

**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**

BWC/MSP/2008/MX/CRP.2  
22 August 2008

ENGLISH ONLY

**2008 Meeting  
Geneva, 1-5 December 2008**

**Meeting of Experts  
Geneva, 18-22 August 2008**  
Item 7 of the agenda  
**Adoption of the factual report  
describing the work of the Meeting**

**DRAFT REPORT OF THE MEETING OF EXPERTS**

Introduction

1. The Final Document of the Sixth 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.VI/6), in the Decisions and Recommendations section, contained the following decision:

“The Conference decides:

- (a) To hold four annual meetings of the States Parties of one week duration each year commencing in 2007, prior to the Seventh Review Conference, to be held not later than the end of 2011, to discuss, and promote common understanding and effective action on:
  - (i) Ways and means to enhance national implementation, including enforcement of national legislation, strengthening of national institutions and coordination among national law enforcement institutions;
  - (ii) Regional and sub-regional cooperation on implementation of the Convention;
  - (iii) National, regional and international measures to improve biosafety and biosecurity, including laboratory safety and security of pathogens and toxins;
  - (iv) Oversight, education, awareness raising and adoption and/or development of codes of conduct with the aim of preventing misuse in the context of

advances in bio-science and bio-technology research with the potential of use for purposes prohibited by the Convention;

- (v) With a view to enhancing international cooperation, assistance and exchange in biological sciences and technology for peaceful purposes, promoting capacity building in the fields of disease surveillance, detection, diagnosis, and containment of infectious diseases: (1) for States Parties in need of assistance, identifying requirements and requests for capacity enhancement; and (2) from States Parties in a position to do so, and international organizations, opportunities for providing assistance related to these fields;
  - (vi) Provision of assistance and coordination with relevant organizations upon request by any State Party in the case of alleged use of biological or toxin weapons, including improving national capabilities for disease surveillance, detection and diagnosis and public health systems.
- (b) Each meeting of the States Parties will be prepared by a one week meeting of experts. The topics for consideration at each annual meeting of States Parties will be as follows: items (i) and (ii) will be considered in 2007; items (iii) and (iv) in 2008; item (v) in 2009; and item (vi) in 2010. The first meeting 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.
- (c) The meetings of experts will prepare factual reports describing their work;
- (d) All meetings, both of experts and of States Parties, will reach any conclusions or results by consensus;
- (e) The Seventh Review Conference will consider the work and outcome of these meetings and decide on any further action.”

2. By resolution 62/60, adopted without a vote on 5 December 2007, 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 provide such services as may be required for the implementation of the decisions and recommendations of the Review Conferences including all assistance to the annual meetings of the States parties and the meetings of experts.

#### Organization of the Meeting of Experts

3. In accordance with the decision of the Sixth Review Conference, the 2008 Meeting of Experts was convened at the Palais des Nations in Geneva from 18 to 22 August 2008, under the Chairmanship of Ambassador Georgi Avramchev of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

4. At its first meeting, on 18 August 2008, the Meeting of Experts adopted its agenda (BWC/MSP/2008/MX/1) and programme of work (BWC/MSP/2008/MX/2/Rev.1) as proposed

by the Chairman. The Chairman also drew the attention of delegations to four background papers prepared by the Implementation Support Unit (BWC/MSP/2008/MX/INF.1, /INF.2, /INF.3, and /INF.4).

5. At the same meeting, following a suggestion by the Chairman, the Meeting of Experts adopted as its rules of procedure, *mutatis mutandis*, the rules of procedure of the Sixth Review Conference, as contained in Annex II of the Final Document of the Review Conference (BWC/CONF.VI/6).

6. 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.

#### Participation at the Meeting of Experts

7. Ninety-four States Parties to the Convention participated in the Meeting of Experts as follows: Albania, Algeria, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belgium, Benin, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Canada, China, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Ecuador, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Holy See, Honduras, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Lithuania, Malaysia, Malta, Mexico, Moldova, Morocco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Romania, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Tajikistan, Thailand, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen and Zambia.

8. In addition, four states that had signed the Convention but had not yet ratified it participated in the Meeting of Experts without taking part in the making of decisions, as provided for in rule 44, paragraph 1, of the rules of procedure: Egypt, Myanmar, Nepal and the Syrian Arab Republic.

9. Three states, Cameroon, Israel and Mauritania, neither parties nor signatories to the Convention, participated in the Meeting of Experts as observers, in accordance with rule 44, paragraph 2 (a).

10. The United Nations, including the Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA), the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1540 Committee attended the Meeting of Experts in accordance with rule 44, paragraph 3.

11. The European Commission, the International Centre for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology (ICGEB), the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the United Nations Educational,

Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the World Health Organization (WHO) and the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) were granted observer status to participate in the Meeting of Experts in accordance with rule 44, paragraph 4.

12. In addition, at the invitation of the Chairman, in recognition of the special nature of the topics under consideration at this Meeting and without creating a precedent, [...] scientific, professional, academic and industry bodies participated in informal exchanges in the open sessions as guests of the Meeting of Experts: [...]

13. [...] non-governmental organizations and research institutes attended the Meeting of Experts under rule 44, paragraph 5.

14. A list of all participants in the Meeting of Experts is contained in document BWC/MSP/2008/MX/INF.5.

#### Work of the Meeting of Experts

15. In accordance with the programme of work (BWC/MSP/MX/2008/2/Rev.1), the Meeting of States Parties heard introductory statements from the following [...] States Parties: [...] The Meeting also heard an introductory statement from one international organisation, the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE).

16. Between 19 and 21 August, the Meeting of Experts held a number of sessions devoted to national, regional and international measures to improve biosafety and biosecurity, including laboratory safety and security of pathogens and toxins (agenda item 5). [...] States Parties, [...] international organisations, and [...] guests of the Meeting made presentations or statements during these sessions. Between 21 and 22 August, the Meeting of Experts held a number of sessions devoted to oversight, education, awareness raising and adoption and/or development of codes of conduct with the aim of preventing misuse in the context of advances in bio-science and bio-technology research with the potential of use for purposes prohibited by the Convention (agenda item 6). [...] States Parties, [...] international organisations, and [...] guests of the Meeting made presentations or statements during these sessions.

17. The Chairman, under his own responsibility and initiative, prepared a paper listing considerations, lessons, perspectives, recommendations, conclusions and proposals drawn from the presentations, statements, working papers and interventions on the topics under discussion at the Meeting. The Meeting of Experts noted that this paper had not been agreed and had no status. It was the Chairman's view that the paper could assist delegations in their preparations for the Meeting of States Parties in December 2008 and in its consideration of how best to "discuss, and promote common understanding and effective action on" the topics in accordance with the decision of the Sixth Review Conference. The paper prepared by the Chairman is attached as Annex I to this Report.

18. In the course of its work, the Meeting of Experts 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 guests of the Meeting, which were circulated in the Meeting.

### Documentation

19. A list of official documents of the Meeting of Experts, 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 Implementation Support Unit website at <http://www.unog.ch/bwc> and through the United Nations Official Document System (ODS), at <http://documents.un.org>.

### Conclusion of the Meeting of Experts

20. At its closing meeting on 22 August 2008, the Meeting of Experts heard an interim report from the Chairman on activities to secure universal adherence to the Convention, in accordance with the decision of the Sixth Review Conference. The Meeting noted that the Chairman would prepare the provisional agenda and programme of work for approval and adoption at the Meeting of States Parties to be held from 1 to 5 December 2008.

21. At the same meeting, the Meeting of Experts adopted its Report by consensus, as contained in document BWC/MSP/2008/MX/CRP.2, as orally amended, to be issued as document BWC/MSP/2008/MX/3.

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