Background information document of Finland on the implementation of Article X

A. General Remarks
Finland provides the following information with regard request for background information on the implementation of Article X.

B. Specific Endeavours Relevant to Article X

At the BWC 2020 Meeting of Experts Finland chaired the working group on the Cooperation and Assistance (MX1).

Global Health Security Agenda

Finland remains an active member of the Global Health Security Agenda (GHSA). Finland is a member of the GHSA Steering Group and continues its active engagement in the country evaluations. The second five-year period of the GHSA programme will run until the end of 2023. Through partnership of more than 50 nations, international organizations, and non-governmental stakeholders, GHSA is to prevent, detect and respond to infectious diseases by facilitating collaborative, capacity-building efforts to achieve specific and measurable targets around biological threats, while accelerating achievement of the core capacities required by the relevant global health security frameworks.

During its year as a GHSA chair in 2015 Finland initiated the GHSA country evaluation processes, which seeks to measure a state’s capacity to respond to a potential health security threat. The GHSA tool was adopted as the base of WHO's Joint External Evaluation-tool, adopted in 2016. Currently, 116 JEEs have been conducted and these have been followed up by more than 70 national actions plans for health security. Finland’s JEE was conducted in 2017. Finland is also, together with Australia, leading an Alliance of interested countries and organizations in support of the external evaluations in order to better link assessments with national planning and development financing.

During the Covid-19 pandemic, a number of processes have been established at WHO to review the lessons and prepare for future biological health threats. Finland participates in the negotiations of a new agreement on pandemic prevention and preparedness and the possible amendments to the International Health Regulations (2005).

Participation in Global Partnership

Finland is actively involved in the international cooperation initiative Global Partnership, which functions as part of G7-cooperation. The Global Partnership addresses nonproliferation, disarmament, counterterrorism, and nuclear safety issues through cooperative projects.

Strengthening Biosafety and Biosecurity in Tanzania

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland has funded a project on biosafety and biosecurity in Tanzania since 2014. The project aims at preventing unintentional and intentional spread of infectious diseases by
strengthening the know-how of diagnosing. The existence and outbreaks of diseases that are dangerous to life place great strain to the national healthcare systems. Efforts to identify microbes that cause infectious diseases are vital to any nation's public health system. The Finnish Centre for Biothreat Preparedness (BUOS)/Center for Military Medicine (SOTLK) administers and implements the biosafety and biosecurity project, together with the Tanzanian counterpart (Ministry of Lifestock and Fisheries Development). Local expertise, detection abilities and developing of biosecurity know-how reduces potential bio threat, thus contributing towards building global security.