

**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**

13 December 2016

English only

Geneva, 7-25 November 2016

Agenda item 10 (b)

**Review of the operation of the Convention
as provided for in its Article XII: Articles I-XV**

**Compliance by States Parties with their obligations under the
Convention**

**Background information document submitted by the Implementation
Support Unit**

Addendum

Mexico

**Implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the
Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological
(Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction**

Information from the Government of Mexico

1. The Government of Mexico has drafted the present document on its compliance with the provisions of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction in accordance with the agreements reached by the Preparatory Committee of the Eighth Review Conference.

Information from the Government of Mexico

2. The Biological Weapons Convention was opened for signature on 10 April 1972 and entered into force on 26 March 1975.¹ It was the first binding instrument negotiated

¹ Mexico signed the Convention on the day it was opened for signature and ratified it on 8 April 1974.



multilaterally within the United Nations framework to ban an entire category of weapons of mass destruction, and it has been in force for more than 40 years.

3. In line with its long-standing and firm commitment to disarmament and the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and to international instruments, the Government of Mexico recognizes the importance of the Convention as a cornerstone of the international security framework, contributing to the common goal of creating a peaceful, safer world for current and future generations.

4. States parties to the Convention are legally bound “never in any circumstances to develop, produce, stockpile or otherwise acquire or retain” biological or toxic weapons or means of delivery (art. I), “not to transfer to any recipient whatsoever” any banned elements or to assist others in the manufacture or acquisition thereof (art. III) and to “take any necessary measures to prohibit and prevent”, within their territory, the activities and elements specified in article I (art. IV). Transparency in the implementation of these national measures can build confidence between States parties. In the absence of a mechanism to verify national implementation of the Convention, improving transparency is one of the objectives of the implementation review exercise that monitors compliance.

5. With the aim of enhancing international cooperation and reducing the occurrence of ambiguities in the implementation of the Convention and in peaceful biological activities, the States parties have voluntarily agreed to a series of confidence-building measures. These include national reports on the subject and on any cooperation and assistance activities conducted in line with article X of the Convention, and also peer review exercises to evaluate the Convention’s implementation.

6. Full observance of this Convention is of paramount importance to the Government of Mexico, which honours its commitments of responsibility, transparency and accountability as a State party. Its aim in doing so is to help build and strengthen national capacities, while at the same time promoting the sharing of best practices, lessons learned, knowledge, experiences and scientific and technological progress, particularly among countries with different levels of development.

7. The Government of Mexico carries out activities for observance of the Convention by means of coordination by various government bodies having responsibilities in this area. These entities include: the Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Health (National Centre for Disease Control and Prevention Programmes, Directorate General and Sub-Directorate General of Epidemiology, Diagnostics and Epidemiological Reference Institute) and Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Rural Development, Fisheries and Food (National Service for Agri-Food Health, Safety and Quality).

8. Of particular importance to the Government of Mexico is the mandate under article X of the Convention to help developing countries create and develop national capacities to address global public health in all its facets by means of cooperation and assistance and the various forms they may take, focusing on the prevention of, and rapid response to, health emergencies and pandemics, at the same time helping to achieve the objective of the Convention, namely to completely eliminate bacteriological (biological) and toxin weapons.

9. In view of the foregoing, the exchange of information and scientific and technological material for peaceful purposes envisaged in the Convention is fundamental to building national capacities, attending to and preventing outbreaks of infectious diseases and making it possible to deal with the risks of a possible biological attack. To that end, international cooperation and assistance among States parties must be strengthened, leveraging existing bilateral and multilateral mechanisms in order to address modern emergencies and crises of all kinds in terms of both public health and security, and matching requests for assistance with the supply of the technical assistance required.

10. In that regard, Mexico believes that the States parties should take into account the advantages of cooperation in its various forms, such as the exchange of information, experiences, lessons learned, best practices, education and technological know-how. Such forms of cooperation can complement traditional models of assistance, ensure the sustainability of projects and reduce inequalities between those countries that have a higher degree of scientific and technological development and those that are in the process of developing their national capacities.

11. In view of the fact that the Convention, despite having entered into force more than 40 years ago, has no institutional mechanism for monitoring its implementation and compliance at the national level it is of equal importance to the Government of Mexico that the States parties have supported the introduction of voluntary confidence-building measures, including reports on voluntary compliance and the use of peer review exercises to evaluate national implementation of the Convention. This process can serve as a channel for fostering an exchange of experiences and concrete collaborative actions to facilitate capacity-building and development in our countries and for inter-institutional coordination. However, it should be emphasized that such exercises are no substitute for a binding verification mechanism. Mexico finds it regrettable that, to date, there has been no agreement for such a mechanism to be adopted within the framework of the Convention and expresses the hope that it may come to pass in the near future. Mexico stands ready to participate in efforts to negotiate and define such a mechanism should there be agreement among the States parties to the Convention.
