

**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

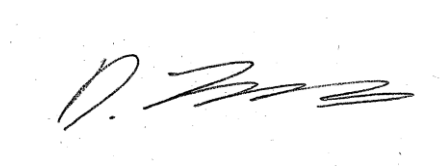
8 November 2018

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 / 2

Geneva, 08 November 2018

Excellency,

I am writing to you in my capacity as Chair of the 2018 Meeting of States Parties to the Biological Weapons Convention.

As I flagged in my earlier letters dated 26 September and 11 October, the financial situation of the BWC is such that the meeting of States Parties, originally scheduled for 4 to 7 December, is directly impacted. While the financial situation has improved slightly since my 26 September letter, it has unfortunately not improved enough to go ahead with the MSP as originally agreed by the 2017 MSP. I would like to take this opportunity to thank those States Parties which have made funds available for the MSP. However, despite these efforts, we are still not in a position to convene the full four-day MSP as intended.

Therefore, I write to inform you of my intentions with regard to the MSP and the preparations for it. Given the shortage of funds, it is my proposal that we shorten the MSP from four days to three, thus reducing expenditure on the associated meeting costs. I also propose that the MSP be a "paperless" meeting, further reducing expenditures, and also our carbon footprint. The MSP would open as planned on Tuesday 4 December and then continue on Wednesday 5 December. We would cancel the formal meetings on Thursday 6 December, and we could make use of this time to hold informal consultations, if necessary. The consultations can cover the financial situation, as well as consider the reports of the Meetings of Experts. The MSP will reconvene in formal session on Friday 7 December and conclude as planned.

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I have thus prepared a revised version of the provisional programme of work for the MSP, which is attached to this letter and which will be issued subsequently as BWC/MSP/2018/2/Rev.1. The provisional agenda of the MSP will remain the same, so does not need to be revised. It has been available in all official UN languages as BWC/MSP/2018/1 for some time.

In this way, we can still address all of the issues on the provisional agenda of the MSP. We had a very successful series of Meetings of Experts in August, so we still need to consider their reports and agree on any possible next steps. In this regard, I have requested the Chairs of the Meetings of Experts to submit to the MSP their personal ideas for possible outcomes to be considered by the MSP. These short papers will be issued and circulated to States Parties prior to the MSP. We also need to consider my annual report on universalization as well as the annual report of the Implementation Support Unit.

However, we cannot escape the fact that we need to devote a great deal of our time and attention in December to financial and budgetary issues. As I have mentioned in my previous letters, if we do not do so we risk jeopardizing everything that we agreed to only one year ago. You have all been informed by UNOG and UNODA that the current situation is not sustainable, so it has to be addressed at the MSP next month.

In order to give delegations opportunities to discuss these issues collectively, I would like to convene informal consultations on financial and budgetary issues. I would propose to meet on Wednesday 14 November to consider these issues. Ahead of these meetings, I will circulate an advance version of my information paper, which will contain a lot of detailed information that I have gathered over the past few months. I propose that we also meet the day before the MSP begins, Monday 3 December to further consider these issues, particularly with a view to a potential outcome on this issue from the MSP.

Given the gravity of the situation and also bearing in mind the MSP's mandate to manage the intersessional programme, which include taking necessary measures with respect to budgetary and financial matters, I will propose a non-paper for consideration ahead of the informal consultations. This non-paper will contain possible elements of a decision on measures to address the financial predictability and sustainability of the Convention.

Time will be a critical factor to success. We have only three days for a substantial agenda. Therefore, strict abidance to the time limits will be kept throughout the meeting. Delegations are kindly asked to bear this in mind when preparing their interventions. The official address of each delegation can be uploaded on the

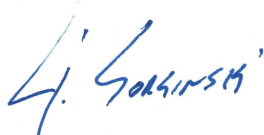
BWC webpage, so no important point is lost. Early submission of prepared interventions will also help significantly with interpretation.

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With days ahead of the MSP, but almost a year into the new ISP, significant challenges and also opportunities are present for this important convention. We had substantial discussions during all five Meetings of Experts. Possible areas of convergence were evident throughout the eight days of formal meetings in August. States Parties decided to entrust the incoming Chair with the mandate to prepare an Information Paper on Financial Predictability and Sustainability, quite clearly recognizing that there were issues that needed to be resolved, which the ongoing financial predicament over the past weeks and months made abundantly clear.

We should use the time between now and 07 December to carefully — and together — explore the possibilities that will lead us to a successful 2018 Meeting of State Parties and, more importantly, set solid foundations for a successful Intersessional Programme.

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

Attachment:

- Provisional Revised Programme of Work for the 2018 BWC MSP

2018 Meeting
Geneva, 4–7 December 2018
Item 3 of the provisional agenda
Adoption of the programme of work

Draft revised provisional programme of work

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)	General debate (agenda item 5 – continued) 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	<u><i>No meeting scheduled</i></u>	<u><i>No meeting scheduled</i></u>
Friday 7 December	Consideration of the factual reports of the Meetings of Experts reflecting their deliberations, including possible outcomes (agenda item 7 – continued) Progress with universalization of the Convention (agenda item 8) Annual report of the Implementation Support Unit (agenda item 9)	Informal consultations on the report of the meeting Adoption of the report of the meeting (agenda item 10) Closing of the meeting (agenda item 11)