

**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**

Geneva, 4-7 December 2018

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To the Permanent Representatives of the States Parties
and Signatories to the Convention on the Prohibition
of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological
(Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on their Destruction

11 October 2018

BIOLOGICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION: LETTER FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Excellency,

I have the honour to convey the attached letter from the Chairman of the 2018 Meeting of States Parties to the Biological Weapons Convention, Mr. Ljupčo Jivan Gjorgjinski, of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.



Daniel Feakes
Chief, BWC Implementation Support Unit



PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA

TO THE UN, WTO AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS IN GENEVA

Nº 16 - 01 - 670 / 1

Geneva, 11 October 2018

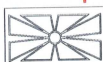
Excellency,

I write to you as Chair of the 2018 Meeting of States Parties to the Biological Weapons Convention, which is, still, scheduled to take place 4-7 December 2018.

We had a very successful series of Meetings of Experts in August and I would like to express here my gratitude to Ambassador Maria Teresa Almojuela, Mr. Pedro Luiz Dalcero, Ambassador Julio Herráiz Espana, Mr. Daniel Nord and Mr. Otakar Gorgol for their efforts in preparing for and skillfully conducting these meetings. The deliberations that took place in each Meeting of Experts were intense, constructive and forward-looking. I was particularly pleased at the technical nature of many of the discussions and at the willingness of delegations to engage in interactive debate. I hope that these Meetings have set us on a good course for the subsequent Meetings of Experts in 2019 and 2020.

Our attention now inevitably turns to the Meeting of States Parties, planned to take place in Geneva 4-7 December. The meeting will consider the reports of the Meetings of Experts, as well as the annual reports on universalization and on the activities of the Implementation Support Unit (ISU). The MSP also needs to review the information paper that I was mandated to prepare on measures to address financial predictability and sustainability for the meetings agreed by the States Parties and for the ISU. I would like to thank those States Parties that have already provided their inputs on financial issues as I requested in my letter dated 6 August. I will use the inputs received as I prepare my information paper.

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The *Information Paper on Measures to Address Financial Predictability and Sustainability* is, evidently, timely. The financial situation we find ourselves in certainly demonstrates this point well. This letter does not mean that the issue is resolved and that we can relax — it is not and we cannot. The financial situation now is not much better than it was when I was informed by UNODA-Geneva that there are not enough funds to organise this year's MSP. We cannot be certain that we will have the mandated four days of meetings, although all options will be explored for that to be so.

But, I can say: we will have a Meeting of States Parties. We must. First, because we must not allow for the good momentum from the start of the ISP to stall. And second, because we must meet in order to try to resolve the financial situation in which this important convention finds itself. Even if my call is heeded and sufficient funds are received to allow this year's MSP to proceed as planned, there are serious long-term structural issues that will need to be addressed. If nothing is done to address these issues, identical problems will arise next year. This is surely not the outcome that we all wanted when we reached consensus on the new intersessional programme at the MSP last year. This is why, for now, we go forward as planned.

I have prepared the attached *Provisional Agenda* and *Provisional Programme of Work* for the MSP. They remain based on the assumption of a full four-day MSP. Both documents are based closely on similar documents from earlier BWC meetings while also adhering to the consensus reached at the MSP last year. They are provisional until their adoption at the MSP in December. The programme of work is indicative, and I intend to treat it as a rolling schedule in order to retain the flexibility to manage our work in the most efficient manner once the Meeting begins.

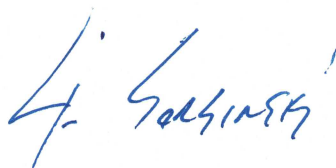
As the MSP will only be four days, and perhaps less, we will have to use the time available as effectively as possible. I would therefore encourage any States Parties intending to **submit working papers to do so as early as possible, and certainly no later than 16 November**. As you will see from the attached draft of the provisional agenda, the MSP will feature a general debate on the opening day. While any State Party or regional group that wishes to do so can participate in the general debate, each State Party to do so should make their oral intervention as short as possible. Full texts of any written statements can be provided to the ISU and posted on the BWC website. I will enforce **speaking limits of 5 minutes for States Parties and 7 minutes for group statements**. Depending on how much time we have at the end for the full MSP, all agenda items may need to be reconsidered, including the general debate item, which might mean even tighter time limits. Depending on the number of registered speakers, a tentative schedule with approximate times for speaking will be assembled and I ask delegations to adhere to it.

You will also notice that items 6 and 7 draw directly from the agreed language from last year's outcome document, specifically from V 19 (f). Item 6 is where we can consider measures to address the financial predictability and sustainability of the Convention, while item 7 where we consider the reports of the MXs "reflecting their deliberations, including possible outcomes." I encourage delegations, under the leadership of the Chairs of each respective MX, to truly invest their energies towards finding the language that would express such outcomes and drive the intersessional programme forward in a substantive manner before the Ninth RevCon.

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In closing, thus, and as States Parties prepare their presence for the MSP, let me use the opportunity to bring attention to several points for their consideration: first, that time is a scarce commodity that we must use to good effect, so we must all plan our interventions accordingly; second, that due consideration is devoted to gender — both in terms of members of delegations and in terms of planning speaking times; and third, that delegations come ready to explore, in a spirit of cooperation, areas of convergence around common understanding and effective action, which were evident during the MXs in August.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.



Ljupčo Jivan Gjorgjinski

Minister Counselor and *Chargé d'Affaires*
Permanent Mission of the Republic of Macedonia in Geneva

Chair of the 2018 Meeting of States Parties
to the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention

Attachments:

- Provisional **Agenda** for the 2018 BWC MSP
- Provisional **Programme of Work** for the 2018 BWC MSP

Draft provisional agenda of the 2018 BWC Meeting of States Parties

Submitted by the Chairman

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. General debate
 6. Management of the intersessional programme: Budgetary and financial matters
 7. 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
 8. Progress with universalization of the Convention
 9. Annual report of the Implementation Support Unit
 10. Adoption of the report of the meeting
 11. Closing of the meeting
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2018 Meeting
Geneva, 4-7 December 2018
 Item 3 of the provisional agenda
Adoption of the programme of work

Draft provisional programme of work of the 2018 BWC Meeting of States Parties

Submitted by the Chairman

<i>Date</i>	<i>10:00 – 13:00</i>	<i>15:00 – 18:00</i>
Tuesday 4 December	Opening formalities (agenda items 1-4)	General debate (agenda item 5 – continued)
	General debate (agenda item 5)	Informal session for NGO statements
Wednesday 5 December	Management of the intersessional programme: Budgetary and financial matters (agenda item 6)	Consideration of the factual reports of the Meetings of Experts reflecting their deliberations, including possible outcomes (agenda item 7)
Thursday 6 December	Consideration of the factual reports of the Meetings of Experts reflecting their deliberations, including possible outcomes (agenda item 7 – continued)	Consideration of the factual reports of the Meetings of Experts reflecting their deliberations, including possible outcomes (agenda item 7 – continued)
Friday 7 December	Consideration of the factual reports of the Meetings of Experts reflecting their deliberations, including possible outcomes (agenda item 7 – continued)	Informal consultations on the report of the meeting
	Progress with universalization of the Convention (agenda item 8)	Adoption of the report of the meeting (agenda item 10)
	Annual report of the Implementation Support Unit (agenda item 9)	Closing of the meeting (agenda item 11)