

**Seventh Review Conference 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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Item 10 of the provisional agenda

**Review of the operation of the Convention
as provided for in its Article XII**

**Developments since the last Review Conference in other
international organizations which may be relevant to the
Convention**

**Background information document submitted by the Implementation
Support Unit**

Summary

The Preparatory Committee decided to request the Implementation Support Unit (ISU) to prepare a background information document on developments since the last Review Conference in other international organizations which may be relevant to the Convention (see BWC/CONF.VII/PC/2, paragraph 24). The ISU has duly prepared this document which reviews developments in the United Nations (including the Security Council, Secretariat, specialised agencies, and committees) and other international intergovernmental organizations, as well as in some particularly relevant international commercial and scientific organizations.

I. Introduction

1. This document reviews developments since 2006 in the United Nations (including the Security Council, Secretariat, specialised agencies, and committees) and other international organizations, as well as in some particularly relevant international commercial and scientific organizations (such as the International Federation of Biosafety Associations and the International Air Transport Association). Entries have been kept as concise as possible, and web addresses are provided for further information. Where developments have been covered in earlier BWC documents (notably the similar background document prepared for the Sixth Review Conference, BWC/CONF.VI/INF.2), references to those documents are provided and only brief updates have been included here. Please note that any reference to "the Convention" in this document means the Biological Weapons Convention, unless otherwise specified.

2. The Implementation Support Unit has taken an inclusive approach to determining what may be relevant to the Convention. Some organizations have been included because although they are not directly or explicitly involved with biological weapons issues, their activities may be related to the provisions of Article III (preventing transfer of biological weapons), Article IV (national implementation), Article VII (assistance in the case of use of biological weapons) or Article X (peaceful uses of biological science and technology).

II. The United Nations and specialised agencies

A. 1540 Committee

<http://www.un.org/sc/1540/>

3. Information on the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 and its activities relevant to the Convention was included in the background paper prepared for the Sixth Review Conference (see BWC/CONF.VI/INF.2).

4. On 25 April 2008, the Security Council adopted resolution 1810 (2008), which extended the mandate of the 1540 Committee for a period of three years, until 25 April 2011. Reaffirming the objectives of resolution 1540 (2004) and resolution 1673 (2006), the Security Council urged the 1540 Committee to continue strengthening its role in facilitating technical assistance. Through resolution 1810 (2008), the Security Council also requested the 1540 Committee to consider a comprehensive review of the status of implementation of resolution 1540 (2004).

5. On 20 April 2011, the Security Council adopted resolution 1977 (2011), which reaffirms resolution 1540 and calls on States to implement appropriate effective measures to address the threat that non-State actors may acquire, develop, traffic in or use weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery. The new resolution extends the mandate of the 1540 Committee for a period of ten years. Two Comprehensive Reviews will be held, one after five years and one before the end of the mandate, where the committee will assess implementation of resolution 1540 and engage in an in-depth dialogue with Member States on issues related to the implementation of resolution 1540.

6. Resolution 1977 mandates the Committee to:

(a) strengthen its role to facilitate the provision of technical assistance and to enhance its cooperation with relevant international, regional and sub-regional organizations;

(b) refine its outreach efforts;

(c) institute transparency measures;

(d) engage actively with States to promote the sharing of experience, lessons learned and effective practices, in the areas covered by resolution 1540 (2004), and dialogue with States on implementation, including through visits to States at their invitation;

(e) conduct annual reviews on the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) in order to guide its activities, and, on this basis, to include as necessary specific priorities in its annual programme of work.

B. Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)

<http://www.unece.org/trans/danger/danger.htm>

7. ECOSOC plays an important role in establishing guidelines for the transport of dangerous goods, including infectious biological agents and toxins. ECOSOC has a Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods (TDG) and on the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling (GHS). Between the Sixth and Seventh Review Conference (December 2006 and December 2011), the sub-committee on the Transport of Dangerous Goods has met twelve times. Among its duties is the revision of two key texts: the UN Recommendations on the Transport of Dangerous Goods (which include UN Model Regulations)¹ and the UN Manual of Tests and Criteria². The Secretariat services are provided by the secretariat of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE).

8. These recommendations are meant for the use of governments, intergovernmental organizations and international organizations, when revising or developing regulations regarding the transport of dangerous goods, supporting them to conform to the Recommendations' principles and contributing to worldwide harmonization in the transport of dangerous goods. The UN Recommendations on the Transport of Dangerous Goods are designed to account for technical progress, the advent of novel substances and materials, the changing dynamics of modern transport systems and a requirement to protect people, property and the environment. They do not apply to the bulk transport of dangerous goods by sea or by air: these are covered, respectively, by the International Maritime Organization and the International Civil Aviation Organization (see the respective sections below).

9. The model regulations appended to the Recommendations include a scheduled characterisation of dangerous goods. Class 6 covers toxic and infectious substances; perhaps also relevant is Class 9 which includes genetically modified organisms. Toxins are characterised according to the median lethal dose for acute oral, dermal and inhalation toxicity. Infectious agents are divided into two categories: A and B. Category A includes infectious substances which are transported in a form that, when exposure to it occurs, is capable of causing permanent disability, life-threatening or fatal disease in otherwise healthy humans or animals. Category B encompasses all other infectious substances. Depending on the nature of the infectious agent or toxin involved, different packaging precautions are detailed.

C. Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)

<http://www.fao.org>

10. FAO has different programmes and departments to cover prevention, preparedness and early warning, as well as impact and needs assessments, emergency relief and rehabilitation. It also services the International Plant Protection Convention. A number of these activities and programmes relevant to the Convention were considered in the background paper prepared for the Sixth Review Conference, (see BWC/CONF.VI/INF.2) and were discussed during the Meeting of Experts and Meeting of States Parties in 2009 (see BWC/MSP/2009/MX/INF.1). The FAO programmes described include:

¹ Latest edition is the 17th revised edition of the Recommendations on the Transport of Dangerous goods, Model Regulations, 2011. http://live.unece.org/trans/danger/publi/unrec/rev17/17files_e.html

² Latest edition is the 5th revised edition. http://live.unece.org/trans/publications/dg_tests.html

- (a) The Global Framework for the Progressive Control of Transboundary Animal Diseases (GF-TADs);
- (b) The Emergency Prevention System for Transboundary Animal and Plant Pests and Diseases (EMPRES);
- (c) The Good Emergency Management Practice programme (GEMP);
- (d) The FAO's Special Relief Operations Service.

Global Rinderpest Eradication Programme (GREP)

11. The Global Rinderpest Eradication Programme (GREP) was launched in 1994, the initiative aims to consolidate gains in rinderpest control and to move towards outright eradication of the disease and works in close association with the OIE.

12. GREP operates as an international coordination mechanism that promotes the global eradication of rinderpest (and verification of freedom from rinderpest) while providing the technical guidance to achieve these goals. From the outset, GREP, a key element within EMPRES, was a time-bound programme expected to lead to a declaration of global freedom from rinderpest by 2011. Initially, GREP focused in determining the geographical distribution and epidemiology of the disease. Later, it promoted actions to contain rinderpest within infected eco-systems and to eliminate reservoirs of infection through epidemiologically and intelligence-based control programmes. Once experts had accumulated evidence that the virus had likely been eliminated, GREP's activities progressively focused on establishing surveillance systems to verify the absence of the disease.

13. On June 28 2011, during the 37th FAO Conference, the 192 Member countries of FAO adopted a Resolution declaring global freedom from rinderpest, making it the first animal disease to be eliminated thanks to human efforts, and only the second disease of any kind, after smallpox in humans³. The resolution also called on the world community to ensure that samples of rinderpest viruses and vaccines be kept under safe laboratory conditions and that rigorous standards for disease surveillance and reporting be applied, as a post-eradication phase.

D. International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO)

<http://www.icao.int>

14. ICAO is a specialized agency of the United Nations and was created in 1944 to promote the safe and orderly development of international civil aviation throughout the world. It sets standards and regulations necessary for aviation safety, security, efficiency and regularity, as well as for aviation environmental protection. forum for cooperation in all fields of civil aviation among its 190 Member States. ICAO services the Convention on Civil Aviation (Chicago Convention).

Annex 18

15. Although most of the Chicago Convention deals with principles of practice, its Annex 18 addresses the Safe Transport of Dangerous Goods by Air. It states that the transport of dangerous goods by air must comply with the relevant regulations, in this case known as the *Technical Instructions for the Safe Transport of Dangerous Goods by Air* (the

³ <http://www.fao.org/ag/againfo/programmes/en/grep/home.html>

"Technical Instructions"). It is designed not only to ensure safety and security but also to facilitate free trade. The latest version of the Technical Instructions is the 2011/2012 edition⁴.

16. The Technical Instructions contain a very comprehensive set of requirements; they provide for the classification of dangerous goods and have a list of them. The list identifies those goods which are: (a) forbidden under any circumstances; (b) forbidden on both passenger and cargo aircraft in normal circumstances but could be carried in exceptional circumstances subject to exemption by the States concerned; (c) forbidden on passenger aircraft but permitted on cargo aircraft in normal circumstances; and (d) permitted on both passenger and cargo aircraft in normal circumstances. The Technical Instructions require that all dangerous goods be packaged and, in general, restrict the quantity per package according to the degree of hazard and the type of aircraft to be used.

Annex 17

17. Apart from dealing safe transport of dangerous goods, ICAO assumes a leadership role in developing aviation security policies and measures at the international level, and today the enhancement of global aviation security is a key objective of the Organization. The Annex 17 to the Chicago Convention in 1974 deals with provisions for international aviation security. Since 1974, it has been improved and updated 12 times. The 12th amendment to the Annex became applicable on 1 July 2011⁵.

E. International Maritime Organization (IMO)

http://www.imo.org/Newsroom/mainframe.asp?topic_id=861

18. A number of IMO's activities relevant to the Convention were considered in the background paper prepared for the Sixth Review Conference (see BWC/CONF.VI/INF.2).

19. The IMO has a long history of involvement in the transport of dangerous goods. In the 1960s the International Maritime Dangerous Goods code (IMDG) was developed to address pressing safety and security issues. The IMDG was updated in 2002 when the IMO met to review security facets of its work. During this meeting the IMDG was made mandatory, effectively establishing an international legally binding instrument to ensure the maritime safety and security of dangerous goods (including toxic and infectious substances). In addition to revising the IMDG, the IMO has become increasingly active in maritime security and has developed an entire maritime security regime.

20. In December 2002 a number of amendments to the 1974 International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS) were adopted, including the new International Ship and Port Facility Code (ISPS). In 2004, the Code of Practice on Security in Ports (CPSP) was adopted, complementing the provisions of the ISPS with respect to security of the wider port area. On 1 July 2004, the ISPS entered into force and therefore became mandatory. In October 2005, two new protocols were added to the 1988 Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Maritime Navigation (SUA Convention) and its Protocol relating to Fixed Platforms Located on the Continental Shelf (two of the twelve universal counter-terrorism conventions). The two new protocols entered into force in July 2010 and aimed to provide a framework for prosecution of alleged terrorists acting against shipping or ports or when using ships to perpetrate acts of terrorism. It represents the first international treaty framework for combating and

⁴ <http://www.icao.int/anb/FLS/DangerousGoods/>

⁵ For more information, see <http://www2.icao.int/en/avsec/Pages/default.aspx>

prosecuting anyone who uses a ship as a weapon or as a means for a terrorist attack, or who transports terrorists or cargo destined to support WMD programs by ship⁶.

F. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)

<http://ochaonline.un.org/>

21. OCHA is tasked with mobilising and coordinating effective and principled humanitarian action in partnership with national and international humanitarian actors in order to alleviate human suffering in natural disasters and complex emergencies. Its role consists in assisting people in need of relief or protection, via five functions: Coordination, Information Management, Advocacy, Humanitarian Financing, and Policy Development. Two triggers exist for OCHA's involvement in an event: (1) if it exceeds the operational capacity of one UN agency; or (2) if a request has been made by a member state for humanitarian assistance. OCHA does not have an express mandate in coordinating humanitarian response to biological emergencies. It is unlikely that OCHA would become involved unless an event triggered large movements of people either internally or across borders. OCHA field staff are not trained, nor do they maintain emergency plans, to deal with events involving biological weapons.

22. OCHA serves as secretariat for emergency and rapid-response tools such as the UN Disaster Assessment and Coordination system (UNDAC), CMCS and other coordinating activities (see the detailed description in the background paper in preparation for the Sixth Review Conference, BWC/CONF.VI/INF.2)

On-site Operations Coordination Centre (OSOCC)

23. OSOCC is managed by the UNDAC, in coordinating international relief. Following a disaster, a first UNDAC team (sent by OCHA) would establish an OSOCC; its size and function would depend on the nature and characteristics of the disaster. The Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) has established cooperation with OCHA and UNDAC in order to run an OSOCC in case of a chemical emergency.

G. Secretary-General of the United Nations

http://www.un.org/disarmament/WMD/Secretary-General_Mechanism/

24. Since 1982, the Secretary-General has been tasked by the General Assembly with investigating the use or alleged use of biological, chemical or toxin weapons. The mechanism developed for his use in such instances was considered during the 2004 and the 2010 Meeting of Experts and Meeting of States Parties. (See BWC/MSP/2004/MX/INF.3 and BWC/MSP/2010/MX/INF.2 for more information).

H. United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

<http://www.undp.org/>

25. A number of UNDP's activities and programmes relevant to the Convention were considered in the background paper prepared for the Sixth Review Conference (see BWC/CONF.VI/INF.2).

⁶ <http://www.acronym.org.uk/docs/0510/doc06.htm>

I. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

<http://www.unesco.org/ethics>

26. UNESCO has become increasingly active in the area of scientific and technological ethics in recent years and currently lists the topic as one of its five priority areas. It aims to strengthen the ethical link between scientific advancement and the cultural, legal, philosophical and religious context in which it occurs. UNESCO's functions and activities relevant to the Convention were considered in the background paper prepared for the Sixth Review Conference (see BWC/CONF.VI/INF.2) and during the 2008 Meeting of Experts and Meeting of States Parties, dealing with codes of conduct for scientists (see BWC/MSP/2008/MX/INF.2).

World Commission on Ethics of Scientific Knowledge and Technology (COMEST)

27. COMEST is housed in UNESCO, and examines codes of conduct for scientists. It is tasked to advise UNESCO on its programme concerning the ethics of scientific knowledge and technology; to be an intellectual forum for the exchange of ideas and experience; to detect on that basis the early signs of risk situations; to perform the role of adviser to decision-makers in this respect; to promote dialogue between scientific communities, decision-makers and the public at large. The first ordinary session took place in Oslo in 1999, while its Sixth ordinary session (latest ordinary session) took place in Kuala Lumpur in 2009, and the latest extraordinary session took place in France, in 2010.

J. United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)

<http://www.unep.org>

28. UNEP supports a number of international agreements which may be relevant to the BWC, including the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the Basel Convention (see BWC/CONF.VI/INF.2 for more information on the CBD)

Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal

<http://www.basel.int>

29. The fundamental aims of the Basel Convention are the control and reduction of transboundary movements of hazardous and other wastes subject to the Basel Convention, the prevention and minimization of their generation, the environmentally sound management of such wastes and the active promotion of the transfer and use of cleaner technologies, according to the Strategic Plan. The latter was established to cover the period from 2002 to 2010. Its implementation has been extended, by the ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Basel Convention, until a new Strategic Framework is adopted in 2011. It was decided that a new Strategic Framework for the implementation of the Convention was required for a 10-year period so that the Convention could promote the environmentally sound management of waste and play a decisive role in highlighting the links between waste management and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals and human health and livelihood. Pending adoption of the new Strategic Framework, the current Strategic Plan continues to be implemented.

30. Hazardous waste, as defined by the Basel Convention, includes toxic, ecotoxic and infectious substances. Since the last BWC review conference, the focus of the Basel Convention has shifted to strengthening implementation, including by: actively promoting

the use of cleaner technologies and production methods; reducing further the movement of hazardous waste; preventing and monitoring illegal traffic; improving institutional and technical capabilities; further developing regional and sub-regional centres for training and technology transfer; and revising infectious waste guidelines.

31. The Secretariat of the Basel Convention has developed a number of technical guidelines which might be relevant to the BWC. These include: model national legislation; a methodological guide for undertaking national inventories; guidelines on physico-chemical treatment/biological treatment; guidelines on the environmentally sound management of biomedical and healthcare wastes; and a guidance paper on hazardous infectious substances. The Basel Convention recognises the classifications of infectious substances used in the UN Recommendations on the Transport of Dangerous Goods.

K. World Health Organization (WHO)

<http://www.who.int>

32. WHO activities related to the Convention were considered in some depth in the background paper prepared for the Sixth Review Conference (see BWC/CONF.VI/INF.2). Activities related to disease surveillance, detection, prevention, mitigation and response were considered in some depth during the Meeting of Experts and Meeting of States Parties in 2009 (see BWC/MSP/2009/MX/INF.1).

Revised International Health Regulations

<http://www.who.int/csr/ihr/>

33. The World Health Assembly adopted a resolution updating the International Health Regulations (IHR) in May 2005. The preamble to this resolution makes specific reference to the earlier resolution stating that the WHO "focuses on the possible public health consequences of an incident involving biological and chemical agents and radionuclear material, regardless of whether it is characterized as a natural occurrence, accidental release or a deliberate act." The revised IHR entered into force in June 2007 and require countries to report certain disease outbreaks and public health events to WHO. The IHR define the rights and obligations of countries to report public health events, and establish a number of procedures that WHO must follow in its work to uphold global public health security.

34. The IHR were revised to ensure the effective prevention, protection against, control of and public health response to the international spread of disease in ways that are commensurate with and restricted to public health risks, and which avoid unnecessary interference with international traffic and trade. Article 5 of the new IHR requires states, with the assistance of the WHO, to develop, strengthen and maintain a capacity to detect, notify and report relevant disease events. Article 6 requires states to notify WHO not just of outbreaks of specific diseases, but of all events that may constitute "public health emergencies of international concern", with Annex 2 providing a "decision instrument" to be used to determine whether an event may constitute such an emergency. Article 13 has obligations to develop, strengthen and maintain a capacity to promptly and effectively respond to public health risks and public health emergencies of international concern. WHO is mandated to create guidelines to help states do this. It can also provide technical assistance and efficiency assessments upon request.

35. The innovation is the mandatory obligation for all States Parties to develop, strengthen and maintain core public health capacities for surveillance and response, as soon as possible. The IHR set out a two-phase process to assist States Parties to plan for the implementation of their capacity strengthening obligations.

Phase 1, from 15 June 2007 to 15 June 2009

36. By 15 June 2009, States Parties must assess the ability of their existing national public health structures and resources to meet the core surveillance and response capacity requirements described in Annex 1A of the IHR. Following this assessment, States Parties are required to develop national action plans (that can build on both national and relevant regional strategies) to ensure that these core capacities are present and functioning throughout the country. WHO will support these assessments and provide guidance on the content and structure of national plans.

Phase 2, from 15 June 2007 to 15 June 2012

37. By 15 June 2012, the surveillance and response capacities set out in Annex 1A are expected to be implemented by each State Party. States Parties that experience difficulties in implementing their national plans may request an additional 2-year period until 15 June 2014 to meet their Annex 1A obligations. In exceptional circumstances, the WHO Director-General may grant an individual State Party a further two years until 15 June 2016 to meet their obligations.

38. WHO will provide guidance to support States Parties in their efforts to develop and implement these national capacity strengthening plans. Upon request, WHO will assist developing countries in mobilizing financial resources needed to build, strengthen and maintain the capacities provided for in Annex 1A.

Laboratory Twinning Initiative

39. The initiative aims to bring together different organizations from different sectors and permit more resources and expertise to tackle public health problems. The objective is to strengthen laboratory capacity through the establishment of twinning projects between resource limited laboratories and specialized institutions, in collaboration with the WHO Regional Offices.

40. The main activities are strengthening laboratory capacity and sharing knowledge. A call for Expressions of Interest was launched in 2006 and 121 proposals were received from resource-limited laboratories and specialized institutions from all over the world; to date, 13 twinning projects have been selected by the Steering Committee from the WHO and have received start-up grants to launch their implementation and mobilize additional resources as needed.

L. United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI)

<http://www.unicri.it/>

41. UNICRI has been active in the fields of crime prevention and criminal justice, although the Institute has no mandate for operations in the field or direct involvement in response measures. UNICRI contributes via its capacity-building programmes to the preparedness and planning stages of response, providing expertise and training and assisting in the creation and implementation of intervention programmes. The following projects or programmes implemented by UNICRI relate to illicit uses of biological material:

(a) CBRN Knowledge Management Systems (KMS), jointly implemented with the European Commission Joint Research Center (EC JRC) on the prevention of illicit trafficking of CBRN materials.

(b) CBRN Centres of Excellence (CoE), jointly implemented with EC JRC. The aim is to build a network within regions identified by UNICRI and EC JRC, sharing of best practices and use of CBRN, establishing cooperation in designing solutions and identification of resources in each of the relevant region.

(c) The “Synthetic Biology and Nanobiotechnology” project, focusing on present and future (bio-) security implications of advances in synthetic biology and nanobiotechnology and examining dual-use potential, with synthetic biology contributing in the development of new or enhanced biological agents and weapons for criminal or terrorist purposes. The project aims to assess risk of malevolent applications of synthetic- and nanobiotechnology.

42. UNICRI cooperates with many partners, such as the European Commission, the International Atomic Energy Agency, the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, the BWC ISU, INTERPOL, Europol and the World Customs Organisation.

III. Other international intergovernmental organizations

A. International Centre for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology (ICGEB)

<http://www.icgeb.org>

43. The ICGEB was launched in 1983 to aid the development of molecular biology and biotechnology in developing countries. Its activities include:

- (a) conducting research in the life sciences for the benefit of developing countries;
- (b) research capacity-building in developing countries through training, funding and advisory services; and
- (c) promoting biotechnology internationally.

The ICGEB has also done work on scientific ethics and responsibility and has been developing a series of principles to aid the development of codes of conduct for scientists. This work was considered during the Meeting of Experts and Meeting of States Parties in 2005 (see BWC/MSP/2005/MX/INF.1).

B. International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)

<http://www.icrc.org/eng/war-and-law/weapons/chemical-biological-weapons/index.jsp>

44. Many of the relevant activities of the ICRC were reviewed during the Meeting of Experts and Meeting of States Parties in 2010 which focused on ICRC’s role for disease detection, surveillance, prevention, mitigation and response as well as assistance in the case of alleged use of biological weapons (see BWC/MSP/2010/MX/INF.2).

45. The ICRC has conducted activities to raise awareness of the Convention, as well as increase the efficiency of its implementation through its project on “Biotechnology, Weapons and Humanity” and the promotion of the International Humanitarian Law (IHL). It also has an emergency assistance capacity which could become involved in incidents involving the use of biological weapons (see BWC/CONF.VI/INF.2).

Customary international humanitarian law (IHL)

46. Customary international law is made up of rules that come from "a general practice accepted as law" and that exist independent of treaty law. Customary international humanitarian law (IHL) aims to fill gaps left by treaty law in both international and non-international conflicts and so strengthens the protection offered to victims of armed conflicts. In 2009 and 2010, the ICRC held a series of regional conferences on the implementation of the IHL. The goals were (1) to share information among States in the region which is relevant to IHL (2) to encourage States to adopt necessary implementing legislation for 28 IHL treaties to which they are party, including the Biological Weapons Convention; (3) to encourage States which are not party to these treaties to consider joining them; and (4) to update participants on recent developments in international humanitarian law and the work of the ICRC.

C. INTERPOL

<http://www.interpol.int/Public/BioTerrorism/>

Bioterrorism Prevention Programme

47. A dedicated bioterrorism unit was created in June 2004 and has developed a programme to build national and international capacity to counter the threat of bioterrorism. The programme team is small but is supported by a steering committee and a group of expert consultants. The programme was officially launched in 2005 with an International Conference on Bioterrorism⁷; current events fall under Phase Three of the programme (years 2008-2011). The INTERPOL Bioterrorism Programme (IBP) deals primarily with addressing, through national measures and international cooperation, the acquisition and use of biological weapons by non-state actors.

48. The programme's tasks include coordinating, developing and enhancing the knowledge, training and capability of law enforcement to recognize, prevent, contain and investigate bio-terrorist threats. More specifically, the programme includes the following:

- (a) establishing a resource centre at the disposal of worldwide law enforcement;
- (b) developing a Bioterrorism Incident Pre-planning and Response Guide, which contains information on bioterrorism preparedness activities and operational response, in order to assist member countries in addressing the unique aspects of intentional biological threats. Now in its second edition, the Guide covers topics as diverse as legislation and media management, and contains expanded information on how to conduct a forensic investigation in a bioterrorism-related case;
- (c) providing training and awareness programmes in a wide variety of formats, as well as an e-learning module, and a fellowship programme for specialized police officers. This training comprises Train The Trainer Sessions (TTT) and TableTop Exercises (TTEx). A detailed schedule of the training programmes from 2005-2011 can be found on Interpol's website⁸.
- (d) seeking to develop, with law enforcement and relevant agencies, ways of gathering and sharing information concerning the threat of bioterrorism more effectively;

⁷ The 1st Interpol Global Conference on preventing bioterrorism, Lyon, France, 1-2 March 2005. For more information, see <http://www.interpol.int/Public/BioTerrorism/Conferences/Conf01/default.asp>

⁸ <http://www.interpol.int/Public/BioTerrorism/Workshops/Default.asp>

(e) creating a database of biological crimes committed since the beginning of the 20th century (complementary to the UN bio-incidents database);

(f) enhancing co-operation and understanding between international organizations and research centres, including those dealing in genetic engineering.

49. Recent activities in Phase 3 of the Bioterrorism Prevention Programme (September 2008-2011) include:

(a) A new national training manual to guide national trainers attending the 'train the trainer' sessions, and for them to use in national training modules in their countries was developed (and was used in Abu Dhabi, November 2009);

(b) The INTERPOL Bioterrorism Incident Preplanning and Response Guide (the BIRG) has been radically revised and updated;

(c) A fellowship programme was instituted in order to provide the opportunity for police officers who have already technical and investigative expertise in bioterrorism prevention to gain a better understanding of the activities of the Programme. In this way, a framework is provided to enhance their ability to develop, implement and/or integrate a bioterrorism prevention and response strategy in their country of origin.

(d) For INTERPOL members, a biocrimes database has been developed; there is also an e-learning module under construction as part of the INTERPOL Global Learning Centre.

D. Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)

www.oecd.org/sti/biotechnology/brc

50. OECD's activities related to the Convention were considered in some depth in the background paper prepared for the Sixth Review Conference (see BWC/CONF.VI/INF.2).

OECD Best Practice Guidelines for BRCs (Biological Resource Centres)

51. BRCs are considered to be one of the key elements for sustainable international scientific infrastructure, which is necessary to underpin successful delivery of the benefits of biotechnology, whether within the health sector, the industrial sector or other sectors, and in turn ensure that these advances help drive growth. *OECD Best Practice Guidelines for BRCs* were approved by OECD member countries in March 2007. The *Best Practice Guidelines* comprise two main parts. Part I sets out the background, the rationale to the project, the methodology used, and a number of general recommendations (related to the implementation and review of the guidelines). Part II of the report comprises the best practice guidelines themselves, divided into four sets: general quality aspects; biosecurity-related issues; specific guidelines for BRCs holding and supplying micro-organisms; and specific guidelines for BRCs holding and supplying human-derived materials.

Biosecurity

52. Addressing the threat of bioterrorism and the need for security measures in legitimate bioscience facilities that work with, store or transfer dangerous biological material, the OECD Committee on Scientific and Technological Policy (CSTP) agreed *Best Practice Guidelines on Biosecurity* for BRCs in March 2007. The *Guidelines on Biosecurity* contain a framework on Risk Assessment to guide BRCs in classifying pathogens.

Synthetic biology

53. Under the auspices of the OECD, the US National Academies of Science and the UK Royal Society held an international symposium entitled “Opportunities and Challenges in the Emerging Field of Synthetic Biology”, which took place in Washington, DC, in July 2009⁹. This symposium brought together the different communities—scientific, engineering, policy, public, legal—involved in synthetic biology and discussed the opportunities and challenges posed by this emerging field such as: the state of the field and its commercial and scientific potential; the scientific, educational and commercial infrastructure needs; emerging financial and business models for its commercial development; the challenges synthetic biology may raise to legal and regulatory arrangements (e.g. biosafety, biosecurity, intellectual property rights); and the ethical dimensions of this new field. The symposium aimed to contribute to fostering the safe and efficient development of synthetic biology by identifying issues and areas for future study and informing policy-makers.

E. Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW)

<http://www.opcw.org>

54. The OPCW is the implementing organization for the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), which has a number of obvious parallels with the BWC, notably in the areas of universalisation, national implementation, assistance and protection, and promotion of peaceful uses of science and technology. Details of developments in the OPCW since the last review conference of the CWC can be found in the organization’s annual reports. Many of the relevant activities of the OPCW were reviewed during the Meeting of Experts and Meeting of States Parties in 2009 and in 2010, which focused on disease detection, surveillance, prevention, mitigation and response as well as assistance in the case of alleged use of biological weapons (for further information see BWC/MSP/2009/MX/INF.4 and BWC/MSP/2010/MX/INF.2).

55. At the end of the Fifth Review Conference of the BWC in 2002, the CWC counted 147 states parties. By the end of 2005 it had 175 (in contrast to 155 for the BWC). Eleven new states joined the CWC in 2003, nine in 2004 and eight in 2005. This increase is widely attributed to the action plan on universalization adopted at the First Review Conference of the CWC in 2003. In 2011, the CWC has nearly reached universality, with 188 states parties, two signatories and five states that have neither signed nor acceded to the CWC. In contrast, membership of the BWC remains at 164.

F. World Customs Organization (WCO)

<http://www.wcoomd.org>

56. The WCO has carried out a strategic review of its security-related procedures in recent years. The June 2004 WCO Council Sessions established a High Level Strategic Group (HLSG) to develop standards to secure and facilitate global trade.

SAFE Framework of Standards to Secure and Facilitate Global Trade

57. WCO has developed many international standards including the SAFE Framework of Standards to Secure and Facilitate Global Trade (in June 2005), and supported national

⁹ http://www.oecd.org/document/28/0,3746,en_2649_34537_43106012_1_1_1_1,00.html

Customs administrations to implement the Framework through a capacity building programme. This Framework promotes supply chain security through the submission of advance cargo information, the application of risk management, the use of non-intrusive cargo scanning equipment, the development of Authorized Economic Operator (AEO) programmes, and partnerships between Customs administrations and between Customs and their trade stakeholders. The Framework is aimed at protecting world trade from the threats posed by international terrorism, organised crime and ever-increasing customs offences. It also provides a structured platform to facilitate the movement of legitimate goods being traded internationally. The Framework has four core principles: advance electronic information; risk management; outbound inspection; and business partnerships. If requested, the WCO will assist Member States in undertaking diagnostic studies aimed at capacity building. The outcomes of these studies are designed to determine implementation status and provide suggestions for possible sustainable solutions. To further assist its members and others in global trade security, the WCO published a Research Paper – *The Customs Supply Chain Security Paradigm and 9/11: Ten Years On and Beyond* – that can be downloaded from the Research Section of the WCO public website.

G. World Organization for Animal Health (OIE)

<http://www.oie.int/>

58. OIE's activities related to the Convention were considered in some depth in the background paper prepared for the Sixth Review Conference (see BWC/CONF.VI/INF.2). OIE has continuing activities relevant to the Convention:

The OIE Terrestrial Animal Health Code (the Terrestrial Code)

59. The Terrestrial Code sets out standards for the improvement of animal health and welfare and veterinary public health worldwide, including through standards for safe international trade in terrestrial animals (mammals, birds and bees) and their products. The Terrestrial Code provides health measures for early detection, reporting and control agents pathogenic to animals or humans, and measures to prevent their transfer via international trade in animals and animal products, while avoiding unjustified sanitary barriers to trade. The health measures in the *Terrestrial Code* have been formally adopted by the World Assembly of the Delegates of the OIE Members. The latest version is the 20th edition agreed during the 79th General Session in May 2011.

The OIE Aquatic Animal Health Code (the Aquatic Code)

60. The Aquatic Code sets out standards for the improvement of aquatic animal health and welfare and veterinary public health worldwide, including through standards for safe international trade in aquatic animals and their products. The Aquatic Code provides health measures for early detection, reporting and control agents pathogenic to aquatic animals and, in the case of zoonotic diseases, for humans, and measures to prevent their transfer via international trade in aquatic animals and aquatic animal products, while avoiding unjustified sanitary barriers to trade. The health measures in the Aquatic Code have been formally adopted by the World Assembly of the Delegates of the OIE Members. The latest version is the 14th edition agreed during the 79th General Session in May 2011.

61. The tool for the evaluation of performance of veterinary services has also been updated (third edition in 2008). The OIE PVS Tool is designed to assist Veterinary Services to establish their current level of performance, to identify gaps and weaknesses regarding

their ability to comply with OIE international standards, to form a shared vision with stakeholders (including the private sector) and to establish priorities and carry out strategic initiatives¹⁰.

62. Like the WHO, OIE is promoting its Laboratory Twinning Programme, and contributing to building laboratory capacity in all regions of the world, but more specifically creating and supporting scientific expertise in developing countries and in-transition countries. These programmes promote the exchange of knowledge, ideas and experience between two parties, providing them the opportunities to develop scientifically competent laboratory diagnostic methods, to progress towards meeting the international standards of the OIE, and in certain cases to become an OIE reference laboratory.

IV. International commercial and scientific organizations

A. IAP – the Global Network of Science Academies

<http://www.interacademies.net/>

63. The IAP was launched in 1993 to act as a global network of the world's scientific academies to assist its members collaborate to better advise governments and civil society on the scientific aspects of global issues. IAP's statute sets out five specific objectives:

- (a) to provide advice to governments and international organizations on scientific aspects of issues of global importance;
- (b) to promote cooperation, the exchange of information and experiences as well as developing common visions between scientific academies;
- (c) to build capacity of the national scientific academies;
- (d) to assist scientific communities in countries without scientific academies to establish them; and
- (e) to organise conferences, workshops and symposia as well as issuing statements or reports of topics of major international concern.

64. The IAP is currently leading a project, "Education in biosecurity: raising awareness on dual use issues", which is led by IAP member the Polish Academy of Sciences, in collaboration with the US National Academies, The Royal Society UK, the Nigerian Academy of Sciences and the Cuban Academy of Sciences. The major objective of the project is to raise the knowledge of the scientific community on biosecurity and risks connected with the misuse of developments in science, especially in the life sciences¹¹.

B. International Air Transport Association (IATA)

http://www.iata.org/whatwedo/security_issues/index.htm

65. IATA is a global trade organization comprising around 260 airlines. Its main security interest is in preventing attacks on aircraft. It is, however, also involved in developing best practices and model regulations on biosafety and biosecurity, as well as on the transport of dangerous goods¹². IATA acts as the Centre of Expertise for the transport of

¹⁰ http://web.oie.int/download/SC/EN_OIE%20PVS%20Tool_2008.pdf

¹¹ <http://www.interacademies.net/Activities/Projects/15186.aspx>

¹² http://www.iata.org/whatwedo/cargo/dangerous_goods/Pages/index.aspx

dangerous goods by air. It sets Dangerous Goods Regulations for its member airlines. It also offers standards for documentation, handling and training, and actively promotes the adoption and use of those standards by the air cargo industry. IATA has a dedicated Training and Development institute which offers courses and diplomas in a number of languages.

66. The Dangerous Goods Regulations are set by IATA's Dangerous Goods Board, which comprises 12 experts elected from member airlines. The regulations use the classification system of the UN Recommendations on the Transport of Dangerous goods (see the section on ECOSOC). The most recent version is the 53rd edition of 2012, which is already available electronically on IATA's website¹³.

C. International Federation of Biosafety Associations (IFBA)

<http://www.internationalbiosafety.org>

67. The International Biosafety Working Group (IBWG) was established in 2001 in response to the identification of a need for an international forum to discuss a wide range of important biosafety issues. In 2009, the Secretariat of the International Biosafety Working Group (IBWG) has changed its name to the International Federation of Biosafety Associations (IFBA). The Federation provides a framework for biosafety professionals of different nations to coordinate and develop a global biosafety agenda aimed at international harmonization, sharing of information, development of common standards and collaboration in all aspects of biological safety. Its mission is to support and promote biosafety on a national and international level through collaboration among national and regional biosafety organizations worldwide. The strategic goals are:

- (a) Creation, coordination and empowerment of an international biosafety advisory body;
- (b) Establishment, documentation, maintenance, and communication of standardized biosafety protocols and procedures;
- (c) Establishment of linkages with key partners;
- (d) Development of an inventory of biosafety laboratory and field best practices and sharing expertise in-between national biosafety organizations;
- (e) Supporting applied biosafety science and research.

68. The Federation holds regular meetings and contacts (email, conference calls, etc) to discuss strategic goals, objectives, and current issues. IFBA has developed and published an *International Compendium of Regulations, Guidelines and Information Sources* relevant to the field of biosafety. An electronic web-based version will also be produced to make the compendium more accessible to biosafety professionals worldwide, and to keep up with the continuous evolution of the field of biological safety. The Federation's ongoing effort to expand professional and public awareness of biological safety through effective communication, has established IFBA as a forum for international associations to interact and exchange information among relevant actors.

69. Most recently, in February 2011, the IFBA organized an international conference in Bangkok on Global Biosafety and Biosecurity, where participants discussed how best to identify urgent gaps and priorities and adopted a *Declaration on Advancing Global Biosafety and Biosecurity*. The Conference recommended action to advance biosafety and

¹³ <http://www.iata.org/ps/publications/dgr/Pages/software.aspx>

biosecurity with particular attention to building sustainable capacity where it is most needed.
