
**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**

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Item 6 of the agenda

**Standing agenda item: review of developments
in the field of science and technology related
to the Convention**

**Review of Developments in the field of science and technology
and Article X of the Convention**

Submitted by the Islamic Republic of Iran

1. The States Parties to BWC recall that the Seventh Review Conference of the BWC decided that the review of the developments in the field of science and technology related to the Convention be addressed under the Standing Agenda items of the inter-sessional programme (2012-2015).

2. The scope of bio sciences including the scientific study of living organisms - such as microorganisms, plants, animals and human beings and new developments in the biology, technological advances in molecular biology and biotechnology can promote and facilitate the implementation of Article X of the Convention.

3. The impact of the new developments in the field of science and technology on Article X of the Convention is important for the public health and the sustainable development of the States Parties in particular their capacity building for prevention, mitigation, control, care and treatment of emerging and reemerging communicable diseases as well as local production of necessary medicines, vaccines, biologics and diagnostics specially considering diversity of such pathogens for specific regions of the world.

4. According to WHO report on 20 March 2015:

“The Ebola outbreak, which has infected some 24,000 people and killed around 10,000 of them, has also reduced vaccination coverage in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone, as health facilities and staff focus on halting the outbreak ... Any disruption of immunization services, even for short periods, will result in an increase in the number of susceptible individuals, and will increase the likelihood of vaccine-preventable disease outbreaks ... A growing risk of outbreaks of measles, pertussis, and other vaccine-preventable diseases in

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countries affected by Ebola must be countered by urgent scaling of routine immunization activities”.¹

5. The widespread epidemic of Ebola virus in West Africa, in particular, in Sierra Leone, Liberia and Guinea as an unusual event alerted the world. The new developments in the field of science and technology should help the WHO and States Parties to BWC, as appropriate and in full conformity with its mandate, in fight against the emerging and reemerging communicable diseases such as HIV/AIDS, Ebola, Malaria, Tuberculosis, MERS-CoV, influenza and other infectious diseases. There is no doubt that the new developments in the field of science and technology can help the States Parties in their review and establishment of new public, animal, plants, health and environmental policies.

6. States Parties to the BWC also recognize that the new advances in bioscience, biotechnology, medicine, agriculture and food industry can effectively promote the medicines, vaccines, biological products and diagnostic production industries, help the efficiency of the public health and biosafety of States Parties, in particular, the disease prevention, surveillance, detection, diagnosis and mitigation of infectious diseases and similar occurrences caused by pathogens and toxins in humans, animals, plants and environment.

7. It should be noted that NAM in its statements has strongly reiterated that the new advances and researches in biology, biotechnology, bioengineering and biomedical engineering, in particular, developments in enabling technologies including high-throughput systems for sequencing, synthesizing and analyzing DNA, bioinformatics and computational tools and systems biology, host-pathogen interactions should provide opportunities for enhanced cooperation and making vaccines, medicines and diagnostics production simpler, faster, cheaper and more efficient in developing countries.

8. Therefore, we are of the view that scope of Article X encompasses cooperation and assistance as and allows as well as capacity building, technical knowledge sharing and training, bearing in mind that States Parties have undertaken to facilitate and have the right to participate in the fullest possible exchange of equipment, materials and scientific and technological information for the use of biological agents and toxins for peaceful purposes including for medicines, vaccines and diagnostic production and procurement.

9. The Islamic Republic of Iran emphasizes that the new developments in the field of science and technology related to the Convention shall, in no way, be the pretext to impose any trade limitations (sanctions) or hamper the economic or technological development of the States Parties or international cooperation in the field of peaceful bacteriological (biological) activities, including the international exchange of bacteriological (biological) agents and toxins for peaceful purposes in accordance with the provisions of the Convention.

10. Consequently any unilateral, bilateral or multilateral restrictions and/or sanctions on medicines, vaccines and diagnostic production or trade against States Parties is contrary to the object and purposes of the Convention and once again we emphasizes that full, effective and non-discriminatory implementation of Article X of the Convention is an integral and essential part of compliance with the Convention for the realization of international cooperation for production and trade of vaccines, medicines and diagnostic equipment and,

¹ Dr. Jean-Marie Okwo-Bele, Director of Immunization, Vaccines and Biologicals at WHO, “Vaccination must be scaled up in Ebola-affected countries”, 20 March 2015, World Health Organization – Geneva. (According to the last report, till 5 July 2015, the number of effected people to Ebola in three African and other countries has been increased to 27,609 cases and death tolls to 11,261 persons.)

in the light of new science and technology developments, international efforts should be enhanced in order to bridge the increasing gaps in the field of biotechnology, genetic engineering, microbiology and other related disciplines between developed and developing countries.

11. Hence, we emphasize that Eighth Review Conference of the BWC in 2016, under this agenda item, thoroughly deliberate and take necessary effective action on the development of science and technology and in its relation with Article X implementation henceforth, to increase the capacity-building of States Parties in biological activities such as medicines, vaccines and diagnostics production.
