

**AD HOC GROUP 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/AD HOC GROUP/WP.296
10 July 1998

Original: ENGLISH

Eleventh session
Geneva, 22 June - 10 July 1998

Working paper submitted by

Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Romania, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, United Kingdom of Great Britain, United States of America.

1. The above States Parties to the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention consider that full and effective compliance with the Convention is an international disarmament and security imperative. In this regard, they believe that the international community must pursue the early and successful conclusion of the Ad Hoc Group negotiations as a matter of urgency. The above States Parties reaffirm their commitment to redouble their efforts in order to achieve this goal.
2. They welcome the calls for urgent conclusion to negotiations contained in:
 - The United States' call, in President Clinton's State of the Union Address, for "stronger international barriers against the proliferation and use of biological weapons";
 - The initiative announced by the Australian Foreign Minister Alexander Downer on 2 March, which envisages a series of measures that will support an early conclusion of the Ad Hoc Group negotiations;
 - The Common Position of the European Union as adopted by the Council of Ministers on 4 March under the United Kingdom Presidency, which calls, *inter alia*, for the intensification of the Protocol negotiations;
 - The report of the 8-9 May meeting of the G-8 Foreign Ministers calling for the intensification and successful conclusion of a Protocol to the BWC as soon as possible; and
 - The Joint Summit Statement of 27 June issued by the United States and China on the Biological Weapons Convention calling for further acceleration toward an early conclusion of the negotiations of the Protocol.

3. Drawing on the impetus provided by these constructive and timely initiatives, the above States Parties consider that measures to strengthen compliance should include, *inter alia*, the following elements, and that discussion on these should focus on ensuring their efficiency, practicality and cost effectiveness. They include:

- Declarations of a range of facilities and activities of potential relevance under the Convention, *inter alia*, so as to enhance transparency;
- Provision for visits to facilities in order to promote accurate and complete declarations and thus further enhance transparency and confidence;
- Provision for rapid and effective investigations into concerns over non-compliance, including both facility and field investigations; and
- A cost-effective and independent organization, including a small permanent staff, capable of implementing the Protocol effectively.

4. In this regard the above States Parties reaffirm their commitment to actively promote and engage in international cooperation and exchanges in the field of biotechnology for peaceful purposes under the BWC and through other relevant multilateral instruments. Further, they look forward to the development of specific measures in Article VII of the Protocol to take full advantage of the opportunities for cooperation, which the Protocol will create among its States Parties. Such measures should also address needs for assistance to ensure the Protocol's implementation.

5. They consider, as noted in the mandate of the Ad Hoc Group, that the Protocol should be formulated and implemented in a manner designed to protect sensitive commercial proprietary information and legitimate national security needs and, in addition, take into account any constitutional obligations.

6. They call upon the Ad Hoc Group as a whole to demonstrate leadership by intensifying its efforts towards the successful and early adoption of a legally-binding Protocol that will address the global threat posed by biological and toxin weapons.
