

**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**

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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

20 November 2013

**BIOLOGICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION: MEETING OF STATES PARTIES 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 States Parties, which will be held at the United Nations Office at Geneva from 9 to 13 December 2013.

Building upon the recent meetings with the regional groups from 12-13 November, I am seeking the views of States Parties on how we should convert the large amount of material contributed at the Meeting of Experts into common understandings we can adopt in our consensus report for the Meeting of States Parties. This is a familiar task and to the greatest extent possible I intend to follow past precedents. I believe that we should continue to use the same structure as last year: a report comprised of procedural elements with a number of substantive paragraphs capturing the relevant common understandings, with annexes detailing the Chairman's synthesis paper and a list of documents.

This year, however, we face a particular challenge: we have to decide how we build on last year's report, and how the reports from each year will fit together. In the previous intersessional programmes, we did not have this problem. Each year was self-contained, with one or two topics being considered, and then the report agreed. The following year's topics were different, and so the work began afresh and the reports were largely independent of one another. In this current intersessional programme, we are dealing with topics that continue from year to year. The three standing agenda items are considered in each of the four years, and the biennial topics each run for two years.

Last year, relying on our long-established practices and collegial approach, we concluded a report recording our common understandings on the three standing agenda items and the biennial item. This year, we have continued to work on the same items. What, then, should we aim to include in this year's report? This is an important question that has implications for

the rest of the intersessional programme and for preparing for the next review conference. I would very much like to hear your views and suggestions on this question.

At the recent regional group meetings I outlined some initial reflections on how we might accomplish this:

- I believe it is best both to avoid repetition and to avoid re-opening the carefully-balanced common understandings we agreed last year.
- I am convinced that we should build on our work from last year, so it may be better to focus on new material, that is, material contributed this year that was not covered in 2012, or that elaborates or further develops what was covered in 2012.
- We might usefully include a reaffirmation of the 2012 text in this year's report, or we could include the text itself wholesale, but attempting to include some elements but not others may lead to confusion and ambiguity.
- I think it is useful to look at the end of the intersessional process and decide now what final product we want to provide to the Eighth Review Conference. When we know this, we can work backwards from there to determine how we could best structure this year's report to bring us closer to that goal.

As the Meeting of States Parties is rapidly approaching, I am keen to know what you think. I have an open mind and no particular preference as Chair: this is a question that we need to answer together, preferably well before we start work on the report. I believe that having a clear sense of what output we expect to produce will help us have a productive meeting. I am keen to avoid surprises and I want all States Parties to be comfortable with both the output from the meeting and the process we are using to deliver it.

In order to hear the views of States Parties and to provide a suitable venue to discuss them, I propose to meet with the regional groups again during the week that precedes the Meeting of States Parties (2-6 December). If you would like to discuss these, or any other matters with me in the interim, I can be readily contacted directly by e-mail at [jkoromi@mfa.gov.hu](mailto:jkoromi@mfa.gov.hu), or else through the ISU or the Permanent Mission of Hungary in Geneva. The two Vice-chairs, Ambassador Mazlan Muhammad of Malaysia and Ambassador Urs Schmid of Switzerland, are also available to discuss your ideas and concerns. Please also remember to consult the ISU website ([www.unog.ch/bwc](http://www.unog.ch/bwc)) regularly for the latest information and documents.

Thank you again for your collaboration and support; I look forward to working with you to reach common understandings and promote effective action at the Meeting of States Parties in December.

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



Judit Körömi  
Special Representative of the Foreign  
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Chairman of the Meeting of States Parties