AD HOC MEETING OF SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL EXPERTS OF STATES PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION ON THE PROHIBITION OF THE DEVELOPMENT, PRODUCTION AND STOCKPILING OF BACTERIOLOGICAL (BIOLOGICAL) AND TOXIN WEAPONS AND ON THEIR DESTRUCTION

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REPORT

I. ORGANIZATION AND WORK OF THE AD HOC MEETING

Introduction

1. The Final Declaration of the Second Review Conference of the Parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on their Destruction, stated, inter alia, the following:

> "The Conference, mindful of the provisions of Article V and Article X, and determined to strengthen the authority of the Convention and to enhance confidence in the implementation of its provisions, agrees that the States Parties are to implement, on the basis of mutual co-operation, the following measures, in order to prevent or reduce the occurrence of ambiguities, doubts and suspicions, and in order to improve international co-operation in the field of peaceful bacteriological (biological) activities:
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> 1. Exchange of data, including name, location, scope and general description of activities, on research centres and laboratories that meet very high national or international safety standards established for handling, for permitted purposes, biological materials that pose a high individual and community risk or specialize in permitted biological activities directly related to the Convention.
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> 2. Exchange of information on all outbreaks of infectious diseases and similar occurrences caused by toxins that seem to deviate from the normal pattern as regards type, development, place, or time of occurrence. If possible, the information provided would include, as soon as it is available, data on the type of disease, approximate area affected, and number of cases.
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> 3. Encouragement of publication of results of biological research directly related to the Convention, in scientific journals generally available to States Parties, as well as promotion of use for permitted purposes of knowledge gained in this research.
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> 4. Active promotion of contacts between scientists engaged in biological research directly related to the Convention, including exchanges for joint research on a mutually agreed basis.

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The Conference decides to hold an ad hoc meeting of scientific and technical experts from States Parties to finalize the modalities for the exchange of information and data by working out, inter alia, appropriate forms to be used by States Parties for the exchange of information agreed to in this Final Declaration, thus enabling States Parties to follow a standardized procedure. The group shall meet in Geneva for the period 31 March - 15 April 1987 and shall communicate the results of the work to the States Parties immediately thereafter.

Pending the results of this meeting, the Conference urges States Parties to promptly apply these measures and report the data agreed upon to the United Nations Department for Disarmament Affairs.

The Conference requests the United Nations Department for Disarmament Affairs to make available the information received to all States Parties."

Organization of the Ad Hoc Meeting

2. In accordance with the Final Declaration of the Second Review Conference, the Ad Hoc Meeting was held from 31 March to 15 April 1987, at the Palais des Nations, Geneva.

3. The Ad Hoc Meeting was opened by the President of the Second Review Conference, Ambassador Winfried Lang of Austria. In his opening statement, the President of the Review Conference noted that no other review conference had ever decided to hold such a follow-up meeting and that, according to an informal understanding, the Ad Hoc Meeting was to be considered as an appendix to the Review Conference, which implied that it would meet under the authority of the President of the Conference and that its costs would be borne by the States Parties to the Convention in accordance with the Rules of Procedure of the Conference.

4. At the first session, Dr. Bo Rybeck (Sweden) was elected Chairman by acclamation.

5. At the same session the Ad Hoc Meeting adopted its agenda (BWC/CONF.II/EX/1), which is reproduced in Annex I to this Report.

6. Ms. Aida Luisa Levin, Senior Political Affairs Officer, United Nations Department for Disarmament Affairs, served as Secretary of the Ad Hoc Meeting, assisted by Mr. Jerzy Zaleski, Political Affairs Officer, United Nations Department for Disarmament Affairs.

Participation in the Ad Hoc Meeting

7. The following States Parties to the Convention participated in the Ad Hoc Meeting: Afghanistan, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Brazil, Bulgaria, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Canada, China, Colombia, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Ecuador, Finland, France, German Democratic Republic, Germany, Federal Republic of, Hungary, India, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Mongolia, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Pakistan, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Turkey, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and United States of America. The list of delegations is contained in Annex II.

Work of the Ad Hoc Meeting

8. The Ad Hoc Meeting held seven plenary, as well as a number of informal sessions, during which it finalized the modalities for the exchange of information and data by working out, inter alia, appropriate forms to be used by States Parties for the exchange of information agreed to in the Final Declaration.

9. At the invitation of the Ad Hoc Meeting, Dr. K. Uemura, Director of the Division of Epidemiological Surveillance and Health Situation and Trend Assessment of the World Health Organization provided information concerning questions relevant to the Meeting's mandate.

Documentation

10. In order to facilitate the work of the Ad Hoc Meeting, the Chairman prepared informal Discussion Papers under Agenda items 4(a)-4(d).

Documents pertaining to Agenda items 4(a)-4(d) were presented by the following delegations:

4(a)-4(d)	Australia
4(a)-4(d)	Canada
4(a)	Germany, Federal Republic of
4(a)	Netherlands
4(a)-4(b)	Sweden
4(a)	United Kingdom
4(c)	United Kingdom
4(c)	United Kingdom
4(a)-4(d)	United States
4(a)	United States
4(c)	United States
4(d)	United States

Proposals under Agenda items 4(a)-4(d) were presented by the following delegations:

4(d)	Bulgaria
4(d)	Byelorussian SSR
4(b)	Czechoslovakia
4	German Democratic Republic
4(a)-4(b)	German Democratic Republic
4(b)	German Democratic Republic
4(b)	German Democratic Republic
4(c)-4(d)	Hungary
4(a)	Ireland/Austria
4(b)	Ireland
4(a)-4(b)	Sweden
4	Ukrainian SSR
4	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

A list of these documents and proposals is contained in Annex III. For the convenience of delegations these documents and proposals are reproduced as received and attached to the adopted report.

Conclusion of the Ad Hoc Meeting

11. At its seventh and final plenary session on 15 April, the Ad Hoc Meeting adopted by consensus its Report. The Report consists of two parts: I. Organization and work of the Ad Hoc Meeting; II. Modalities for the exchange of information.

12. The President of the Second Review Conference received the Report for immediate distribution to the States Parties to the Convention and closed the meeting.

II. MODALITIES FOR THE EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION

A. Exchange of data on research centres and laboratories

At the Second Review Conference it was agreed that States Parties are to implement the following:

> "Exchange of data, including name, location, scope and general description of activities, on research centres and laboratories that meet very high national or international safety standards established for handling, for permitted purposes, biological materials that pose a high individual and community risk or specialize in permitted biological activities directly related to the Convention."

Modalities

The Ad Hoc Meeting agreed that data should be provided on each research centre or laboratory, within the territory of a State Party, under its jurisdiction or under its control anywhere,

(a) which has maximum containment unit(s) meeting the criteria for a "maximum containment laboratory" as specified in the 1983 WHO Laboratory Biosafety Manual (Annex IV), such as those designated as Biosafety Level 4 (BL4) or P4, or equivalent standard; or

(b) which has containment unit(s) and specializes in research or development for prophylactic or protective purposes against possible hostile use of microbial and/or other biological agents or toxins.

To enable the States Parties to follow a standardized procedure, the Ad Hoc Meeting has agreed that Form 1 should be used for the exchange of data on research centres and laboratories.

Form 1

Exchange of data on research centres and laboratories

1. Name(s) of the research centre and/or laboratory .....
.....

2. Responsible public or private organization or company .....
.....
.....

3. Location and postal address .....
.....
.....
.....

4. Source(s) of financing of the reported activity, including indication if the activity is wholly or partly financed by the Ministry of Defence

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5. Number of maximum containment units */ within the research centre and/or laboratory, with an indication of their respective size (m^2)

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6. If no maximum containment unit, indicate highest level of protection

.....

7. Scope and general description of activities, including type(s) of micro-organisms and/or toxins as appropriate

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*/ In accordance with the 1983 WHO Laboratory Biosafety Manual, or equivalent.

B. Exchange of information on outbreaks of infectious diseases and similar occurrences caused by toxins

At the Second Review Conference it was agreed that States Parties are to implement the following:

"Exchange of information on all outbreaks of infectious diseases and similar occurrences caused by toxins that seem to deviate from the normal pattern as regards type, development, place, or time of occurrence. If possible, the information provided would include, as soon as it is available, data on the type of disease, approximate area affected, and number of cases."

Modalities

In its discussion of what constitutes an outbreak the Ad Hoc Meeting consulted an expert from the World Health Organization who informed that the WHO considers the terms "outbreak" and "epidemic" to be interchangeable, and the following definition was suggested:

"An outbreak or epidemic is the occurrence of an unusually large or unexpected number of cases of an illness or health-related event in a given place at a given time. The number of cases considered as unusual will vary according to the illness or event and the community concerned."

Furthermore, reference was made to the following definitions:

- "An epidemic of infectious disease is defined as the occurrence of an unusually large or unexpected number of cases of a disease known or suspected to be of infectious origin, for a given place and time. It is usually a rapidly evolving situation, requiring a rapid response." (WHO internal document CDS/Mtg/82.1)

- "The occurrence in a community or region of cases of an illness, specific health-related behaviour, or other health-related events clearly in excess of normal expectancy. The community or region, and the time period in which the cases occur, are specified precisely. The number of cases indicating the presence of an epidemic will vary according to the agent, size and type of population exposed, previous experience or lack of exposure to the disease, and time and place of occurrence: epidemicity is thus relative to usual frequency of the disease in the same area, among the specified population, at the same season of the year. A single case of a communicable disease long absent from a population or first invasion by a disease not previously recognized in that area requires immediate reporting and full field investigation: two cases of such a disease associated in time and place may be sufficient evidence to be considered an epidemic." (Last, J.M.; A Dictionary of Epidemiology, Oxford University Press, New York, Oxford, Toronto, 1983)

The Ad Hoc Meeting agreed on the following:

1. In determining what constitutes an outbreak States Parties are recommended to take guidance from the above.

2. Since no universal standards exist for what might constitute a deviation from the normal pattern, States Parties are encouraged

   - to fully utilize existing reporting systems within the WHO, and

   - to provide background information on diseases caused by organisms which meet the criteria for risk groups III and IV according to the classification in the 1983 WHO Laboratory Biosafety Manual, the occurrence of which, in their respective areas, does not necessarily constitute a deviation from normal patterns. */

3. Exchange of data on outbreaks that seem to deviate from the normal pattern is considered particularly important in the following cases:

   - when the cause of the outbreak cannot be readily determined or the causative agent **/ is difficult to diagnose,

   - when the disease may be caused by organisms which meet the criteria for risk group III or IV, according to the classification in 1983 WHO Laboratory Biosafety Manual,

   - when the causative agent is exotic to a given region,

   - when the disease follows an unusual pattern of development,

   - when the disease occurs in the vicinity of research centres and laboratories subject to exchange of data under item A,

   - when suspicions arise of the possible occurrence of a new disease.

4. In order to enhance confidence, an initial report of an outbreak of an infectious disease or a similar occurrence that deviate from the normal pattern should be given promptly after cognizance of the outbreak and should be followed up by annual reports.

   To enable States Parties to follow a standardized procedure, the Ad Hoc Meeting has agreed that Form 2 should be used, to the extent information is known and/or applicable, for the exchange of initial as well as annual information.

5. In order to improve international co-operation in the field of peaceful bacteriological (biological) activities and in order to prevent or reduce the occurrence of ambiguities, doubts and suspicions, States Parties are encouraged to invite experts from other States Parties to assist in the handling of an outbreak, and to respond favourably to such invitations.

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*/ This information should be provided in accordance with E.1.

**/ It is understood that this may include organisms made pathogenic by molecular biology techniques, such as genetic engineering.

Form 2

Information on outbreaks of infectious diseases and similar occurrences, that seem to deviate from the normal pattern

1. Time of cognizance of the outbreak .....

2. Location and approximate area affected .....

3. Type of disease/intoxication .....

4. Suspected source of disease/intoxication .....

5. Possible causative agent(s) .....

6. Main characteristics of systems .....

7. Detailed symptoms, when applicable
   - respiratory .....
   - circulatory .....
   - neurological/behavioural .....
   - intestinal .....
   - dermatological .....
   - nephrological .....
   - other .....

8. Deviation(s) from the normal pattern as regards
   - type .....
   - development .....
   - place of occurrence .....
   - time of occurrence .....
   - symptoms .....
   - virulence pattern .....
   - drug resistance pattern .....
   - agent(s) difficult to diagnose .....
   - presence of unusual vectors .....
   - other .....

9. Approximate number of primary cases .....

10. Approximate number of total cases .....

11. Number of deaths .....

12. Development of the outbreak .....

13. Measures taken .....

C. Encouragement of publication of results and promotion of use of knowledge

At the Second Review Conference it was agreed that States Parties are to implement the following:

"Encouragement of publication of results of biological research directly related to the Convention, in scientific journals generally available to States Parties, as well as promotion of use for permitted purposes of knowledge gained in this research."

Modalities

The *Ad Hoc* Meeting agreed on the following:

1. It is recommended that basic research in biosciences, and particularly that directly related to the Convention should generally be unclassified and that applied research to the extent possible, without infringing on national and commercial interests, should also be unclassified.

2. States Parties are encouraged to provide information on their policy as regards publication of results of biological research, indicating, *inter alia*, their policies as regards publication of results of research carried out in research centres and laboratories subject to exchange of information under item A and publication of research on outbreaks of diseases covered by item B, and to provide information on relevant scientific journals and other relevant scientific publications generally available to States Parties.

3. The *Ad Hoc* Meeting discussed the question of co-operation and assistance as regards the safe handling of biological material covered by the Convention. It concluded that other international fora were engaged in this field and expressed its support for efforts aimed at enhancing such co-operation.

D. Active promotion of contacts

At the Second Review Conference it was agreed that States Parties are to implement the following:

"Active promotion of contacts between scientists engaged in biological research directly related to the Convention, including exchanges for joint research on a mutually agreed basis."

Modalities

The *Ad Hoc* Meeting agreed on the following:

In order to actively promote professional contacts between scientists, joint research projects and other activities aimed at preventing or reducing the occurrence of ambiguities, doubts and suspicions and at improving international co-operation in the field of peaceful bacteriological (biological) activities, States Parties are encouraged to provide information, to the extent possible.

- on planned international conferences, seminars, symposia and similar events dealing with biological research directly related to the Convention,

- on other opportunities for exchange of scientists, joint research or other measures to promote contacts between scientists engaged in biological research directly related to the Convention.

To enable States Parties to follow a standardized procedure, the Ad Hoc Meeting has agreed that Form 3 should be used for exchange of information under this item.

E. Procedural modalities

1. Bearing in mind resolution 41/58 A, adopted on 3 December 1986 by the General Assembly of the United Nations which requested the Secretary-General to render the necessary assistance and to provide such services as may be required for the implementation of relevant parts of the Final Declaration */), the Ad Hoc Meeting has agreed that all information agreed to above should be provided in one of the authentic languages of the Convention and be sent to the United Nations Department for Disarmament Affairs and be promptly forwarded, in the form received, to all States Parties. Information should also be made available to the World Health Organization.

2. The Ad Hoc Meeting has agreed that the first exchange of information and data should take place as soon as possible and be sent to the United Nations Department for Disarmament Affairs not later than 15 October 1987. Thereafter information to be given on an annual basis should be provided not later than 15 April and should cover the previous calendar year.

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*/ In connection with the adoption of that resolution, the Secretariat of the United Nations issued a note (A/C.1/41/9) concerning the responsibilities entrusted to the Secretary-General under the resolution, stating that the Secretary-General considered that "he would be required to render technical services and assistance to States Parties to the Convention with a view to enabling them to implement relevant parts of the Final Declaration of the Review Conference, it being understood that such services and assistance would have no financial implications for the regular budget of the United Nations and that all related costs would be met by the States Parties to the Convention in accordance with the rules of procedure adopted by the Second Review Conference".

Form 3

Active promotion of contacts

1. Planned international conferences, symposia, seminars, and other similar fora for exchange

For each such event, the following information should be provided:

- name of the conference, etc. .....
- arranging organization(s), etc. .....
- time .....
- place .....
- main subject(s) for the conference, etc. .....
.....
- conditions for participation .....
.....
- point of contact for further information, registration, etc. .....
.....
.....

2. Information regarding other opportunities

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.....
.....

3. The experts note that, should any question arise in relation to the objective of, or in the application of the provisions of, the Convention, including as regards the information and data which States Parties have undertaken to exchange, States Parties can make use of the provisions for consultation and co-operation under Article V of the Convention, using, inter alia, appropriate international procedures within the framework of the United Nations and in accordance with its Charter.

Attention was drawn to the possibility that, inter alia, the Secretary-General of the United Nations might be requested to investigate, with the assistance of qualified experts, following procedures available to him, information that may be brought to his attention concerning possible use of bacteriological (biological) or toxin weapons and that this possibility covers outbreaks of infectious diseases and similar occurrences caused by toxins, that seem to deviate from the normal pattern and that could be interpreted as resulting from the use of bacteriological (biological) or toxin weapons.

F. Additional Considerations

1. In addition to the modalities agreed to under items A-E the Ad Hoc Meeting considered, inter alia, proposals

- that exchange of information should also cover research centres and laboratories which, in view of the type or scale of their activities involving highly pathogenic micro-organisms and/or toxins, could be considered relevant for the purpose of item A,

- that exchange of information under item A should also cover research centres and laboratories which engage in field aerosol experiments with micro-organisms and toxins relevant to the Convention, or in research and development in the field of large scale bioprocessing specifically designed for highly pathogenic micro-organisms,

- that exchange of information under item A could also occur on a voluntary basis with regard to research centres and laboratories engaged in research and development relevant to the Convention and related to the mechanism of transmission of micro-organisms and absorption and mode of action of toxins; toxicological assays; diagnostics and bio-sensors; and protective devices not elsewhere covered,

- that experts also discuss including animal and plant diseases in the exchange of information,

- that States Parties having national programmes for biological research should provide information on these programmes,

- that States Parties should refrain from any discriminatory practices that may hamper the international peaceful co-operation in bioscience and in related basic and applied research, as well as international trade in related goods and equipment,

- that exchange of data on outbreaks that seem to deviate from the normal pattern would be particularly important when the outbreak is associated with biological activities at a military facility.

- that exchange of data on outbreaks that seem to deviate from the normal pattern would be particularly important when the outbreak is associated with biological activities at any facility.

2. The Ad Hoc Meeting noted that with respect to items C and D it would be useful for States Parties to provide information on existing intergovernmental agreements that are relevant to the implementation of the commitments made in the Final Declaration.

3. Bearing in mind various proposals made, the Ad Hoc Meeting wishes to encourage States Parties to provide any additional information which they might consider useful to prevent or reduce the occurrence of ambiguities, doubts and suspicions and in order to improve international co-operation in the field of peaceful bacteriological (biological) activities.

4. Furthermore, the Ad Hoc Meeting is aware that the Third Review Conference shall consider, inter alia, the effectiveness of the co-operative measures agreed in the Final Declaration of the Second Review Conference and whether or not further actions are called for to create further co-operative measures in the context of Article V. In this regard States Parties may wish to take note of proposals presented during the Ad Hoc Meeting.