Revised
Draft elements for inclusion in the Report of the Meeting of States Parties

18/19. In accordance with the decision of the Seventh Review Conference, and recalling the common understandings reached during the 2003-2005 and 2007-2010 intersessional work programmes and by the Meeting of States Parties in 2012, States Parties continued to develop common understandings on each of the three standing agenda items and the biennial item.

A. Standing agenda item: cooperation and assistance, with a particular focus on strengthening cooperation and assistance under Article X

20. States Parties recalled their legal obligation to facilitate and their right to participate in the fullest possible exchange of equipment, materials and scientific and technological information for the use of bacteriological (biological) agents and toxins for peaceful purposes and not to hamper the economic and technological development of States Parties.

21. States Parties recalled their agreement on the importance of taking full advantage of the 2012–2015 intersessional process, as well as the other outcomes of the Seventh Review Conference, to strengthen international cooperation and assistance. States Parties recognized the value of elaborating further the existing common understandings related to Article X.

22. To further reinforce efforts to work together to target and mobilize resources, States Parties agreed on the value of:

   (a) Promoting international cooperation providing for the fullest possible exchange of equipment, materials and scientific and technological information for the use of bacteriological (biological) agents and toxins for peaceful purposes in accordance with Article X of the Convention and not limiting this cooperation to financial resources;

   (b) Continuing to work together to target and mobilize resources, including financial resources, to address gaps and needs for assistance and cooperation including in particular from developed to developing States Parties and also exploring different ways of cooperation, including South-South cooperation;

   (c) Submitting clear, specific, and timely national reports on implementation of Article X as agreed at the Seventh Review Conference.

23. In order to further enhance the function of the database system to facilitate requests for and offers of exchange of assistance and cooperation, States Parties noted the value of, assessing its functionality, strengthening its utilization and improving its operation. States Parties agreed on the value of:

   (a) Making offers of assistance accessible on the open section of the website and feature a prominent link to these offers on the home page;

   (b) Encouraging States Parties that have submitted offers to regularly update contact and other information;

   (c) Exploring more effective means of bringing assistance requests to the attention of States Parties that have made potentially relevant offers of assistance;
24. To further efforts to address 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, States Parties noted the value of:

(a) Pursuing a long-term, sustainable and systematic approach to the provision of cooperation and assistance;

(b) Avoiding imposing restrictions and/or limitations on transfers for purposes consistent with the objectives and provisions of the Convention of scientific knowledge, technology, equipment and materials under Article X;

(c) Helping requesting countries to provide a thorough explanation of their needs and to define in specific terms the type of support that could best address those needs;

(d) Leveraging existing bilateral and multilateral partnerships, and create new ones, to better coordinate plans and develop joint solutions to the challenges in exchange of assistance during public health and medical emergencies;

(e) Convene regional seminars and workshops to explore ways and means of promoting the full and effective implementation of Article X.

25. Recognizing the value of twinning programmes and other means of international exchange in education and training for strengthening cooperation among States Parties, for capacity-building and sharing of advanced expertise including in particular with developing countries, and for improving global capacity for disease detection and control, States Parties recognized the value of developing and facilitating such programmes, including by:

(a) Sharing results of advanced research in life sciences so that scientists, engineers, students and teachers including in particular in developing countries are aware of opportunities and can take full advantage of new developments in biological sciences and technology;

(b) Providing opportunities for training in advanced laboratories and working with cutting-edge technology to help build defenses against disease whether naturally occurring or deliberate, including in particular to developing countries.

26. In order to further efforts to strengthen national capacity through international cooperation to prevent accidental or deliberate releases of biological agents, as well as for detecting and responding to outbreaks of infectious disease or biological weapons attacks, States Parties noted the value of:

(a) Providing assistance upon request with challenges related to storing and dealing with pathogens, development of scientific research capacity and training of national specialists;

(b) Facilitating the transport, entry, exit, processing and disposal of biological substances and diagnostic specimens and materials, in accordance with national laws and regulations, for public, animal and plant health response and for other peaceful purposes;

(c) Developing international capacity to provide urgent assistance, including testing systems and diagnostic equipment, medical countermeasures and related logistical support, biological environmental monitoring devices, and advice and expert assistance;
(d) Identifying and addressing specific impediments to the provision or receipt of international assistance in response to an attack or unusual disease outbreak;

(e) Promoting interagency coordination and multi-sectoral cooperation to prepare for, detect, and respond to infectious disease outbreaks whether natural, accidental or deliberate in nature;

(f) Developing and implementing appropriate, sustainable, and effective laboratory safety and security measures, through international cooperation and assistance, including on exchanges of technology, training materials and resources.

27. In order to further efforts to strengthen international cooperation to ensure all States Parties have access to the benefits of developments in the life sciences, States Parties noted the value of harnessing recent advances, including in enabling technologies, in order to strengthen the sustainable development of States Parties, taking into account the needs of developing countries in meeting health-related challenges.

28. Recognizing the importance of coordination with relevant international and regional organizations and other relevant stakeholders, taking into account the mandates of existing mechanisms established by those organizations, States Parties noted the value of closer cooperation and coordination between States Parties and relevant international organization, in accordance with their respective mandates, including in order to build an integrated approach on biosecurity and biosafety.

29. States Parties recalled their agreement on the importance of continuing discussions on full and effective implementation of Article X obligations, including in light of various proposals made by States Parties.

B. **Standing agenda item: review of developments in the field of science and technology related to the Convention**

30. States Parties identified certain developments in science and technology that have potential benefits for the Convention and agreed on the need to share information on these developments, including:

   (a) improving identification of biological agents and toxins for both health and security purposes, resulting from advances in life science research, including metagenomics, immunological methods, molecular probes, amplification of nucleic acids, and in microbial forensics;

   (b) advances in comparative genomics, which would increase the capacity to investigate alleged use of biological weapons;

   (c) improved, more efficient and economical vaccine and diagnostic technologies, resulting from advances in:

      (i) identifying new targets and reducing the timescale for the development of vaccines, drugs and diagnostics;

      (ii) production of vaccines including through developments in single-use or disposable bioreactor systems, which can increase yield, cost-effectiveness, portability and safety, and novel vaccine production methods, including cell cultures and cell suspension bioreactors, recombinant DNA, metabolic engineering and synthetic biology, chemical peptide synthesis; and transgenic animals and plants;

      (iii) vaccine distribution and delivery, such as encapsulation in silk matrices, nano-vesicles, and nanotechnology-based patches;
(iv) point-of-care diagnostic systems suitable for use in low resource settings resulting from advances in microfluidics, nanotechnology, lateral flow immunoassays and new techniques emerging from multidisciplinary collaborations that combine different approaches into simple devices;

(d) enhanced epidemiological capacity including for identifying unknown pathogens, outbreak sources and animal reservoirs, resulting from advances in faster and less expensive high-throughput DNA sequencing, along with parallel advances in computational biology.

31. States Parties agreed that some of the developments reviewed have the potential for uses contrary to the provisions of the Convention, including manipulating the pathogenicity, host-specificity, transmissibility, resistance to drugs, or ability to overcome host immunity to pathogens, and increasing the production efficiency and the effectiveness of biological weapons agents. States Parties also agreed on the importance of facilitating the fullest possible exchange of dual-use technologies where their use is fully consistent with the peaceful object and purpose of the Convention.

32. In order to further seize opportunities for maximizing benefits from advances in science and technology while minimizing the risk of their application for prohibited purposes, States Parties noted the value of:
   
   (a) Promoting access to, and use of, the technologies they reviewed, including through the development of inexpensive and field-portable applications;

   (b) Promoting appropriate oversight measures to identify and manage such risks, ensuring that they are proportional to the assessed risk, take into account both risks and benefits, and avoid hampering legitimate peaceful activities;

   (c) Recognizing that a one-size-fits-all approach is unsuitable, exploring approaches for developing guiding principles that could be tailored to national circumstances;

   (d) Undertaking efforts to engage the scientific community, research funding organizations and, when appropriate, industry in dialogue about how best to identify and manage these risks;

   (e) Sharing information about oversight frameworks, guiding principles, and practical experience with other States Parties.

   (f) Continuing discussion under the Convention on dual use research, bringing in a wide range of national and international stakeholders and focusing on specific instances in order to better understand options for mitigating risks;

   (g) The elaboration of models to inform risk assessment and oversight of scientific research activities that have significant dual-use potential, which should be carried out during all phases of the research cycle.

33. In order to further efforts on education and awareness-raising about risks and benefits of life sciences and biotechnology, States Parties agreed on the value of using science responsibly as an overarching theme to enable parallel outreach efforts across interrelated scientific disciplines, as well as taking full advantage of active learning techniques, consistent with national laws and regulations.

34. States Parties agreed on the value of promoting education on the Convention and the dual-use nature of biotechnology, including through preparing easily accessible and understandable courses, integrating consideration of biosecurity with broader efforts on bioethics, and assessing the impact of such education.
35. In light of the growing convergence between the fields of biology and chemistry, States Parties agreed on the value of furthering efforts to build and sustain coordination between the Convention and the Chemical Weapons Convention, while respecting the legal and institutional bases of each convention. States Parties recognized the value of exploring appropriate ways and means to promote greater collaboration between the CWC and the Convention to analyze potential benefits, risks and threats resulting from relevant advances in science and technology.

36 States Parties agreed on the value of increasing the participation of scientific and technical experts in national delegations to Meetings of Experts. States Parties also recognized the value of contributions to the Sponsorship Programme to facilitate such participation.

37. Recognizing the importance of thoroughly and effectively reviewing science and technology developments relevant to the Convention, and of keeping pace with rapid changes in a wide range of fields, States Parties agreed on the value of considering, in future meetings, possible ways of establishing a more systematic and comprehensive means of review.

38. States Parties recognized the valuable contribution to their work of associated stakeholders in science, academia and industry and agreed on the importance of continuing to encourage them to participate, as appropriate, in the intersessional programme.

C. Standing agenda item: strengthening national implementation

39. States Parties recalled their legal obligation, in accordance with their constitutional processes, to take any necessary measures to prohibit and prevent the development, production, stockpiling, acquisition, or retention of biological weapons and to prevent their transfer to any recipient whatsoever, directly or indirectly, and not in any way to assist, encourage, or induce any State, group of States or international organizations to manufacture or otherwise acquire them.

40. States Parties recalled their agreement to continue to work to strengthen national implementation, taking into account differences in national circumstances and legal and constitutional processes. States Parties agreed on the need to pursue national implementation through the current intersessional programme to foster regional and sub-regional cooperation to promote awareness of the Convention and strengthen regional discussions on the topics of the current intersessional programme. States Parties recognized the value of elaborating further the existing common understandings related to national implementation.

41. In order to further efforts to strengthen national implementation, continue to share best practices and experiences, taking into account differences in national circumstances and legal and constitutional processes, States Parties noted the value of:

   (a) Information on the current status of implementation efforts through the sharing of up-to-date information on their legislative, administrative and other national measures;
   (b) Continuing to improve and update data handling of information provided by States Parties on their national implementation;
   (c) Continuing to strengthen the national institutions which play a role in national implementation;
   (d) Enhancing national coordination between law enforcement institutions.
42. States Parties agreed on the value of continuing to develop measures for, and taking advantage of, international cooperation in accordance with Article X to strengthen implementation of the Convention. States Parties noted the value of such international cooperation including public health, socio-economic development, biological safety and security, as well as national capacities to prevent, detect and respond to biological threats.

43. In order to further efforts to mitigate biological risks, States Parties noted the value of, in accordance with national laws and regulations:

   (a) Promoting regulation, at the national level, of possession, use and transfer of potentially dangerous biological agents and toxins;
   (b) Promoting oversight of pathogens, at the national level, by harmonizing and updating applicable biosafety and biosecurity standards and guidelines, and clarifying and updating biocontainment requirements.

44. States Parties agreed on the value of continuing discussion on measures to strengthen national implementation of the Convention, including in light of various proposals made by States Parties.

D. Biennial item: how to enable fuller participation in the Confidence-building Measures (CBMs)

45. Recalling their recognition of the importance of annual exchanges of information to provide transparency and build mutual trust, States Parties noted the value of:

   (a) Encouraging States Parties that have not participated regularly in the CBMs or have never participated, to share information on the specific reasons on why they do not participate;
   (b) Consider voluntarily making all, or part, of their CBM returns public.

46. Recalling their previous understanding of the value of the Chairman writing each year to all States parties to remind them of the call by the Seventh Review Conference to participate annually in the CBMs, States Parties recognized the value of including in this reminder a request for information on issues affecting their participation in the CBMs.

47. Recalling their agreement on the value of activities identified in 2012 for addressing the technical difficulties experienced by some States Parties in completing full and timely CBM submissions, States Parties agreed to work to:

   (a) Provide further technical assistance and support to States Parties, on request, for preparing and submitting CBM submissions, including through bilateral cooperation on CBMs and the provision of assistance, using the national point of contact list available on the ISU website;
   (b) Continue to develop the electronic CBM platform that was demonstrated at the Meeting of States Parties, including through collaborating with the ISU to test and refine the system;
   (c) Further improve access by States Parties to the information submitted in CBMs by examining the financial and technical feasibility, benefits and implications of various means of making CBM submissions available in more UN languages;
   (d) Convene regional seminars and workshops to promote awareness of CBMs and to provide an opportunity for States Parties to report on their difficulties and needs for assistance;
(e) Consider a “step-by-step” approach in CBM participation whereby States Parties submit CBM forms separately or one by one, as the information is collected and updated, working towards the end goal of updating and completing CBM submissions while upholding the Decisions of the Seventh Review Conference. In this approach, submitting a “less than perfect” CBM initially, and subsequently updating and completing it, would not have negative consequences.

E. Further steps

[The procedural report CRP.1 then continues:

46. The States Parties further considered that in pursuing the above understandings and actions, States Parties could, according to their respective circumstances and constitutional and legal processes, take into account 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 Annex I of the Report of the Meeting of Experts (BWC/MSP/2013/MX/3), as well as the synthesis of these considerations, lessons, perspectives, recommendations, conclusions and proposals contained in BWC/MSP/2013/L.1, which is attached to this report as Annex I. This annex was not proposed for adoption as an outcome of the Meeting, and therefore was not discussed with that aim. Thus, the annex was not agreed upon and consequently has no status.

47. States Parties are encouraged to continue sharing information at subsequent meetings of the intersessional programme on any actions, measures or other steps that they may have taken on issues under consideration in the intersessional programme, in order to further promote common understanding and effective action and to facilitate the Eighth Review Conference’s consideration of the work and outcome of these meetings and its decision on any further action, in accordance with the decision of the Seventh Review Conference (BWC/CONF.VII/7, Part III, paragraph 15).]