

Meeting of States Parties to the Biological Weapons Convention
Geneva, 6-10 December 2010

Note for the regional groups from the Chairman – November 2010

- States Parties' constructive contributions to the Meeting of Experts and their preparations for the Meeting of States Parties are greatly appreciated.
- The Meeting of States Parties will be conducted on exactly the same basis as in previous years. All delegations are familiar with the working practices and procedures. There will be no surprises.
- It is hoped that States Parties have found the synthesis paper (BWC/MSP/2010/L.1) useful. The purpose of the paper is to support the work of the Meeting of States Parties. Delegations are welcome to discuss and refer to the paper, to use it as a basis for developing common understandings, or to ignore it, as they wish.
- The synthesis paper is certainly not an exhaustive inventory, and delegations are most welcome to make additional proposals.
- An indicative schedule for the meeting has been prepared (attached), which will form the basis of the Programme of Work to be adopted at the opening session.
- Following the opening formalities, the General Debate will be held. Delegations wishing to participate in the General Debate are invited to contact the ISU to inscribe themselves on the list of speakers (tel: 022 917 2230, e-mail: bwc@unog.ch).
- It is suggested that we suspend the formal meeting and allow the usual time on the Monday afternoon to hear statements from NGOs.
- The majority of time in the schedule is devoted to agenda item 6, the topic for this year. The schedule sub-divides the topic along the same lines as the synthesis paper, but this division is only a guide. The schedule will be adjusted according to the way the work of the meeting develops.
- One session will be devoted to the respective reports on universalization activities (agenda item 7) and the Implementation Support Unit (agenda item 8).
- One session will also be devoted to agenda item 9: arrangements for the Seventh Review Conference and its Preparatory Committee in 2011. Following requests from several delegations, this session will be held early in the week, on the morning of Tuesday 7 December.
- At this session, the meeting will take decisions on the dates for the Review Conference and Preparatory Committee, the nomination of the President, and the cost estimates for both meetings.
- It is proposed to use the remainder of the session to provide an opportunity for States Parties to inform each other of workshops, seminars and other activities they have undertaken or are planning in order to prepare for the Review Conference.

- On the topic of "*provision of assistance and coordination with relevant organizations upon request by any State Party in the case of alleged use of biological or toxin weapons, including improving national capabilities for disease surveillance, detection and diagnosis and public health systems*", the task is to convert the many ideas and proposals discussed at the Meeting of Experts into a more concise, focused product.
 - The meeting will work on the same basis as in previous years, on the same understandings about the scope of its mandate. The aim is to "promote common understanding and effective action", not to negotiate binding agreements.
 - All views and perspectives are welcome. There is no intention to exclude any points of view. States Parties will have different priorities, but all these can be reflected in a fair and transparent manner.
 - It would be helpful for the Chairman to hear the views of States Parties on the various elements reflected in the synthesis paper, as well as to hear of any other aspects of the topic which delegations think could form the basis of common understandings that could be recorded in the report of the meeting.
 - It is hoped the report will provide at least part of the answer to the underlying question: *if a biological weapon were to be used tomorrow, how would we, the States Parties, individually and collectively respond?*
 - The Chairman asks for the support of all States Parties to develop a report which genuinely promotes effective action towards fulfilling the objectives of the Convention.
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