a need to continue to strengthen international cooperation to ensure all States Parties have access to the benefits of biotechnology, genetic engineering, microbiology and other related areas. States Parties agreed on the value of domestic legislative, regulatory and policy arrangements to promote activities not prohibited by the Convention and foster innovation in the life sciences, including in industry and academic and research institutions.

27. States Parties agreed on the importance of continuing discussions on full and effective implementation of Article X obligations, including in light of various proposals made by States Parties.

B. Standing agenda item: review of developments in the field of science and technology related to the Convention

28. States Parties reviewed various enabling technologies, including, for example, in: bioinformatics; computational biology; DNA microarrays; gene synthesis technology; high-throughput mass spectrometry; high-throughput sequencing; nanotechnology; synthetic biology; systems biology; and whole-genome directed evolution. States Parties agreed that these developments could provide for faster, cheaper, and easier application of biological science and technology. These enabling technologies can affect how science is conducted and applied. This will bring both benefits and challenges for the Convention which may require action by States Parties.

29. States Parties agreed that certain developments in science and technology have potential benefits for the Convention, including: improved identification of agents for both public health and security purposes; increasing capacity to investigate the possible use of biological weapons; improved understanding of the nature of disease; and better healthcare technologies such as improved, more efficient and economical vaccines, antibiotics, and their means of delivery, as well as point-of-care diagnostic systems.

30. States Parties also agreed that certain developments in science and technology have the potential for use contrary to the provisions of the Convention now or in the future. These developments include, inter alia, increased capacity to manipulate the pathogenicity, host-specificity, transmissibility, resistance to drugs, or ability to overcome host immunity to pathogens; to synthesize pathogens and toxins without cultivation of microorganisms or using other natural sources; to identify new mechanisms to disrupt the healthy functioning of humans, animals and plants; and to develop novel means of delivering biological agents and toxins. States Parties also agreed on the importance of facilitating the fullest possible exchange of dual-use technologies where their use is fully consistent with the peaceful object and purpose of the Convention.

31. States Parties identified opportunities for maximising benefits from these enabling technologies while minimizing risks of their application for prohibited purposes, including, for example, supporting:

(a) Efforts to ensure the fullest possible exchange of equipment, materials and scientific and technological information and in full conformity with the provisions of the Convention;

(b) Enhanced national oversight of dual use research of concern without hampering the fullest possible exchange of knowledge and technology for peaceful purposes;

(c) Continued discussion under the Convention on oversight of dual use research of concern;

(d) Improved use by relevant national agencies of available sequence and function data;

(e) Enhanced reference databases to support identification of agents by relevant national agencies; and

(f) Promotion of the beneficial applications of gene synthesis technologies while ensuring their use is fully consistent with the peaceful object and purpose of the Convention.

32. States Parties noted these enabling technologies were the result of a convergence of different sciences and technologies. States Parties recognized the relevance to the Convention of an increasing convergence of scientific disciplines, in particular biology and chemistry. This convergence increases the importance of building and sustaining coordination between the Convention and the Chemical Weapons Convention while respecting the legal and institutional bases of each convention.

33. States Parties reiterated the importance of measures, in accordance with national laws and regulations, to increase awareness among scientists, academia and industry of the Convention and related laws and regulations. States Parties noted the value, on a voluntary basis of using of codes of conduct including those based on the principles of autonomy, beneficence and integrity, in accordance with national laws and regulations. In this regard, States Parties can provide international leadership, facilitate coordination and promote communication. States Parties recognized the value of pursuing various national measures, in accordance with national needs and circumstances, such as:

(a) Promoting interaction between relevant national agencies and the scientific community;

(b) Strengthening linkages between biosafety and biosecurity training and broader issues of responsible conduct;

(c) Encouraging the addition of relevant elements to existing codes, where they exist, as an alternative to developing new codes;

(d) Supporting the inclusion of relevant material in professional training courses;

(e) Encouraging the development of practical tools for use by individuals and organizations to familiarize them with the provisions of the Convention; as well as

(f) Enabling specific outreach for those working outside of institutional research and commercial environments.

34. States Parties recognized the valuable contribution to their work of associated stakeholders in science, academia and industry agreed on the importance of continuing to encourage them to participate, as appropriate, in the intersessional programme.

C. Standing agenda item: strengthening national implementation

35. States Parties recalled their legal obligation, in accordance with their constitutional processes, to take any necessary measures to prohibit and prevent the development, production, stockpiling, acquisition, or retention of biological weapons and to prevent their transfer to any recipient whatsoever, directly or indirectly, and not in any way to assist, encourage, or induce any State, group of States or international organizations to manufacture or otherwise acquire them.

36. States Parties reiterated calls for appropriate measures, including effective national export controls, by all States Parties to implement Article III, in order to ensure that direct and indirect transfers relevant to the Convention, to any recipient whatsoever, are authorized only when the intended use is for purposes not prohibited under the Convention. States Parties also reiterated that States Parties should not use the provisions of Article III to impose restrictions and/or limitations on transfers for purposes consistent with the objectives and provisions of the Convention of scientific knowledge, technology, equipment and materials under Article X.

37. States Parties agreed to continue to work to strengthen national implementation, taking into account differences in national circumstances and legal and constitutional processes. States Parties agreed on the need to pursue national implementation through the current intersessional programme to foster regional and sub-regional cooperation to promote awareness of the Convention and strengthen regional discussions on the topics of the current intersessional programme. States Parties recognized the value of elaborating further the existing common understandings related to national implementation.

38. States Parties agreed the full and comprehensive implementation of the Convention, especially Articles III and IV, could benefit from, depending on national needs and circumstances and in accordance with national laws and regulations:

- (a) Information on the status of implementation;
- (b) Continuing discussion on sharing best practices and experiences, including the voluntary exchange of information among States Parties, including in light of various proposals made by States Parties;
- (c) Continuously updating and enforcing national measures;
- (d) Strengthening the national institutions which play a role in national implementation;
- (e) Making appropriate use of national expertise outside of government, including those with knowledge and experience germane to the Convention;
- (f) Enhancing coordination between national regulators and relevant scientific institutions and, where appropriate, cooperation among national regulators; and
- (g) Promoting interagency coordination and multi-sectoral cooperation to prepare for, detect, and respond to infectious disease outbreaks whether natural, accidental, or deliberate in nature.

39. States Parties agreed on the need for strong national biological risk management frameworks to maximize the benefits of, and minimize the risks from, relevant science and technology. States Parties noted the value of measures to mitigate biological risks, including:

- (a) National policies on how best to balance scientific freedom and progress with legitimate security concerns;

- (b) Suitable national oversight frameworks, such as to identify and mitigate risks at the earliest possible stage in, and manage risks throughout, the research cycle;
- (c) Enhanced capacity-building and education on biosafety and biosecurity; and
- (d) Coordination among government agencies and outreach to other relevant national stakeholders dealing with matters relevant to the Convention;
- (e) Appropriate, sustainable, and effective laboratory safety and security measures, including those based on existing frameworks, such as the WHO's Laboratory Biorisk Management Strategic Framework for Action 2012–2016.

40. States Parties recognised the importance of regional and sub-regional cooperation in assisting national implementation of the Convention and agreed to work together to promote awareness of the implementation of the Convention, to strengthen regional discussions on the intersessional topics and their application.

D. Biennial item: how to enable fuller participation in the Confidence-building Measures (CBMs)

41. States Parties recognized the importance of annual exchanges of information to provide transparency and build mutual trust among States Parties.

42. Taking into account the technical difficulties experienced by some States Parties in completing full and timely CBM submissions, States Parties agreed to work to:

- (a) Find ways to improve participation, including through raising awareness and training;
- (b) Make the CBM submissions more user-friendly;
- (c) Promote their possible utility in improving domestic coordination and in enhancing domestic understanding of national activity to be reported in the CBMs;
- (d) Provide technical assistance and support to States Parties, on request, for preparing and submitting CBM submissions;
- (e) Further develop electronic means of submission; and
- (f) Improve access by States Parties to the information submitted in CBMs, including through the provision of voluntary, informal translations of CBM submissions.

43. States Parties agreed to continue discussing in 2013, including in the light of various proposals made by States Parties, how to enable fuller participation in the CBMs, focusing on the practical difficulties experienced by some States Parties in completing full and timely submissions.

44. States Parties agreed on the importance of all States Parties participating in, and reiterating to others the importance of, the CBMs. States Parties recalled that they are to designate a National Point of Contact as agreed at the Sixth Review Conference and reiterated at the Seventh Review Conference.

45. States Parties recognised the value of the Chairman writing each year to all States Parties to remind them of the call by the Seventh Review Conference to participate annually in the CBMs.

46. The States Parties further considered that in pursuing the above understandings and actions, States Parties could, according to their respective circumstances and constitutional and legal processes, take into account the considerations, lessons, perspectives, recommendations, conclusions and proposals drawn from the presentations, statements,

working papers and interventions made by delegations on the topics under discussion at the Meeting of Experts, as contained in Annex I of the Report of the Meeting of Experts (BWC/MSP/2012/MX/3), as well as the synthesis of these considerations, lessons, perspectives, recommendations, conclusions and proposals contained in BWC/MSP/2012/L.1, which is attached to this report as Annex I. This annex was not proposed for adoption as an outcome of the Meeting, and therefore was not discussed with that aim. Thus, the annex was not agreed upon and consequently has no status.

47. States Parties are encouraged to continue sharing information at subsequent meetings of the intersessional programme on any actions, measures or other steps that they may have taken on issues under consideration in the intersessional programme, in order to further promote common understanding and effective action and to facilitate the Eighth Review Conference's consideration of the work and outcome of these meetings and its decision on any further action, in accordance with the decision of the Seventh Review Conference (BWC/CONF.VII/7, Part III, paragraph 15).

48. 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/2012/3, and Add.1), as well as reports from States Parties on their activities to promote universalization. The Meeting welcomed the accession of Marshall Islands, which brought the number of States Parties to the Convention to 166. 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, 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 decision of the Seventh Review Conference.

49. The Meeting of States Parties considered the Report of the Implementation Support Unit (BWC/MSP/2012/2, and Add.1). The Meeting took note of the Report, and expressed its satisfaction with the work of the Unit. The Meeting expressed concern that more than half the States Parties had not participated in the CBMs in 2012. The Meeting encouraged all States Parties to make an annual CBM submission in accordance with the decisions of the respective review conferences, seeking assistance through the Implementation Support Unit where required. 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 Seventh Review Conference.

50. The Meeting of States Parties considered the arrangements for the Meeting of Experts and Meeting of States Parties in 2013. The Meeting decided that the Meeting of Experts would be held in Geneva from 12 to 16 August 2013 and that the Meeting of States Parties would be held in Geneva from 9 to 13 December 2013. The Meeting approved the nomination by the Eastern European Group of Ms. Judit Körömi of Hungary as Chairman of the Meeting of Experts and Meeting of States Parties in 2013, and the nominations by the Group of the Non-aligned Movement and Other States of Ambassador Mazlan Muhammad of Malaysia and by the Western Group of Ambassador Urs Schmid of Switzerland as the two Vice-chairs.

V. Documentation

51. Noting the information provided on documentation services in the Report of the Implementation Support Unit (BWC/MSP/2012/2/Add.1), the Meeting of States Parties clarified the requirements for documentation services for meetings of the Convention set

out in Annex II. The Meeting of States Parties requested the Implementation Support Unit to report annually on the fulfilment of these requirements, pursuant to General Assembly resolution 67/77.

52. A list of official documents of the Meeting of States Parties, including the working papers submitted by States Parties, is contained in Annex III to this Report. All documents on this list are available on the Implementation Support Unit 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 States Parties

53. At its closing meeting on 14 December 2012, the Meeting of States Parties adopted its Report by consensus, as contained in document BWC/MSP/2012/CRP.1, as orally amended, to be issued as document BWC/MSP/2012/5.

Annex I

Synthesis of considerations, lessons, perspectives, recommendations, conclusions and proposals drawn from the presentations, statements, working papers and interventions on the topics under discussion at the Meeting of Experts

I. Cooperation and assistance, with a particular focus on strengthening cooperation and assistance under Article X

A. Ways and means to target and mobilize resources

1. Recognizing the fundamental importance of enhancing international cooperation and assistance, States Parties should work together to mobilize resources to address needs for assistance and cooperation, in particular from developed to developing States Parties, and from international and regional organizations and other relevant stakeholders. In light of rapid developments in the life sciences, there is a need to strengthen cooperation among States Parties in order to bridge the ever increasing gaps in the fields of biotechnology, genetic engineering, microbiology and other related areas. This can be done through, *inter alia*:

(a) Concentrating the electronic cooperation and assistance database on the cooperation aspect with priority given to offers and requests for projects under the BWC context;

(b) Supporting domestic legislative, regulatory and policy arrangements to allow for beneficial activities and innovation in the life sciences, including by industry and academic and research institutions;

(c) Submitting clear, specific, and timely national reports on implementation of Article X agreed at the Seventh Review Conference;

(d) Identifying specific gaps and areas of need at an early stage;

(e) Collaborating and offering assistance in support of implementation measures including training programs; increasing awareness of requirements; and drafting, implementing, and enforcing laws and regulations, particularly at the regional and sub-regional levels.

(f) Respecting the following principles for cooperation:

(i) Complementarity: projects and cooperation activities should support national efforts of developing countries;

(ii) Self-sustainability: international cooperation should contribute to the establishment of an independent development process that, together with international cooperation, may be sustained with the resources of beneficiary countries;

(iii) Co-financing: parties involved in cooperation projects should provide financial, human or technical support to enhance national development and encourage a sense of ownership.

B. Coordination of cooperation with relevant international and regional organizations and other relevant stakeholders

2. States Parties recognized the importance of coordination with relevant international and regional organizations and other relevant stakeholders, specifically:

- (a) Closer cooperation between the BWC and WHO, OIE, FAO and OPCW, in full conformity with their respective mandates;
- (b) Greater interaction between the BWC and CWC scientific communities;
- (c) Regional partnerships to enhance multi-sectoral training as well as disease surveillance and containment initiatives;
- (d) Increased cooperation on biosafety and biosecurity at the bilateral, regional and international levels.

C. Challenges and obstacles to developing international cooperation, assistance and exchange in the biological sciences and technology

3. Recognising the importance of overcoming challenges and obstacles to international cooperation, assistance and exchange in the biological sciences and technology, States Parties should work together to:

- (a) Balance implementation of Article X and Article III of the Convention, and in this regard promote appropriate export controls in conformity with the obligations set out in the Convention;
- (b) Coordinate key activities in order to enhance synergy and avoid duplication.
- (c) Develop procedures to promote full, effective, and non-discriminatory implementation of Article X.
- (d) Develop procedures for the settlement of disputes arising from concerns about the implementation of Article X;
- (e) Utilize the database to facilitate requests for and offers of assistance and cooperation among States Parties.

D. Capacity-building through international cooperation

4. Recognizing the importance 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 emergency preparedness, response, management, and mitigation, States Parties should work to build capacity and reduce inequalities between developed and developing countries in the life sciences and related technologies, including by:

- (a) Identifying and addressing the need for, and facilitating the exchange of equipment, materials, and scientific and technological information for the use of biological agents for peaceful purposes, particularly to developing countries;
- (b) Supporting states in building defences against new and emerging diseases and developing national capacity for responding to biological threats through detection, containment, and decontamination;

(c) Promoting interagency coordination and multi-sectoral cooperation to prepare for, detect, and respond to infectious disease outbreaks whether natural, accidental, or deliberate in nature;

(d) Developing and implementing appropriate, sustainable, and effective laboratory safety and security measures, including guidelines, training materials and resources;

(e) Supporting the WHO's Laboratory Biorisk Management Strategic Framework for Action 2012-2016, which promotes laboratory biosafety and biosecurity solutions in developing countries;

(f) Making use of initiatives such as the 5-Year Strategic Plan for strengthening global biosafety and biosecurity developed by the International Federation of Biosafety Associations (IFBA), which identifies innovative approaches to develop capacities in areas with limited resources;

(g) Promoting sustainable commitment from funders and the consideration of whole-life costs.

II. Review of developments in the field of science and technology related to the Convention

A. Advances in enabling technologies

5. Recognizing that advances in enabling technologies are the result of a convergence of different sciences and technology and are critical for future life sciences research and development, States Parties reviewed a number of relevant, interdependent advances, including: bioinformatics; computational biology; DNA microarrays; gene synthesis technology; high-throughput mass spectrometry; high-throughput sequencing; nanotechnology; synthetic biology; systems biology; and whole-genome directed evolution.

6. States Parties identified the following advantages and benefits of the advances:

(a) Faster, cheaper, and easier application of biological science and technology by more people in more locations;

(b) Improved identification of agents for both public health and security purposes, including by whole genome sequencing; nanobiosensors; protein and peptide analysis; and nucleic acid analysis for the detection and identification of microbes;

(c) Increased capacity to investigate the possible use of biological weapons, including by enhanced differentiation of unusual and unnatural disease events; and improved bioforensics capacities to investigate and attribute cases of the use of biological weapons;

(d) Improved understanding of disease, including the relationship between human genetic variation and pathogenesis; the evolution of toxicity and pathogenicity; and the role of the regulation of biological networks on disease;

(e) Better healthcare technologies, including: new diagnostic reagents; new ways to produce pharmaceuticals; enhanced and more accessible vaccines; new, cheaper and more accessible antibiotics and antimicrobials; synthetic delivery systems for therapeutic protein delivery; more accurate predictions of efficacy and side effects; and improved epidemiological systems;

(f) Better environmental technologies.

7. States Parties identified the following challenges and concerns related to the advances:

- (a) Faster, cheaper, and easier application of biological science and technology, changing proliferation risks and complicating biosafety and biosecurity efforts;
- (b) Increasing capacity to manipulate pathogens, including their pathogenicity, host-specificity, transmissibility; and reaction to drugs.
- (c) The synthesis of pathogens, including novel pathogens and those previously eradicated, creating new proliferation pathways;
- (d) Novel targets for weapons, new ways to disrupt the healthy functioning of target biochemistry and neurology, and new delivery systems for biological agents and toxins.

8. Noting that advances in enabling technologies require greater awareness rather than specific action, States Parties identified a number of opportunities to respond, including:

- (a) Developing best practices to ensure the unhindered flow of scientific information and technology while protecting international and national security interests;
- (b) Developing novel regulatory and oversight systems for pathogenic agents, including the identification of agents in ways relevant to the conduct of contemporary biology (such as sequence-based classification), and internationally agreed databases of sequences of concern relevant to the Convention;
- (c) Enhancing reference databases and improving connection of existing data sources to support identification of agents and facilitate attribution of deliberate use;
- (d) Promoting the beneficial applications of gene synthesis technologies while safeguarding security, for example, through the development of screening procedures for synthetic gene orders and customers.

B. New science and technology developments that have potential for uses contrary to the provisions of the Convention

9. In addition to the advances in enabling technologies, States Parties identified a number of developments that have potential for uses contrary to the provisions of the Convention, including:

- (a) Programming cells to produce toxins, viruses or other cells which could cause harm;
- (b) Designing and building new or altered pathogenic viruses;
- (c) The ability to confer mammalian transmissibility to viruses;
- (d) The increasing ability to confer drug resistance to pathogens;
- (e) The decreasing genetic diversity amongst farm animals, reducing natural resistance to certain diseases;
- (f) The development of incapacitating weapons using recent advances in the neurosciences;
- (g) The increasing capacity to deliver biological weapons via the alimentary route using advances in understanding of enterobacteria and horizontal gene transfer;
- (h) The identification of mechanisms to overcome both vaccine-generated and natural host immunity to pathogens;

- (i) The increasing capacity to confer unusual serological responses to pathogens significantly hampering diagnosis and subsequent treatment;
- (j) The increasing capacity to target differences in genetic variation which correlate to ethnicity, geographic distribution or other factors.

C. New science and technology developments that have potential benefits for the Convention

10. In addition to the advances in enabling technologies, States Parties identified a number of developments that have potential benefits for the Convention, including:

- (a) New silk-based stabilizers for vaccines and antibiotics which could eliminate cold chain refrigeration requirements thus improving access and decreasing associated costs;
- (b) Biodegradable microneedles that can simplify delivery, reduce cold chain refrigeration requirements, and help stretch limited supplies of vaccines or other treatments;
- (c) Progress towards point-of-care diagnostic systems suitable for use in resource-limited settings;
- (d) Increasing capacity to diagnose and treat neurological diseases;
- (e) Improved health care, more efficient food production, more renewable energy resources and better pollution management resulting from increasing convergence of biology and chemistry.

D. Science- and technology-related developments relevant to the activities of multilateral organizations

11. Recognising the increasing convergence of biology and chemistry, including: the increasing use of biologically-mediated processes for the production of chemicals; the chemical synthesis of viruses; and the chemical synthesis of generic material to be used in bacterial chassis, States Parties identified a number of possible challenges and opportunities for the implementation of the Convention, including:

- (a) Building and sustaining links between the Convention and the Chemical Weapons Convention, including the possibility of facilitating joint consideration of relevant developments in science and technology;
- (b) Improved coordination between the Implementation Support Unit and the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons.

E. Possible measures for strengthening national biological risk management, as appropriate, in research and development involving new science and technology developments of relevance to the Convention

12. Recognising that the dual-use nature of some life sciences research requires thoughtful approaches to maximize benefits and minimize risks of accident or misuse, States Parties should work to develop measures to mitigate biological risks. Such measures should be proportional to the assessed risk, take into account national circumstances, and not hamper activities necessary for prophylactic, protective or other peaceful purposes. They could include:

(a) Strengthening national implementation measures and international monitoring and cooperation, including national biorisk assessments, global management tools and innovative scientific and technical system designs;

(b) Strengthening capacity-building and education on biosafety and biosecurity while countering the provision of overly restrictive or elaborate solutions;

(c) Formulating best practices to address the dual-use implications of bioscience and technology and the identification and mitigation of risks at the earliest possible stage in the research cycle;

(d) Strengthening self-regulation, education and management practices to prevent intentional or inadvertent involvement in activities inconsistent with the Convention;

(e) Developing national approaches of how best to balance scientific freedom and progress with legitimate security concerns;

(f) Measures covering the publication of relevant scientific articles, without hampering the free flow of scientific and technological information for peaceful purposes.

F. Voluntary codes of conduct and other measures to encourage responsible conduct by scientists, academia and industry

13. Recalling the relevant common understandings identified in 2005² and 2008³, States Parties identified a number of additional opportunities to further their work in this area, including:

(a) Making use of the characteristics of different types of codes, including those covering ethics, behaviour and practice as well as the different layers of codes, such as a universal code, codes developed by scientific societies, and codes developed by individual workplaces;

(b) Developing general guidelines and approaches that are of use to individuals and organizations when faced with novel situations and unexpected scenarios;

(c) Implementing ethical guidelines to ensure that all research activities only involve microbial or other biological agents of types or in quantities that have justification for prophylactic, protective or other peaceful purposes;

(d) Facilitating the engagement of the general public by the scientific community on issues relevant to the Convention;

(e) Regularly reviewing relevant measures with all relevant stakeholders.

G. Education and awareness-raising about risks and benefits of life sciences and biotechnology

14. Recalling the relevant common understandings identified in 2008⁴, States Parties identified a number of additional opportunities to further their work in this area, including:

² BWC/MSP/2005/3

³ BWC/MSP/2008/5

⁴ BWC/MSP/2008/5

(a) Additional measures to increase awareness among scientists, academia and industry, such as: outreach by law enforcement agencies; insertion of relevant materials in core texts for science courses; workplace codes; and better linkages with biosafety and biosecurity training;

(b) Working with relevant professional and scientific bodies, such as national academies of science, to generate a renewed effort to inculcate awareness of the dual-use challenge at an early stage of professional training;

(c) Assimilating efforts relevant to the Convention into broader professional training for scientists in university curricula;

(d) The production of education material in more languages, suitable for use in a broader set of national circumstances;

(e) Inviting the scientific community to share its views on how States Parties can better support scientists in efforts relevant to the Convention.

III. Strengthening national implementation

15. States Parties recalled the common understandings identified at the Meetings of States Parties in 2003⁵ on “necessary national measures to implement the prohibitions set forth in the Convention” and 2007⁶ on “ways and means to enhance national implementation” and “regional and sub-regional cooperation on implementation of the Convention”.

A. Ways and means to enhance national implementation

16. Recognising the importance of enhancing national implementation, sharing best practices and experiences, enforcement of national legislation, strengthening of national institutions and coordination among national law enforcement institutions, States Parties should work towards:

(a) Continuously updating national implementation legislation, regulations and other measures to meet the new challenges raised by recent developments in science and technology;

(b) Sharing best practices and lessons learned among States Parties, especially in the areas of biosafety and biosecurity;

(c) Managing, coordinating, enforcing and regularly reviewing measures to ensure their effectiveness;

(d) Addressing variations in levels of implementation among States Parties, due to different national circumstances and legal and constitutional processes;

(e) Building capacity through international cooperation and assistance to enhance capabilities for the full implementation of the Convention;

(f) A legally-binding instrument to strengthen the comprehensive implementation of the Convention.

⁵ BWC/MSP2003/4

⁶ BWC/MSP/2007/5

B. Specific measures

17. States Parties identified a range of specific measures for the full and comprehensive implementation of the Convention, especially Articles III and IV, including:

- (a) Comprehensive control systems, consistent with the highest international standards and best practice, to control the sampling, collection, transport, import and export of pathogens and toxins;
- (b) Making more use of experts outside of government, including specialized actors from civil society;
- (c) Enhancing coordination and international cooperation between national regulators and scientific institutions to ensure greater compatibility of biosafety and biosecurity regimes;
- (d) Increasing awareness of biosecurity issues, conducting relevant training to prevent biosecurity incidents and raising barriers to prevent the theft of relevant materials from laboratories;
- (e) Ensuring active outreach and engagement between scientific and security communities to mitigate and diminish biosecurity risks;
- (f) Promoting biosafety and biosecurity as a part of Corporate Social Responsibility for private institutions and companies;
- (g) Conducting different types of national inspections at laboratories and containment facilities to determine specific biosafety and biosecurity risks.

C. Regional and sub-regional cooperation

18. Recognising the importance of regional and sub-regional cooperation that can assist national implementation of the Convention, States Parties should work together to:

- (a) Promote awareness about the implementation of the Convention;
- (b) Strengthen regional discussions on the intersessional topics and their application;
- (c) Support key regional actors in defining needs and requirements for national implementation.

IV. How to enable fuller participation in the Confidence-building Measures (CBMs)

19. Recognising the importance of the exchange of information among States Parties through the CBMs, noting that this provides transparency and builds trust among States Parties, States Parties should:

- (a) Reach a common understanding of the relevance and appropriateness of the information to be submitted in order to enhance transparency, build confidence and improve implementation of the Convention;
- (b) Reach a common understanding of how to handle and process the information received, including on the questions of translation, public access, and analysis of content.

20. Recognising the need to enable fuller participation in the CBMs and the technical difficulties experienced by some States Parties in completing full and timely CBM submissions, States Parties should work to find ways to improve participation, make the CBMs more user-friendly, and to provide technical assistance and support to States Parties requesting it, including by:

(a) Continuing to examine and develop options for electronic means of submission of CBMs;

(b) Providing necessary support and assistance, possibly through the establishment of a CBM assistance network coordinated by the ISU, to provide expert advice in an accessible manner and update and harmonize CBM guidance material.

21. Recognising the need to enhance participation of States Parties in the CBMs and for designation of national points of contact responsible preparing the submission of CBMs, States Parties should:

(a) Continue to urge all States Parties to acknowledge, and reiterate to others, the importance of participation in the CBM process;

(b) Encourage the Chairman to write each year to all States Parties urging them to submit their CBMs without delay and stressing that the ISU and various States Parties stand ready to provide assistance;

(c) Call on all States Parties to designate National Points of Contact, as agreed at the Sixth Review Conference and reiterated at the Seventh Review Conference, and encourage the Chairman to contact all States Parties which have not yet designated a National Point of Contact and ask them to do so.

Annex II

Documentation requirements for meetings of the Convention

1. By resolution 67/77, adopted without a vote on 3 December 2012, the General Assembly, *inter alia*, requested the Secretary-General to continue to render the necessary assistance to the depositary Governments of the Convention, to provide “such services as may be required” for the implementation of the decisions and recommendations of the review conferences, and to render the necessary assistance and to provide “such services as may be required” for the meetings of experts and meetings of States Parties during the 2012–2015 intersessional programme. The following sets out the “services required” by States Parties in the area of documentation for official meetings of the Convention:

(a) Documents for meetings of the Convention are to be prepared, published and distributed in accordance with the Rules of Procedure (BWC/CONF.VII/7, Annex III, applied *mutatis mutandis* for meetings other than review conferences) and with any other decision adopted by the States Parties. Rule 11 states, *inter alia*, that the Secretariat of the meeting shall “receive, translate and circulate” the documents of the meeting, shall “publish and circulate” any report of the meeting, and shall “arrange for the custody of the documents ... in the archives of the United Nations”.

(b) Except as explicitly decided by the States Parties, no restrictions may be placed on the length, content or time of submission of documents of meetings of the Convention.

(c) As the States Parties pay the full cost of documentation services provided by the United Nations pursuant to General Assembly resolution 67/77, changes to the documentation services of the United Nations due to reductions in the regular budget of the United Nations shall have no implications for the provision of documentation services to meetings of the Convention.

(d) The Implementation Support Unit, which acts as the Secretariat of meetings of the Convention, shall prepare for the Division of Conference Management of the United Nations Office at Geneva a biannual forecast of documents expected to be submitted over the following six months, in accordance with the approved cost estimates for the meeting(s) concerned. This forecast shall include for each document:

- (i) The planned date of submission;
- (ii) The estimated length;
- (iii) The language(s) of submission (if known) and the languages required;
- (iv) The date required.

(e) The interval between the date of submission and the date required (i.e. the processing time) shall be proportional to the length of the document, based on the benchmark of four weeks for a document of 10,700 words.

(f) The forecast shall be used to ensure that the necessary extrabudgetary translation and processing resources are secured and made available by the Division of Conference Management, in accordance with the relevant cost estimates approved by the States Parties. If for any reason the resources necessary to meet the requirements of the forecast cannot be provided, the Implementation Support Unit shall immediately inform the States Parties.

(g) If a document is submitted after the forecast date, or exceeds the estimated length by more than 5%, the date required may be revised by the Division of Conference Management in consultation with the Implementation Support Unit. A document submitted after the forecast date may be treated by the Division of Conference Management as a “late submission”.

(h) The Implementation Support Unit, in consultation with the Chairman of the meeting as appropriate, shall make all decisions concerning the release and distribution of documents, including on the matter of simultaneous distribution of different language versions.

(i) In all other respects, where no specific instruction is given by States Parties or the Implementation Support Unit, documents of meetings of the Convention shall be treated in the same way as documents of the United Nations.

Annex III

List of documents

<i>Symbol</i>	<i>Title</i>
BWC/MSP/2012/1 and Rev.1	Provisional agenda. Submitted by the Chairman
BWC/MSP/2012/2 and Add.1	2012 Report of the Implementation Support Unit. Submitted by the Implementation Support Unit
BWC/MSP/2012/3 and Add.1	Report on universalization activities. Submitted by the Chairman
BWC/MSP/2012/4	Provisional programme of work. Submitted by the Chairman
BWC/MSP/2012/5	Report of the Meeting of States Parties
BWC/MSP/2012/L.1	Synthesis of considerations, lessons, perspectives, recommendations, conclusions and proposals drawn from the presentations, statements, working papers and interventions on the topic under discussion at the Meeting of Experts. Submitted by the Chairman
BWC/MSP/2012/WP.1 [English only]	Next steps on the CBMs: some key questions for 2013. Submitted by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
BWC/MSP/2012/WP.2 [English only]	The crucial role of life scientists in the effective implementation of the BTWC. Submitted by Poland
BWC/MSP/2012/WP.3 [English only]	The United States Government's Bio-transparency and Openness Initiative. Submitted by the United States of America
BWC/MSP/2012/WP.4 [English and French only]	Considerations and recommendations to inculcate awareness of the dual-use challenge into biosafety and biosecurity training and education for life scientists in States Parties. Submitted by Canada
BWC/MSP/2012/WP.5 [Arabic Only]	National implementation measures in Iraq. Submitted by Iraq
BWC/MSP/2012/WP.6 [English only]	National implementation of the BTWC: compliance assessment: update. Submitted by Canada, the Czech Republic and Switzerland
BWC/MSP/2012/WP.7 [English only]	The intersessional process: comments and proposals. Submitted by South Africa

<i>Symbol</i>	<i>Title</i>
BWC/MSP/2012/WP.8 [English only]	Regional cooperative efforts to combat biological threats: the ASEAN Regional Forum workshops. Submitted by Australia, the Philippines and the United States of America
BWC/MSP/2012/WP.9 [Spanish only*]	“Código de Conducta para Científicos”. Presentado por Chile, Colombia, España, Italia y México
BWC/MSP/2012/WP.10 [Chinese only**]	International cooperation. Submitted by China
BWC/MSP/2012/WP.11 [English only]	We need to talk about compliance. Submitted by Australia, Canada, Japan, New Zealand and Switzerland
BWC/MSP/2012/WP.12 [English/French only]	Etude de l’UNIDIR sur la création d’un mécanisme de revue par les pairs dans le cadre de la Convention d’interdiction des armes biologiques et à toxines. Présenté par la France
BWC/MSP/2012/INF.1 [English only]	International activities of the Government of Canada related to Article X of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention: Update 2012. Submitted by Canada
BWC/MSP/2012/INF.2 [English/French/Spanish only] and Add.1 [English only]	List of participants
BWC/MSP/2012/CRP.1 [English only]	Draft report of the Meeting of States Parties. Submitted by the Chairman
BWC/MSP/2012/MISC.1 [English/French/Spanish only]	Provisional list of participants

* An English unofficial translation is included after the Spanish text.

** An English unofficial translation is included after the Chinese text.