
2018 Meeting

Geneva, 4-7 December 2018

Item 11 of the agenda

Adoption of the report of the meeting

Report of the 2018 Meeting of States Parties¹ *

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 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.

¹ 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.

* This advance version of the report of the 2018 Meeting of States Parties has been issued in order to assist participants before the formal report is issued in all official languages. Annex II listing the official documentation of the Meeting will be included in the final version. This advance version was updated on 13 December 2018 to include in paragraph 8 an additional State Party (Bahrain) which attended 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.

[...]

(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 72/71, adopted without a vote on 4 December 2017, 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 implementation of the decisions and recommendations of the review conferences.

II. Organization of the Meeting of States Parties

4. In accordance with the decisions of the Eighth Review Conference and the 2017 Meeting of States Parties, the 2018 Meeting of States Parties was convened at the Palais des Nations in Geneva from 4 to 7 December 2018, chaired by Mr. Ljupčo Jivan Gjorgjinski of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. States Parties decided to proceed, on an exceptional basis without Vice-Chairs for 2018. This shall not in any way set a precedent.

5. At its first meeting, on 4 December 2018, the Meeting of States Parties adopted its agenda (BWC/MSP/2018/1), as orally amended and contained in Annex I to this report, and its revised programme of work (BWC/MSP/2018/2/Rev.1) as proposed by the Chairman. The Chairman drew the attention of delegations to two reports: a report on universalization activities prepared by the Chairman (BWC/MSP/2018/3/Rev.1) and the report of the Implementation Support Unit (BWC/MSP/2018/4 and Amend.1).

6. At the same meeting, following a suggestion by the Chair, the Meeting of States Parties 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, served as Secretary of the Meeting of States Parties. Mr. Hermann Lampalzer, Political Affairs Officer, Implementation Support Unit, served as Deputy Secretary and Ms. Ngoc Phuong van der Blij, Political Affairs Officer, Implementation Support Unit, also served in the secretariat.

III. Participation at the Meeting of States Parties

8. 116 delegations participated in the Meeting of States Parties as follows: Albania; Algeria; Angola; Argentina; Armenia; Australia; Austria; Azerbaijan; Bahrain; Barbados; Belarus; Belgium; Bolivia (Plurinational State of); Bosnia and Herzegovina; Brazil; Bulgaria;

Cameroon; Canada; Central African Republic; Chile; China; Colombia; Costa Rica; Côte d'Ivoire; Croatia; Cuba; Cyprus; Czech Republic; Dominican Republic; Ecuador; El Salvador; Estonia; Fiji; Finland; France; Georgia; Germany; Ghana; Greece; Guatemala; Holy See; Hungary; India; Indonesia; Iran (Islamic Republic of); Iraq; Ireland; Italy; Jamaica; Japan; Jordan; Kazakhstan; Kenya; Kuwait; Kyrgyzstan; Lao People's Democratic Republic; Latvia; Lebanon; Lithuania; Luxembourg; Malaysia; Mauritius; Mexico; Mongolia; Montenegro; Morocco; Myanmar; Nepal; Netherlands;; Niger; Nigeria; Norway; Oman; Pakistan; Panama; Paraguay; Peru; Philippines; Poland; Portugal; Qatar; Republic of Korea; Republic of Moldova; Romania; Russian Federation; San Marino; Saudi Arabia; Senegal; Serbia; Singapore; Slovak Republic; Slovenia; South Africa; Spain; Sri Lanka; State of Palestine; Sudan; Sweden; Switzerland; Thailand; The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia; Togo; Trinidad and Tobago; Tunisia; Turkey; Uganda; Ukraine; United Arab Emirates; United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland; United States of America; Uruguay; Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of); Viet Nam; Yemen; Zambia; and Zimbabwe.

9. In addition, four States that had signed the Convention but had not yet ratified it participated in the Meeting of States Parties without taking part in the making of decisions, as provided for in rule 44, paragraph 1 of the rules of procedure: Egypt; Haiti; Syrian Arab Republic; and the United Republic of Tanzania.

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

11. The United Nations, including the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI), the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT) and the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA), attended the Meeting of States Parties in accordance with rule 44, paragraph 3.

12. The Caribbean Community Secretariat (CARICOM), European Union, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), ICGEB (International Centre for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology), International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL), Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) and World Health Organization (WHO) were granted observer status to participate in the Meeting of States Parties in accordance with rule 44, paragraph 4.

13. Twenty-three non-governmental organizations and research institutes attended the Meeting of States Parties under rule 44, paragraph 5.

14. A list of all participants in the Meeting of States Parties is contained in document BWC/MSP/2018/INF.1.

IV. Work of the Meeting of States Parties

15. In accordance with the revised programme of work (BWC/MSP/2018/2/Rev.1), the Meeting of States Parties held a general debate in which the following 62 States Parties made statements: Albania, Algeria, Angola, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belgium, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Central African Republic, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador, Finland, France, Germany, Guatemala, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Latvia, Malaysia, Mexico, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Nepal, Netherlands, Nigeria, Norway, Pakistan, Panama, Peru, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Russian Federation (on behalf of Armenia, Belarus, Brazil, China, Cuba, India, Iraq, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Serbia, Tajikistan, and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)), South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Tunisia (on behalf of the Arab Group), Turkey, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) (on behalf of the Group of Non-Aligned and Other States Parties to the BWC). In addition, the following three signatory States made statements: Egypt, Haiti, and the

United Republic of Tanzania. Furthermore, the Meeting also heard a statement by South Sudan as an Observer State. Two observer organizations, the European Union and Interpol, also made statements. Following the general debate, during an informal session, the Meeting heard a joint statement endorsed by fifteen non-governmental organizations and twenty-seven individuals.

16. Between 4 and 7 December 2018, the Meeting of States Parties held sessions devoted to each of the items on its agenda. The opening formalities, agenda items 1 to 5, were considered on 4 and 5 December. A message from the United Nations High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Ms. Izumi Nakamitsu, was delivered by Ms. Anja Kaspersen, Director of the Geneva Branch of the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs. The General Debate (agenda item 6) took place on 4 and 5 December. Agenda item 7 was considered on 5 and 7 December, as was agenda item 8. On 6 December, the discussions continued in an informal manner reflecting the financial environment. On 7 December, a session was devoted to progress with universalization of the Convention (agenda item 9) and the annual report of the Implementation Support Unit (agenda item 10).

17. In the course of its work, the Meeting of States Parties 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 Implementation Support Unit, which were circulated in the Meeting.

18. The Meeting of States Parties reviewed progress towards obtaining universality for the Convention and considered the report from the Chairman on universalization activities (BWC/MSP/2018/3/Rev.1), as well as reports from States Parties on their activities to promote universalization. The Meeting welcomed the increase in the number of ratifications of and accessions to the Convention. The States Parties reaffirmed the particular importance of the universality of the Convention and in this regard urged signatory States to ratify the Convention without delay and also urged those States that have not signed the Convention to accede without delay. In this context, the Meeting took note of the reports from States Parties, and called on all States Parties to continue to promote universalization, and to support the universalization activities of the Chairman with support from the Implementation Support Unit, in accordance with the decisions of the Seventh and Eighth Review Conferences.

19. The Meeting of States Parties considered the report of the Implementation Support Unit (BWC/MSP/2018/4 and Amend.1). The Meeting took note of the report, and expressed its satisfaction with the work of the Unit. The Meeting called on States Parties to continue working closely with the Implementation Support Unit in fulfilling its mandate, in accordance with the decision of the Eighth Review Conference.

V. Management of the intersessional programme: Budgetary and financial matters

20. The Meeting reviewed the Information Paper prepared by the Chairman, Mr. Ljupčo Jivan Gjorgjinski (BWC/MSP/2018/5), in accordance with paragraph 20 of BWC/MSP/2017/6 which examined the financial situation and identified possible measures to address predictability and sustainability, with a view to ensuring the proper implementation of the intersessional programme. Mr. Clemens Adams, Director of Administration, United Nations Office at Geneva, presented the status of contributions and financial outlook of the Convention on 5 December 2018. Mr. Adams and Ms. Anja Kaspersen, Director of the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs, Geneva Branch, responded to questions from delegations. States Parties recognized that the Convention's financial difficulties stem from three principal sources: non-payment of contributions by some States Parties, delays in receipt of contributions from other States Parties and financial requirements of the United Nations with respect to activities not funded from the Regular Budget of the United Nations. In order to address these, the Meeting of States Parties endorsed the following measures:

A. Measures to Encourage Timely Payment

21. The Meeting of States Parties:

-
- a) Stressed that the payment of annual assessed contributions by the States Parties in a timely manner and in full is necessarily of utmost importance for the financial sustainability of the Convention and full implementation of the intersessional programme of work, and stressed that States Parties shall honour their obligations under the Convention;
 - b) Requested States Parties in arrears to pay outstanding amounts at the earliest possible date;
 - c) Taking note of challenges encountered by some States Parties in meeting their financial obligations, requested the Chair of the Meeting of States Parties to contact these States Parties to better understand reasons for non-payment, and encourage prompt payment;
 - d) Called on all States Parties to seek to pay invoices at the earliest possible date and, where feasible, in advance of the beginning of the year; and
 - e) Requested the United Nations Office at Geneva to send invoices at least 90 days prior to the start of the year.

B. Measures to Ensure Liquidity

22. The Meeting of States Parties agreed that:

- a) As an interim measure, to be reviewed at the Ninth Review Conference for its effectiveness and the possibility explored to be financed by assessed contributions, pending other possible steps to assure liquidity, to establish a Working Capital Fund (WCF), to be financed by voluntary contributions and used solely as a source of short-term financing pending receipt of reasonably anticipated contributions, taking into account the average collection rate and pattern of payments over the preceding three years. Drawdowns from the WCF should be repaid to the WCF from annual assessed contributions of States Parties within 12 months. In order to ensure the continuity of approved programmes and activities, priority should be given to funding the contracts of the Implementation Support Unit; and
- b) Accounts for each financial year are to remain open for the subsequent 12 months, at which time the accounts should be closed, a final balance determined, and any surplus funds allocated back to States Parties as a credit against their next assessment. Unused balances at the end of the financial year may be used as a source of short-term financing for mandated activities during this interim period.

C. Measures to Avoid Deficit Spending/Accumulation of Liabilities

23. The Meeting of States Parties:

- a) Affirmed that financial obligations for a given year will be limited to an amount based upon the average collection rate for the preceding three years until and unless contributions for the year indicate that level will be exceeded. The Chair will manage possible impacts on the approved programme of work in consultation with the other officers and proceeding in an open, transparent, and consultative manner;
- b) Confirmed that arrears for unpaid contributions should remain the amount of the initial assessment invoiced to the relevant State Party for the year in question;
- c) Requested the United Nations to calculate credits due to States Parties that paid for a given financial year on the basis of the final cash balance following the closure of the accounts for that financial year; and
- d) Determined that delegations from signatory and non-signatory observer States should contribute to the costs of the meetings in which they participate on the basis of their shares in the Scale of Assessments of the United Nations.

D. Further Measures

24. The Meeting of States Parties further:

- a) Requested regular reporting on expenditure, collections, and use of the Working Capital Fund by the United Nations Office at Geneva and the Implementation Support Unit;
- b) Requested the Chair of the 2019 Meeting of States Parties, in full consultation with the States Parties and taking into account their views, the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs, and the United Nations Office at Geneva, to identify further measures, including possible measures to incentivize payment, for consideration at the 2019 Meeting of States Parties; and
- c) Resolved to continue monitoring the financial situation of the Convention and requested the Chair of the 2019 Meeting of States Parties, in close consultation with the United

Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs and the United Nations Office at Geneva, to report on the overall financial situation of the Convention, implementation of measures above, and possible further measures to bring about timely payment as required, for consideration by the 2019 Meeting of States Parties.

VI. Consideration of the factual reports of the Meetings of Experts reflecting their deliberations, including possible outcomes

25. In accordance with the decision of the 2017 Meeting of States Parties, States Parties continued at the Meetings of Experts to seek common understandings and effective action on the topics regarding the strengthening of the Convention.

26. No consensus was reached on the deliberations including any possible outcomes of the Meetings of Experts.

VII. Arrangements for meetings in 2019

27. The Meeting of States Parties considered the arrangements for the Meetings of Experts and Meeting of States Parties in 2019. The Meeting decided that the Meetings of Experts would be held in Geneva from 29 July to 9 August 2019 and that the Meeting of States Parties would be held in Geneva from 3 to 6 December 2019, taking into account the availability of resources, and bearing in mind sub-paragraph 23(a).

28. The Meeting approved the nomination by the Western Group of H.E. Mr. Yann Hwang, Ambassador, Permanent Representative of France to the Conference on Disarmament, as Chair of the Meeting of States Parties in 2019 and approved the nominations by the Eastern European Group of H.E. Mr. Adrian Vierita, Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Romania to the United Nations Office at Geneva, and by the Group of the Non-Aligned Movement and Other States of H.E. Mr. Andreano Erwin, Ambassador, Deputy Permanent Representative of the Republic of Indonesia to the United Nations, World Trade Organization and other International Organizations in Geneva, as the two Vice-Chairs.

29. The Eastern European Group will nominate the Chairs of MX1 and MX2 in 2019, the Group of the Non-Aligned Movement and Other States will nominate the Chairs of MX3 and MX4 and the Western Group will nominate the Chair of MX5.

VIII. Documentation

30. A list of official documents of the Meeting of States Parties, 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 Convention's website at <http://www.unog.ch/bwc> and through the United Nations Official Document System (ODS), at <http://documents.un.org>.

IX. Conclusion of the Meeting of States Parties

31. At its closing meeting on 7 December 2018, the Meeting of States Parties adopted its report by consensus, to be issued as document BWC/MSP/2018/6.

Annex I

Agenda of the 2018 Meeting of States Parties

1. Opening of the meeting.
2. Adoption of the agenda.
3. Adoption of the programme of work.
4. Adoption of the rules of procedure.
5. Organization of the Meeting of States Parties.
6. General debate.
7. Management of the intersessional programme: Budgetary and financial matters.
8. Consideration of the factual reports of the Meetings of Experts reflecting their deliberations, including possible outcomes:
 - (a) Meeting of Experts on Cooperation and Assistance, with a Particular Focus on Strengthening Cooperation and Assistance under Article X;
 - (b) Meeting of Experts on Review of Developments in the Field of Science and Technology Related to the Convention;
 - (c) Meeting of Experts on Strengthening National Implementation;
 - (d) Meeting of Experts on Assistance, Response and Preparedness;
 - (e) Meeting of Experts on Institutional Strengthening of the Convention.
9. Progress with universalization of the Convention.
10. Annual report of the Implementation Support Unit.
11. Adoption of the report of the meeting.
12. Closing of the meeting.

Annex II

List of documents of the Meeting of States Parties

Symbol

Title

To be completed

ADVANCE VERSION