

Possible Outcome Paper (as adopted)

16 *bis*. The Meeting of States Parties was preceded by a Meeting of Experts where measures relevant to the two agenda items were discussed in detail. States Parties noted that the Meeting of Experts was helpful in promoting common understanding and effective action on the agenda items. They stressed the need for undertaking activities at the national and international levels on these two agenda items in accordance with the decision adopted by consensus in the Final Document of the Fifth Review Conference of the States Parties to the Convention (BWC/CONF.V/17) in the section dealing with decisions and recommendations.

17. On the mandate to discuss, and promote common understanding and effective action on strengthening and broadening national and international institutional efforts and existing mechanisms for the surveillance, detection, diagnosis and combating of infectious diseases affecting humans, animals, and plants, the States Parties recognised that:

- a) infectious disease outbreaks can be contained and suppressed through early-detection, immediate response and co-operation and support at the national and international level;
- b) strengthening and broadening national and international surveillance, detection, diagnosis and combating of infectious disease may support the object and purpose of the Convention;
- c) the primary responsibility for surveillance, detection, diagnosis and combating of infectious diseases rests with States Parties, while the WHO, FAO and OIE have global responsibilities, within their mandates, in this regard. The respective structures, planning and activities of States Parties and the WHO, FAO and OIE should be co-ordinated with and complement one another;
- d) scientific and technological developments have the potential to significantly improve disease surveillance and response.

18. The States Parties consequently agreed on the value of:

- a) supporting the existing networks of relevant international organisations for the surveillance, detection, diagnosis and combating of infectious diseases and acting to strengthen the WHO, FAO and OIE programmes, within their mandates, for the continued development and strengthening of, and research into, rapid, effective and reliable activities for the surveillance, detection, diagnosis and combating of infectious diseases, including in cases of emergencies of international concern;
- b) improving, wherever possible, national and regional disease surveillance capabilities, and, if in a position to do so, assisting and encouraging, with the necessary agreement, other States Parties to do the same;
- c) working to improve communication on disease surveillance, including with the WHO, FAO and OIE, and among States Parties.

19. On the mandate to discuss, and promote common understanding and effective action on enhancing international capabilities for responding to, investigating and mitigating the effects of cases of alleged use of biological or toxin weapons or suspicious outbreaks of disease, the States Parties recognised that:

- a) capabilities for responding to, investigating and mitigating the effects of cases of alleged use of biological or toxin weapons or suspicious outbreaks of disease promote the object and purpose of the Convention;
- b) States Parties' national preparedness and arrangements substantially contribute to international capabilities for responding to, investigating and mitigating the effects of cases of alleged use of biological or toxin weapons or suspicious outbreaks of disease;
- c) the Secretary-General's investigation mechanism, set out in A/44/561 and endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution A/Res/45/57, represents an international institutional mechanism for investigating cases of alleged use of biological or toxin weapons.

20. The States Parties consequently agreed on the value of:

- a) continuing to develop their own national capacities for response, investigation and mitigation, in cooperation with the relevant international and regional organisations, and, if in a position to do so, assisting and encouraging, with the necessary agreement, other States Parties to do the same;
- b) the Sixth Review Conference considering, *inter alia*, the further development of current procedures for the provision of assistance, by those in a position to do so, to States Parties in cases of alleged use of biological weapons or suspicious outbreaks of disease.

21. The States Parties further considered that in pursuing the above understandings and actions, States Parties could, according to their respective circumstances, consider 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 the Annex II of the Report of the Meeting of Experts (BWC/MSP/2004/MX/3), as well as the synthesis of these considerations, lessons, perspectives, recommendations, conclusions and proposals contained in BWC/MSP/2004/L.1, which are attached to this report as Annex II and III. These annexes were not discussed or agreed upon and consequently have no status.

22. States Parties are encouraged to inform the Sixth Review Conference of, *inter alia*, any actions, measures or other steps that they may have taken on the basis of the discussions at the 2004 Meeting of Experts and of the outcome of the 2004 Meeting of States Parties in order to facilitate the Sixth Review Conference's consideration of the work undertaken at the meetings in 2004 and of a decision on any further action in accordance with paragraph 18 (e) of the decision adopted at the Fifth Review Conference (BWC/CONF.V/17).