



**PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA  
TO THE UNITED NATIONS OFFICE AT GENEVA AND OTHER  
INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS IN SWITZERLAND**

To the Permanent Representatives in Geneva 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

10 October 2008

Excellency,

I am writing once more in my capacity as Chairman of the 2008 meetings of the Biological Weapons Convention, to thank you for your contribution to the success of the Meeting of Experts held in August, and to update you on plans for the forthcoming Meeting of States Parties, which will be held at the Palais des Nations in Geneva from 1 to 5 December 2008.

The Meeting of Experts adopted a factual report describing its work on the two topics: national, regional and international measures to improve biosafety and biosecurity, and oversight, education, awareness raising, and adoption and/or development of codes of conduct (see BWC/MSP/2008/MX/3). Annexed to this report was a list of the various proposals and ideas on the two topics that were put forward in the course of the meeting.

As I foreshadowed at the close of the meeting, and as was done in previous years, I have consolidated these proposals and ideas, removing duplications and merging similar concepts, to produce a synthesis paper. This synthesis, which is attached, is intended as food for thought, to help guide your preparations for the Meeting of States Parties. It contains no new material, but simply reflects the ideas put forward at the Meeting of Experts in what I hope is a reasonably coherent, concise and accessible way. It is not intended to exclude any proposal from consideration, and States Parties are of course welcome to make additional proposals at the Meeting of States Parties. The synthesis paper is a resource for States Parties to draw upon in their preparations, and I encourage you to use it that way. As in previous years, the synthesis will be issued as an official document in all languages.

I have also prepared a provisional agenda for the Meeting of States Parties, an advance version of which I attach for your information. The agenda follows exactly the same form as that of last year, including the items mandated by the Sixth Review Conference: reports on universalization activities, and the report of the Implementation Support Unit (including on the confidence-building measures).

As to the operation of the Meeting of States Parties, I believe it is important that we take the opportunity to add value to the work done at the Meeting of Experts. The Meeting of Experts produced a wealth of material, from a wide array of participants including experts from States Parties, international organizations, scientific and professional associations, and academia. I believe there would be benefit in a more structured discussion on the proposals and ideas raised, and I will be preparing a programme of work to facilitate such discussion.

On the outcome of the meeting, we should aim for a product that genuinely promotes common understanding and that will help States Parties, including those which are not able to participate in our meetings, to take effective action on our two topics. I am interested in hearing the views of delegations on how we can best achieve this, and I will be consulting widely in the coming weeks. Please do not hesitate to contact me through the ISU if you would like to discuss any aspect of the preparations for the meeting.

In the lead up to the Meeting of States Parties, I will also be preparing a report on the Promotion of Universalization, as mandated by the Final Document of the Sixth Review Conference. I would, therefore, encourage you to forward to the ISU details of any contacts you may have had with states not party to the BWC, and any other information relevant to securing additional accessions and ratifications.

I would also welcome the opportunity to consult the regional groups on preparations for the Meeting of States Parties, and I will be liaising with the group coordinators to arrange mutually convenient times.

Finally, I would like to remind you to check the BWC website (<http://www.unog.ch/bwc>) regularly, including the restricted area which contains information for States Parties only.

Thank you for your continuing support and cooperation, and I look forward to a productive Meeting of States Parties in December.

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

[signed]

Georgi Avramchev  
Ambassador and Permanent Representative of  
the Republic of Macedonia  
Chairman of the 2008 Meeting of States Parties  
to the Biological Weapons Convention

encl: (1) Synthesis paper (7 pages)  
(2) Provisional agenda (1 page)