

2009 Meeting

Geneva, 7-11 December 2009

Item 6 of the provisional agenda

Consideration of, with a view to enhancing international cooperation, assistance and exchange in biological sciences and technology for peaceful purposes, promoting capacity building in the fields of disease surveillance, detection, diagnosis, and containment of infectious diseases

**TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE, EXCHANGE AND COOPERATION
UNDERTAKEN BY THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN UNDER
ARTICLE X OF THE BWC**

Submitted by the Islamic Republic of Iran

I. Overview

1. The Islamic Republic of Iran believes that facilitation of and participation in the fullest possible exchanges and enhanced international cooperation in the field of peaceful biological activities, aimed at facilitating economic and social development, is a fundamental element in strengthening the implementation of the Convention. Likewise, lack of proper implementation of Article X prevents less developed and developing States Parties from fulfilling their plans to control, mitigate, eliminate and eradicate infectious diseases, and the imposition of restrictions on dual use application of know-how, material and equipment necessary for the scientific research and peaceful biological activities, inter alia, production of diagnostic and medical goods, vaccines and agricultural biologic pesticides is a blatant discriminatory action in direct violation of the Article X.
2. Pursuant to Paragraph 54 of the final document of the Sixth 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, Islamic Republic of Iran's participation and facilitation on matters relevant to Article X of the Biological Weapons Convention consists of a wide range of issues and in various regions and countries.
3. This paper outlines examples of cooperative activities already done and/or are currently undertaken relevant to Article X of the BWC.

II. Activities

4. Islamic Republic of Iran provides significant training courses, workshops, and Congresses both at national and international levels. During the past few years, there were numerous workshops and seminars carried out independently or in coordination with World Health Organization (WHO), European Union (EU), Islamic Development Bank (IDB) and World Organization of Animal Health (OIE), as well as through bilateral cooperation, among them are including:

- (i) Workshop on Human Genetic Diversity in Islamic Countries (2002);
- (ii) Pasteur Institute of Iran (PII) is the host of Eastern Mediterranean Health Genomics & Biotechnology Network (EMGEN-<http://www.EMGEN.net>) since 2004;
- (iii) Int'l Congress of Bioethics (2005);
- (iv) Int'l Workshop on Bio-safety and Risk Assessment for the Environmental Release of Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs 2005);
- (v) Workshop on Mutation Screening, Micro-Satellite Analysis in Cancer (2005);
- (vi) International Workshop on "Classical Real-time PCR for Diagnosis of Bacterial Diseases" (2006);
- (vii) "Process Validation", "Cleaning Validation", "Trans-boundary Validation", "Quality Control Tests and Method Validation" Workshops (97 enrolments from Islamic and Regional Countries between 2006 and 2008);
- (viii) Trans-boundary Diseases Workshop (15 enrolments from Regional Countries in 2007);
- (ix) Workshop on "Epidemiology of Bacterial Diseases" (2007);
- (x) Workshop on New Trends in Enzyme Science and Nano- biotechnology (2007);
- (xi) International Workshop on "Genotyping of Plasmodium Vivax for Regional Vaccine Development" (2007);
- (xii) Annual Meeting of the IDB Self-Reliance in Vaccine Production (SRVP) Program (Vaccine Manufacturers in Islamic Countries in 2008);
- (xiii) Workshop on "New Identification method for leishmania" (85 Participants in 2008);
- (xiv) Workshop on "Population Genetics in Infectious Diseases" (2008);
- (xv) "International Workshop on Leishmaniasis" (2008);

- (xvi) Regional Congress on Parasitology and Parasitic Diseases (5 Int'l participants in 2008);
- (xvii) Int'l Workshop on Application of Advanced Molecular Methods for Diagnosis of Human Genetic Diseases (4 Workshops between 2002 and 2008);
- (xviii) Int'l Workshop/short course in Genomic Engineering and Nano-biotechnology (2008);
- (xix) Workshop on Quality Assurance on Biological Products (60 participants in 2008);
- (xx) CGMP for Drugs & Biological Products and its Practical Implementation Workshop (45 participants in 2008);
- (xxi) Int'l Workshop on The Analysis of Agricultural Products for the Presence of Genetically Modified Organisms (2009);
- (xxii) Laboratory Bio-safety and Bio-security in Vaccine Facilities Workshop (30 participants in 2009);
- (xxiii) The Second Conference of Health Ministers of the Organization of the Islamic Conference Countries (OIC)(2009);

5. Iran has also been providing significant training courses and research opportunities for various students and researchers in the field of biology, among them are including:

- (i) A two-year period Post-doctoral Research of a Scientist from Indian Subcontinent (2003-2005);
- (ii) Training Course on Vaccine Production for experts from Africa and Indian Subcontinent (1999 and 2005);
- (iii) Research Courses for researchers and PhD students from Persian Gulf region (6 students, 2005-2008);
- (iv) Research Courses for researchers and PhD students from Africa (1 student, 2006);
- (v) Research Courses for researchers and PhD students from South East Asia (1 student, 2007);
- (vi) PhD Research collaboration with a University in Persian Gulf region (2008);
- (vii) Training Course on Field Epidemiology Co-hosted by Islamic Republic of Iran and WHO and European CDC (2009); The Follow-up Course would be held by the Islamic Republic of Iran for the Regional Countries in 2010.

6. Islamic Republic of Iran also believes that use of the existing institutional means within the United Nations system and full utilization of the possibilities provided by the specialized agencies and other international organizations, though not sufficiently, pave the way for better

implementation of the Convention. In this vein, the Islamic Republic of Iran has endeavored to strengthen its participation and cooperation in the regional and Int'l networks and organizations, including:

- (i) Cooperation between Iran's National Institute of Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology (NIGEB) and Int'l Center for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology (ICGEB) since 2001;
- (ii) Cooperation between Iran's National Institute of Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology (NIGEB) and Center for Excellence of Developing Countries Academy of Science (TWAS) since 2002;
- (iii) Cooperation between Iran's National Institute of Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology (NIGEB) - as a Founding Member of – and Federation of Asian Biotech Associations (FABA) since 2004;
- (iv) Cooperation between RVSRI and the Countries in the region and beyond to cover the shortages of its veterinary biological requirements since 2005;
- (v) Cooperation between RVSRI and the Countries in the region and beyond on promoting scientific and research cooperation since 2006;
- (vi) Cooperation between RVSRI and the Countries in the region and beyond on establishing cooperation in areas of research, biological production and academics since 2006;
- (vii) Cooperation between RVSRI and the Countries in the region and beyond on scientific research collaboration and intellectual exchange since 2006;
- (viii) Cooperation between RVSRI and the Countries in the region and beyond on elaborating potential areas of general collaboration including business opportunities since 2008;
- (ix) And various cooperation accords signed with the different Institutes and Research Centers in Asia and Europe since 2001.

III. Conclusion

7. Concluding, as Article X of BTWC states that the implementation of the BTWC should avoid hampering the development of its States Parties or international cooperation in the field of peaceful biological activities and also as previous Review Conferences of the Convention have outlined a number of principles, objectives and measures to enhance implementation of Article X, the Islamic Republic of Iran believes that the States Parties to the Convention should reaffirm their commitment to the full and comprehensive implementation of Article X, especially in the light of recent scientific and technological developments in the field of biotechnology, which increase the potential for cooperation amongst States Parties. Therefore, the Islamic Republic of Iran urges States Parties, particularly those most advanced in this field, to adopt positive steps

aimed at promoting international cooperation and transfer of technology, on an equal and non-discriminatory basis, in particular with countries less advanced in this field, thus promoting the basic objectives of this Convention.
