
**Meeting 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**

31 August 2021

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2020 Meeting

Geneva, 22-25 November 2021

**Meeting of Experts on Cooperation and Assistance,
with a Particular Focus on Strengthening Cooperation
and Assistance under Article X**

Geneva, 30-31 August 2021

Item 11 of the Agenda

**Adoption of the factual report reflecting the deliberations of the meeting,
including possible outcomes**

**Report of the 2020 Meeting of Experts on cooperation and
assistance, with a particular focus on strengthening
cooperation and assistance under Article X***

I. Introduction

1. At the Eighth 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 ([BWC/CONF.VIII/4](#)), States Parties decided to hold annual meetings and that the first such meeting, in December 2017, would seek to make progress on issues of substance and process for the period before the next Review Conference, with a view to reaching consensus on an intersessional process.

2. At the Meeting of States Parties in December 2017, States Parties reached consensus on the following:

“(a) Reaffirming previous intersessional programmes from 2003-2015 and retaining the previous structures: annual Meetings of States Parties preceded by annual Meetings of Experts.

(b) The purpose of the intersessional programme is to discuss, and promote common understanding and effective action on those issues identified for inclusion in the intersessional programme.

(c) Recognizing the need to balance an ambition to improve the intersessional programme within the constraints – both financial and human resources – facing States Parties, twelve days are allocated to the intersessional programme each year from 2018- 2020. The work in the intersessional period will be guided by the aim of strengthening the implementation of all articles of the Convention in order to better respond to current challenges. The Meetings of Experts for eight days will be held back to back and at least three months before the annual Meetings of States Parties of four days each. Maximum use would be made of the Sponsorship Programme

* Any entry listed in this document does not imply the expression of any opinion regarding, and is without prejudice to, the legal status of any country or territory or of its authorities.

funded by voluntary contributions in order to facilitate participation of developing States Parties in the meetings of the intersessional programme.

(d) The meetings of the MSP will be chaired by a representative of the EEG in 2018, a representative of the Western Group in 2019 and a representative of the Group of Non-Aligned Movement and Other States in 2020. The annual Chair will be supported by two annual vice-chairs, one from each of the other two regional groups. In addition to the reports of the Meetings of Experts, the Meetings of States Parties will consider the annual reports of the ISU and progress on universality. The Meetings of Experts will be chaired in 2018 by [the Group of the Non-Aligned Movement and Other States Parties to the BWC] (MX 1 and MX 2) and the Western Group (MX 3 and MX4), in 2019 by EEG (MX1 and MX 2) and NAM (MX 3 and MX 4), and in 2020 by Western Group (MX 1 and MX 2) and by EEG (MX 3 and MX 4); MX 5 will be chaired by the regional group chairing the MSP.

	<i>MSP</i>	<i>MX 1</i>	<i>MX 2</i>	<i>MX 3</i>	<i>MX 4</i>	<i>MX 5</i>
2018	EEG	NAM	NAM	WG	WG	EEG
2019	WG	EEG	EEG	NAM	NAM	WG
2020	NAM	WG	WG	EEG	EEG	NAM

All meetings will be subject mutatis mutandis to the rules of procedure of the Eighth Review Conference.

(e) The Meetings of Experts would be open-ended and will consider the following topics:

MX.1 (2 days): Cooperation and assistance, with a particular focus on strengthening cooperation and assistance under Article X:

- Consideration of the reports of the States Parties on their full and comprehensive implementation of all provisions of Article X;
- Review of the report by the ISU on the operation of the assistance and cooperation database established by the Seventh Review Conference and renewed by the Eighth Review Conference and consideration of its further operationalization, including measures to further strengthen the operation of the database, including in the light of BWC/MSP/2017/4;
- Identification of 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 ways and means of overcoming these;
- Development of guidelines and procedures for mobilizing resources, including financial resources on a voluntary basis to address gaps and needs;
- Facilitation of education, training, exchange and twinning programs and other means of developing human resources in biological sciences and technology related to implementation of the Convention, particularly in developing countries;
- Promotion of capacity building, through international cooperation, in biosafety and biosecurity and for detecting, reporting and responding to outbreaks of infectious disease or biological weapons attacks, including in the areas of preparedness, response, and crisis management and mitigation;
- Collaboration with international organizations and networks related to combating infectious diseases at all levels, as well as regional and sub-regional cooperation to promote implementation of all articles of the Convention.

[...]

(f) Each Meeting of Experts will prepare for the consideration of the annual Meeting of States Parties a factual report reflecting its deliberations, including possible outcomes. All meetings, both of Experts and of States Parties will reach any conclusions or results by consensus. The Meeting of States Parties will be responsible for managing the intersessional programme, including taking necessary measures with respect to budgetary and financial matters by consensus with a view to ensuring the proper implementation of the intersessional programme. The Ninth Review Conference will consider the work and outcomes it receives from the Meetings of States Parties and the Meetings of Experts and decide by consensus on any inputs from the intersessional programme and on any further action.”

3. By resolution 75/88, adopted without a vote on 7 December 2020, the General Assembly, *inter alia*, requested the Secretary-General to continue to render the necessary assistance to the depositary Governments of the Convention and to continue to provide such services as may be required for the conduct and the implementation of the decisions and recommendations of the review conferences.

II. Organization of the Meeting of Experts

4. In accordance with the decisions of the Eighth Review Conference, the 2017 Meeting of States Parties and the 2019 Meeting of States Parties, the Meeting of Experts was originally scheduled to take place from 25 to 26 August 2020. However, the Meeting was postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic and States Parties agreed by written silence procedure that it would instead be convened at the Palais des Nations in Geneva from 30 to 31 August 2021.¹ The Meeting of Experts was chaired by Mr. Kimmo Laukkanen, Deputy Permanent Representative of Finland to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva.

5. On 30 August 2021, the Meeting of Experts adopted its agenda ([BWC/MSP/2020/MX.1/1](#)) as proposed by the Chair.

6. Following a suggestion by the Chair, the Meeting of Experts adopted as its rules of procedure, *mutatis mutandis*, the rules of procedure of the Eighth Review Conference, as contained in document [BWC/CONF.VIII/2](#).

7. Mr. Daniel Feakes, Chief, Implementation Support Unit, Office for Disarmament Affairs, Geneva, served as Secretary of the Meeting of Experts. Mr. Hermann Lampalzer, Political Affairs Officer, Implementation Support Unit, served as Deputy Secretary and Ms. Ngoc Phuong van der Blij, Political Affairs Officer, also served in the secretariat.

III. Participation at the Meeting of Experts

8. Eighty-nine delegations participated in the Meeting of Experts as follows: Algeria; Argentina; Australia; Austria; Azerbaijan; Barbados; Belarus; Belgium; Botswana; Brazil; Brunei Darussalam; Bulgaria; Canada; Chile; China; Colombia; Costa Rica; Cuba; Czech Republic; Democratic Republic of Congo; Dominican Republic; Ecuador; Estonia; Finland; France; Georgia; Germany; Ghana; Guyana; Holy See; Hungary; India; Indonesia; Iran (Islamic Republic of); Iraq; Ireland; Italy; Japan; Kazakhstan; Kenya; Kuwait; Lao People's Democratic Republic; Lebanon; Libya; Lithuania; Madagascar; Malaysia; Mauritius; Mexico; Montenegro; Myanmar; Nepal; Netherlands; Nigeria; North Macedonia; Norway; Pakistan; Panama; Peru; Philippines; Poland; Portugal; Qatar; Republic of Korea; Romania; Russian Federation; Saudi Arabia; Senegal; Serbia; Slovakia; Slovenia; South Africa; Spain; Sri Lanka; Sudan; Sweden; Switzerland; Thailand; Togo; Turkey; Ukraine; United

¹ See the letters from the Chairperson of the Meeting of States Parties dated 28 July 2020, 23 November 2020 and 9 February 2021.

Arab Emirates; United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland; United States of America; Uruguay; Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of); Yemen; Zambia; and Zimbabwe.

9. In addition, one State that had signed the Convention but had not yet ratified it participated in the Meeting of Experts without taking part in the making of decisions, as provided for in rule 44, paragraph 1 of the rules of procedure: Egypt.

10. Two States, Chad and Israel, neither parties nor signatories to the Convention, participated in the Meeting of Experts as observers, in accordance with rule 44, paragraph 2.

11. The United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research, the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute, the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs and the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism attended the Meeting of Experts in accordance with rule 44, paragraph 3.

12. The Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention, the Caribbean Public Health Agency, the European Union, the International Committee of the Red Cross, the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, the Organization of American States and the World Health Organization were granted observer status to participate in the Meeting of Experts in accordance with rule 44, paragraph 4.

13. In addition, at the invitation of the Chair, in recognition of the special nature of the topics under consideration at this meeting and without creating a precedent, an independent expert participated in informal exchanges in the open sessions as a Guest of the Meeting of Experts: Ms. Mayra Ameneiros, alumna of the 2021 “Youth for Biosecurity” workshop.

14. Eleven non-governmental organizations and research institutes attended the Meeting of Experts under rule 44, paragraph 5.

15. A list of all participants in the Meeting of Experts is contained in document [BWC/MSP/2020/MX.1/INF.1](#).

IV. Work of the Meeting of Experts

16. In accordance with the provisional agenda ([BWC/MSP/2020/MX.1/1](#)) and an annotated programme of work prepared by the Chair, the Meeting of Experts had substantive discussions on the issues allocated by the 2017 Meeting of States Parties.

17. Under agenda item 4 (“Consideration of the reports of the States Parties on their full and comprehensive implementation of all provisions of Article X”), the Implementation Support Unit provided a brief update and the United States of America introduced a working paper ([BWC/MSP/2020/MX.1/WP.1](#)). There then followed an interactive discussion on the agenda item in which the following States Parties participated: Canada; Georgia; Germany; India; Iran (Islamic Republic of); Kenya; Japan; Mexico; Qatar; Republic of Korea; and Russian Federation. The European Union made a statement. Various views were expressed during the consideration of this agenda item.

18. Under agenda item 5 (“Review of the report by the ISU on the operation of the assistance and cooperation database established by the Seventh Review Conference and renewed by the Eighth Review Conference and consideration of its further operationalization, including measures to further strengthen the operation of the database, including in the light of BWC/MSP/2017/4”), the Implementation Support Unit gave a brief update on the Cooperation and Assistance database. There then followed an interactive discussion on the agenda item in which the following States Parties participated: Brazil; China; France; India; Iran (Islamic Republic of); Philippines; Switzerland; United States of America; and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of). The European Union made a statement. Various views were expressed during the consideration of this agenda item.

19. Under agenda item 6 (“Identification of 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 ways and means of overcoming these”), the United Kingdom of Great Britain

and Northern Ireland, the Islamic Republic of Iran and Cuba introduced working papers ([BWC/MSP/2020/MX.1/WP.2](#), [BWC/MSP/2020/MX.1/WP.6](#) and [BWC/MSP/2020/MX.1/WP.7](#) respectively). There then followed an interactive discussion on the agenda item in which the following States Parties participated: China; Cuba; Germany; Iran (Islamic Republic of); Pakistan; Philippines; United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland; United States of America; and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of). Various views were expressed during the consideration of this agenda item.

20. Under agenda item 7 (“Development of guidelines and procedures for mobilizing resources, including financial resources on a voluntary basis to address gaps and needs”), the Implementation Support Unit provided a brief update on the BWC Sponsorship Programme and the United States of America and Germany introduced working papers ([BWC/MSP/2020/MX.1/WP.4](#) and [BWC/MSP/2020/MX.1/WP.5](#) respectively). There then followed an interactive discussion on the agenda item in which the following States Parties participated: Brazil; India; Kenya, Philippines; and United Arab Emirates. Various views were expressed during the consideration of this agenda item.

21. Under agenda item 8 (“Facilitation of education, training, exchange and twinning programmes and other means of developing human resources in biological sciences and technology related to implementation of the Convention, particularly in developing countries”), Ms. Mayra Ameneiros, alumna of the 2021 “Youth for Biosecurity” workshop made a presentation as a Guest of the Meeting. There then followed an interactive discussion on the agenda item in which the following States Parties participated: Brazil; Italy; Japan; Libya; Mexico; Norway; Republic of Korea; Switzerland; and United States of America. Various views were expressed during the consideration of this agenda item.

22. Under agenda item 9 (“Promotion of capacity building, through international cooperation, in biosafety and biosecurity and for detecting, reporting and responding to outbreaks of infectious disease or biological weapons attacks, including in the areas of preparedness, response, and crisis management and mitigation”), France introduced a working paper ([BWC/MSP/2020/MX.1/WP.3](#)). There then followed an interactive discussion on the agenda item in which the following States Parties participated: [...]. Various views were expressed during the consideration of this agenda item.

23. Under agenda item 10 (“Collaboration with international organizations and networks related to combating infectious diseases at all levels, as well as regional and sub-regional cooperation to promote implementation of all articles of the Convention”), the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention and the Caribbean Public Health Agency gave technical presentations. There then followed an interactive discussion on the agenda item in which the following States Parties participated: [...]. Various views were expressed during the consideration of this agenda item.

24. In the course of its work, the Meeting of Experts was able to draw on a number of working papers submitted by States Parties, as well as on statements and presentations made by States Parties, international organizations and the Guest of the Meeting, which were circulated in the Meeting.

25. The Chair, under his own responsibility and initiative, has prepared a paper listing considerations, lessons, perspectives, recommendations, conclusions and proposals drawn from the presentations, statements, working papers and interventions on the agenda items under discussion at the Meeting. The Meeting of Experts noted that this paper had not been agreed and had no status. It was the Chair’s view that the paper could assist delegations in their preparations for the Meeting of States Parties in November 2020 and also in their consideration of how best to “discuss, and promote common understanding and effective action on” the topics in accordance with the consensus reached at the 2017 Meeting of States Parties. The paper prepared by the Chair, in consultation with States Parties, is attached as Annex I to this report.

V. Documentation

26. A list of official documents of the Meeting of Experts, including the working papers submitted by States Parties, is contained in Annex II to this report. All documents on this list are available on the UNODA Meetings Place website at <https://meetings.unoda.org/meeting/bwc-mx-2020/> and through the United Nations Official Document System (ODS), at <http://documents.un.org>.

VI. Conclusion of the Meeting of Experts

27. At its closing meeting on 31 August 2021, the Meeting of Experts adopted its report by consensus, as orally amended, as contained in document BWC/MSP/2020/MX.1/CRP.1, to be issued as document BWC/MSP/2020/MX.1/2.

Annex I

Summary report

Submitted by the Chairperson of the 2020 Meeting of Experts on Cooperation and Assistance, with a Particular Focus on Strengthening Cooperation and Assistance under Article X

[...]

Annex II

List of documents

<i>Symbol</i>	Title
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