

**Statement by the Asia Pacific Centre for Military Law  
BWC Meeting of Experts 18-22 August 2008**

Mr. Chairman,

I would like to begin this statement by thanking the BWC States Parties for giving the Asia Pacific Centre for Military Law (APCML) the opportunity to participate in this Meeting of Experts.

The APCML is a collaborative initiative between the Legal Division of Australia's Department of Defence and the University of Melbourne Law School. The Charter of the APCML was drawn up in 2001 to facilitate cooperation in the Asia Pacific Region in research, training and the implementation of laws governing military operations.

To this end, the APCML promotes academic research into relevant aspects of international law, including international humanitarian law, the law of peace operations, international criminal law, and arms control and disarmament law. The APCML also organizes and conducts regional conferences, workshops, seminars and other related activities.

In this context, the APCML has undertaken regional activities in the promotion of arms control and disarmament associated with nuclear, chemical and biological weapons, as well as certain conventional weapons. With respect to the BWC, the APCML has played a key role in organizing and convening the first BWC Regional Workshop co-hosted by the governments of Australia and Indonesia held at the University of Melbourne in February 2005, and the second BWC Workshop held in Bali in March 2006.

At these workshops, there were a range of practical presentations and discussions, including; legislative requirements necessary for effective BWC implementation; national measures to enhance bio-security; and measures for promoting awareness among the relevant scientific communities. These discussions led to the recognition that while all BWC States Parties have the same basic obligations under the BWC, the most useful approach will be for each State Party to develop a 'tailor-made' solution to its national approach to ensure full implementation of the BWC – it is not a case of 'one size fits all'. In these discussions, many participants underscored the importance of fostering further cooperation between States Parties, both regionally and bilaterally. The Proceedings of the Melbourne Workshop are available at the APCML website: <http://www.law.unimelb.edu.au/events/bwc/>.

The APCML is presently assisting in the further development of an 'Implementation Toolbox' which includes:

- (i) A checklist of legislation requirements and 'drafting elements' covering the various BWC legislative requirements, including biosafety and biosecurity; and
- (ii) Guidelines on outreach to relevant scientific communities, including drafting elements for codes of conduct for scientists working in the biological sciences and biotechnology.

The APCML looks forward to further contributing to the activities associated with the BWC intersessional process and the effective implementation of the BWC.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.