

BWC MEETING OF STATES PARTIES  
DECEMBER 2007

NATIONAL STATEMENT  
AUSTRALIA

Mr Chairman,

~~Let me begin by~~ thanking you for your support in guiding <sup>our</sup> ~~the~~ work  
~~program through the~~ year.

**Domestic Measures**

Mr Chairman,

Throughout 2007, Australia has continued its active efforts to ~~further~~  
strengthen implementation and universalisation of the BWC, particularly  
in our region.

We have also taken ~~several~~ steps to enhance laboratory biosecurity  
throughout Australia.

In September this year, Australia enacted new legislation, the National  
Health Security Act, which established controls for the security of certain  
biological agents that have the potential to be used as weapons.

This new Act provides for the establishment of a National Authority to  
regulate and monitor facilities <sup>handling</sup> ~~which work with~~ security sensitive  
biological agents.

This includes

~~It provides for~~ a national register, informed by mandatory reporting, of facilities handling these agents.

The Act also

~~It~~ provides for a registration scheme addressing physical, personnel and transport security concerns, and includes a security audit and inspection process.

And importantly, it provides for education and awareness-raising campaigns.

<sup>significant</sup>  
~~Mr Chairman, this new legislation is significant, and does much to~~  
enhance implementation of the BWC in Australia.

~~Mr Chairman,~~  
<sup>has</sup>  
~~Australia continues to put into action practical measures to enhance~~  
national implementation through strengthened and better coordinated national institutions.

This year, a team of key research and academic <sup>experts</sup> ~~authorities~~ revised the Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research. <sup>to</sup> ~~Now it is linked~~ <sup>it</sup> with the <sup>substantial</sup> Statement on Biosecurity, <sup>merely</sup> ensuring better coordinated cross-agency implementation. <sup>of the BWC.</sup>

Mr Chairman,

~~We are~~ Building on the success of our May 2007 biosafety and laboratory biosecurity training workshop for South East Asian technical experts at the Australian Animal Health Laboratory (~~AAHL~~) <sup>in</sup> Geelong, <sup>by</sup> ~~sponsoring the attendance of new regional experts at a second AAHL~~ <sup>we are</sup> workshop in February 2008.

That workshop will provide an opportunity to share information and biotechnological expertise among participants, including on measures that raise barriers to international bioterrorism, and <sup>on</sup> obligations under the BWC.

~~Our arranging the workshop will assist Australia to meet obligations~~ *is part of* *efforts to fulfil it*  
under Article X of the Convention.

### **International Measures**

~~Mr Chairman, this year Australia ran a workshop for technical experts from Southeast Asia which raised awareness of laboratory security and the threat of bioterrorism.~~

*in addition,*  
Australia remains an active provider of technical assistance on matters related to the life sciences.

And many international students are sponsored to participate in training programs.

### **Universalisation**

*Mr Chairman,*  
At the 2007 Meeting of Experts members agreed to make a concerted effort to encourage those states yet to do so to accede to the BWC.

~~Australia considered there was an opportunity to advance universalisation efforts in the Pacific region.~~

*Australia is committed to encouraging and assisting Asia-Pacific states to accede to and implement The BWC*

To ~~advance that goal~~, Australia has written to the eight Pacific Island countries yet to accede to the BWC and urged them to do so.

We will continue this outreach ~~with~~ <sup>will</sup> and provide assistance where appropriate to those Pacific Island states seeking additional information and support in acceding to the BWC.

Australia is committed to encouraging and assisting Asia-Pacific states to accede to and implement the BWC, and we will continue our efforts to bring all our regional neighbours into the fold.

Mr Chairman, Australia thanks you for your support, and commends you on your leadership in chairing the 2007 process.

Thank you Mr Chairman.

Mr Chairman, we note you have ~~actively promoted~~ <sup>actively promoted</sup> the universalisation of the Convention - including ~~in the region of the Asia-Pacific~~ <sup>in the Asia-Pacific region</sup> - and we thank you for these efforts.