

**STATEMENT BY ARGENTINA TO THE SIXTH REVIEW CONFERENCE OF
THE BIOLOGICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION**

UNOFFICIAL TRANSCRIPT

20 NOVEMBER 2006

Thank you very much, sir. I would first of all like to repeat how happy we are at seeing you guiding us through our work. You can rely on us and our support in order to achieve a positive outcome at the Conference. We also thank the Convention Secretariat which has spared no effort during the preparatory process. We thank them for the documents distributed.

Sir, the Government of Argentina would like to play a useful part in applying the Convention regime in all its aspects. This desire on our part is based on our commitment to disarmament and the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Our commitment to non-proliferation of biological weapons is based on previous statements, the Mendoza Declaration dating back to the 5th of September 1991 signed by Brazil, Argentina and Chile which was joined later on by Uruguay, Paraguay, Bolivia and Ecuador, and also based on the political Declaration of MERCOSUR, Bolivia and Chile as a zone of peace signed in Ushuaia on the 29th of July 1998. We took active part in the tribune as you can see from the four documents submitted nationally during the period 2003 to 2005 on the basis of the agreement reached on the various issues at the Fifth Review Conference. Last October, this year that is, we submitted an Information document to the Convention Secretariat. It is a new national document containing information relating to new scientific and technical developments which seem relevant to us under the Convention. And we also provided information on amendments made to our criminal legislation which criminalizes actions prohibited by Articles 1 and 4 of the Convention.

I would very specifically like to say how much we welcome the results achieved at the Regional Experts' Meeting looking at weapons and humanitarian law which was held under the auspices of the International Committee of the Red Cross this year in Buenos Aires. Among these objectives was information exchange on work undertaken in the context of the agreed mandate in our Convention.

Sir, the strengthening of this Convention which is a permanent goal which Argentina has set itself can also be seen reflected in the statements made by a whole set of Latin American countries. I am in particular thinking about the statement made by Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Mexico and Peru on the 10th of July 1998, as well as the Declaration 26th of April 2006 signed by Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Chile, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Mexico, Peru and Uruguay. And today we are submitting five joint Working Papers for this Review Conference. These five Working documents have a common denominator, namely, they contain a positive constructive

approach which, in a realistic way, seeks to progress towards the strengthening of the Convention.

Sir, Argentina firmly and vigorously supports the terms of Security Council Resolution 1540 and takes active part in all the international non-proliferation control mechanisms, and it is in this way that we are convinced that we really must take a very close look at the threat posed by bio-terrorism. There is therefore a need for strict controls on biotechnological capability which could lead to the manufacture of weapons of mass destruction.

Now all these comments which I have made merely bear out the usefulness of adopting multilateral follow-up machinery to look at all the substantive topics of the Convention within the ambit of biotechnology of interest to our Convention. A failure or the cessation of work on the tasks under the Convention would be tantamount to sending a negative signal to the whole of the international community, and would add another disturbing factor of concern, given the hardly very encouraging picture we've seen over the last few years **[recording 0027 terminates and continues on 0028]** disarmament and non-proliferation. Thank you.