

**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**

Geneva, 9-13 December 2013

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To the Permanent Representatives in Geneva of the
States Parties and Signatories to the Convention on the Prohibition
of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological
(Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on their Destruction

28 June 2013

BIOLOGICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION: MEETING OF EXPERTS 2013

Excellency,

I am writing once more in my capacity as Chairman of the 2013 meetings of the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) to update you on preparations for the Meeting of Experts, which will be held at the United Nations Office at Geneva from 12 to 16 August 2013.

Following my letter to you of 18 February 2013, I have been consulting extensively with States Parties in a range of settings: through the regional groups, bilaterally, and in various informal gatherings. I am most grateful for the constructive and practical feedback I have received from many delegations, and for the support and advice of the two Vice-chairs, Ambassador Mazlan Muhammad of Malaysia and Ambassador Urs Schmid of Switzerland.

I am particularly pleased with the positive response to my proposal to "bring in more voices" to our intersessional programme. I thank all those delegations which have provided useful ideas to broaden awareness of and active participation in our work.

Schedule and programme of work

Based on my consultations, and the written responses to my letter of 18 February, I have prepared an informal indicative schedule for the Meeting of Experts, as well as a draft provisional programme of work. Both are attached.

The informal indicative schedule provides an overview of the Meeting of Experts, including the side events. A more detailed version of this indicative schedule, showing individual presentations and statements that delegations have so far indicated they plan to make under

each agenda item, is available on the ISU website (www.unog.ch/bwc/meeting). This will be updated continually as more delegations provide input.

The provisional programme of work is closely based on that of 2012, and will be proposed for adoption in the usual manner at the opening session of the meeting. It lists the sub-items of the respective Standing Agenda Items, indicating both those which were originally proposed for consideration in 2013 according to the division helpfully put forward in 2012 by my distinguished predecessor, Ambassador Delmi, and those which one or more delegations have specifically indicated they will wish to address in August.

In developing the schedule and programme, I have strived to maximise efficiency, while strictly following the mandate given to us by the Seventh Review Conference, by giving each Standing Agenda Item one full day. I believe this will facilitate the attendance of relevant experts, support a focused and structured discussion, and allow us to match the side events to the topics of the formal meeting. Scheduling the three Standing Agenda Items in this way means that for purely pragmatic reasons the biennial item on how to enable fuller participation in the CBMs has to be split over two days. This is perhaps not ideal, but I believe that keeping the Standing Agenda Items together is more important. I trust that delegations will find the schedule and programme acceptable, and useful aids to their preparations for the meeting.

Observers and guests of the meeting

In line with past practice, and following feedback and suggestions kindly provided in the course of my consultations, I have compiled the attached list of relevant international organizations, professional and academic associations, and other NGOs and experts who might usefully contribute to our work by sharing their experience and expertise at the Meeting of Experts. In accordance with our established procedures, I will be writing to the intergovernmental organizations to notify them of the meeting, and will invite the other organizations and experts to participate as guests of the meeting.

If you would like to nominate any additional organizations or experts, I encourage you to contact me as soon as possible.

Registration

Registration for the Meeting of Experts is now open. I invite all States Parties to register their participation through the usual procedure. Please see **www.unog.ch/bwc/meeting** for details on how to register. To avoid delays, I would request all delegations to register by **5 August 2013**.

Next steps

I hope that we have now settled the major questions on the structure and format of the Meeting of Experts. I encourage all delegations to continue with their preparations according to our agenda and programme of work, and to keep me and the ISU informed of any working papers you are preparing, and any statements or presentations you plan to make. Please remember to consult the ISU website (www.unog.ch/bwc/meeting) regularly for the latest information and documents.

I, along with the two Vice-chairs, remain at your disposal for consultations, and we welcome your further feedback and ideas. Although I will not be able to visit Geneva again until the Meeting of Experts, I can be readily contacted directly by e-mail at jkoromi@mfa.gov.hu, or else through the ISU or the Permanent Mission of Hungary.

Thank you again for your active support and collaboration and your valuable feedback. I am confident that we have laid the foundations for a productive and successful Meeting of Experts, and I look forward to working with you during the meeting in August.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.



Judit Körömi
Special Representative of the Foreign
Minister of Hungary for Arms Control,
Disarmament and Non-proliferation
Chairman of the Meeting of States Parties

Attachments: (1) Informal indicative schedule (1 page)
(2) Draft provisional programme of work (2 pages)
(3) List of observers and invitees (2 pages)

Biological Weapons Convention: Indicative schedule for the 2013 Meeting of Experts

	Monday 12 August	Tuesday 13 August	Wednesday 14 August	Thursday 15 August	Friday 16 August
09.00- 10.00		Side event: Dual Use Education (Bradford University, US National Academies, LNCV)	Side event: Dealing with Dual-Use Research of Concern (Indonesian Academy of Sciences & Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences)	Side event: The UNSG's Investigative Mechanism (Germany & UNODA)	
10.00-13.00	Opening formalities Opening remarks NGO statements	Cooperation and assistance, with a particular focus on strengthening cooperation and assistance under Article X (agenda item 5)	Review of developments in the field of science and technology related to the Convention (agenda item 6)	Strengthening national implementation (agenda item 7)	How to enable fuller participation in the CBMs (agenda item 8) (continued)
13.00- 15.00	Side event: Compliance (Kings College London)	Side event: Building Human Capacity (United Kingdom)	Side event: Convergence & Outreach (BWC ISU and OPCW Scientific Advisory Board)	Side event: How exchange of good practices improves surveillance of high risk pathogens (France)	
15.00-18.00	How to enable fuller participation in the CBMs (agenda item 8)	Cooperation and assistance, with a particular focus on strengthening cooperation and assistance under Article X (agenda item 5)	Review of developments in the field of science and technology related to the Convention (agenda item 6)	Strengthening national implementation (agenda item 7)	Adoption of report Closing formalities
18.00-	Poster session				

Draft Provisional programme of work for the Meeting of Experts

<i>Day</i>	<i>AM (10:00–13:00)</i>	<i>PM (15:00–18:00)</i>
Mon 12/8	<p>Opening formalities (agenda items 1-4)</p> <p>Introductory statements</p> <p>Informal session for NGO statements</p>	<p>How to enable fuller participation in the CBMs (agenda item 8)</p>
Tue 13/8	<p>Cooperation and assistance, with a particular focus on strengthening cooperation and assistance under Article X (agenda item 5):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Reports by States Parties on their implementation of Article X, and reports by the ISU on the operation of the database system to facilitate assistance requests and offers;¹ – Challenges and obstacles to developing international cooperation, assistance and exchange in the biological sciences and technology, including equipment and material, for peaceful purposes to their full potential, and possible means of overcoming these;² – A range of specific measures for the full and comprehensive implementation of Article X taking into account all of its provisions, including facilitation of cooperation and assistance, including in terms of equipment, materials and scientific and technological information for peaceful purposes, and identification of critical gaps and needs in these areas;¹ – Ways and means to target and mobilize resources, including financial resources, to address gaps and needs for assistance and cooperation, in particular from developed to developing States Parties, and from international and regional organizations and other relevant stakeholders.¹ 	<p>Cooperation and assistance, with a particular focus on strengthening cooperation and assistance under Article X (agenda item 5):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Education, training, exchange and twinning programmes and other means of developing human resources in the biological sciences and technology relevant to the implementation of the Convention, particularly in developing countries;¹ – Capacity-building, through international cooperation, in biosafety and biosecurity, and for detecting, reporting, and responding to outbreaks of infectious disease or biological weapons attacks, including in the areas of preparedness, response, and crisis management and mitigation;² – Coordination of cooperation with other relevant international and regional organizations, and other relevant stakeholders.¹

¹ This sub-item was originally allocated for consideration in 2013 by the 2012 Chairman in his letter to States Parties of 21 June 2012.

² One or more States Parties have specifically indicated they will wish to address this sub-item at the Meeting of Experts.

<i>Day</i>	<i>AM (10:00–13:00)</i>	<i>PM (15:00–18:00)</i>
Wed 14/8	<p>Review of developments in the field of science and technology related to the Convention (agenda item 6), focusing on advances in technologies for surveillance, detection, diagnosis and mitigation of infectious diseases, and similar occurrences caused by toxins in humans, animals and plants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – New science and technology developments that have potential for uses contrary to the provisions of the Convention;¹ – New science and technology developments that have potential benefits for the Convention, including those of special relevance to disease surveillance, diagnosis and mitigation;¹ – Possible measures for strengthening national biological risk management, as appropriate, in research and development involving new science and technology developments of relevance to the Convention.² 	<p>Review of developments in the field of science and technology related to the Convention (agenda item 6), focusing on advances in technologies for surveillance, detection, diagnosis and mitigation of infectious diseases, and similar occurrences caused by toxins in humans, animals and plants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Voluntary codes of conduct and other measures to encourage responsible conduct by scientists, academia and industry;¹ – Education and awareness-raising about risks and benefits of life sciences and biotechnology.¹ – Science- and technology-related developments relevant to the activities of multilateral organizations such as the WHO, OIE, FAO, IPPC and OPCW;¹ – Any other science and technology developments of relevance to the Convention.¹
Thu 15/6	<p>Strengthening national implementation (agenda item 7):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – A range of specific measures for the full and comprehensive implementation of the Convention, especially Articles III and IV;² – Ways and means to enhance national implementation, sharing best practices and experiences, including the voluntary exchange of information among States Parties on their national implementation, enforcement of national legislation, strengthening of national institutions and coordination among national law enforcement institutions;¹ – Regional and sub-regional cooperation that can assist national implementation of the Convention² 	<p>Strengthening national implementation (agenda item 7):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – National, regional and international measures to improve laboratory biosafety and security of pathogens and toxins;¹ – Any potential further measures, as appropriate, relevant for implementation of the Convention.¹
Fri 16/8	<p>How to enable fuller participation in the CBMs (agenda item 8)</p>	<p>Adoption of the factual report reflecting the deliberations of the meeting (agenda item 9)</p> <p>Closing of the meeting (agenda item 10)</p>

Biological Weapons Convention

Proposed Observers and Guests for the 2013 Meeting of Experts

I. Observers – Intergovernmental Organizations

World Health Organization (WHO)

World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE)

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)

Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW)

International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)

INTERPOL

UNSCR 1540 Committee

II. Guests of the Meeting

A. International professional and scientific organizations

International Federation of Biosafety Associations (IFBA)

IAP: the Global Network of Science Academies

International Union of Microbiological Societies (IUMS)

International Union of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology (IUBMB)

Biotechnology Industry Organization (BIO)

International Pharmaceutical Manufacturers and Associations (IFPMA)

B. Other organizations and individual experts

Cooperation & Assistance

- *Nathan Wolfe* (Global Viral Forecasting initiative) – a leading virus hunter who has done a number of recent high-profile interviews.

- *Association of University Technology Managers*: a professional body directly involved in technology transfer.
- *Developing Countries Vaccine Manufacturers Network*: an industry body representing vaccine manufacturing capacity in emerging economies
- *Mike Short* (Institution of Engineering and Technology & Telefonica Europe): an expert on the use of information and communications technologies for disease reporting and surveillance, particularly in Africa.
- *Shanshan Zhang* (Peking University): runs a the joint Ph.D. programme with Emory University in the USA; will discuss how the programme deals with differences in national approaches to biorisk management, especially in the context of building human capacity.

Science & Technology

- *Muhammad Abbas* (Veterinary Research Institute, Lahore, Pakistan): an expert on advances in understanding of influenza viruses.
 - *Prof. Peter Piot* (Director, School of Global Health, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine)
 - *Eri Gentry* (Scanadu): co-founder of a company producing a hand held scanner for home use capable of performing many routine diagnostic tasks.
 - *Sanofi Aventis*: will update States Parties on the industrial production of an Artemisinin precursor created using synthetic biology. The 2009 Meeting of Experts was briefed by the biotechnology company doing the scale up work.
 - *Simon Hay* (University of Oxford): an expert on the global mapping of infectious disease.
 - *Sung-Woo Kim* (Nanobiosys): founder of a company producing state of the art PCR diagnostic equipment.
 - *Simon Wain-Hobson* (Foundation for Vaccine Research): a leading scientist who has expressed strong moral and ethical objections to gain-of-function research.
 - *Frida Kuhlau* (Uppsala University): an expert on the ethics of disseminating dual-use knowledge.
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