
**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**

20 October 2016

English only

Geneva, 7-25 November 2016

Item 10 of the provisional agenda

**Review of the operation of the Convention
as provided for in its Article XII**

Implementation of Article X of the Convention

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

Addendum

Summary

The Preparatory Committee decided to request the Implementation Support Unit (ISU) to prepare a background information document on the implementation of Article X, to be compiled from information submitted by States Parties, including information submitted pursuant to paragraph 61 of the Final Declaration of the Seventh Review Conference (see BWC/CONF.VIII/PC/9, paragraph 26(h)). The ISU duly requested submissions from States Parties, and all submissions provided to the ISU by 27 September 2016 are included in this document. Any further submissions from States Parties will be included in an addendum to this document. The information in this document is reproduced as submitted by States Parties, in some cases with minor editing. Information submitted in official languages other than English has been translated into English.

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China

State report on fulfilment of article X of the Biological Weapons Convention

1. China has consistently advocated the comprehensive enhancement of the effectiveness of the Biological Weapons Convention (hereinafter referred to as "the Convention") and promoted its comprehensive implementation. China is actively implementing article X of the Convention, regarding international cooperation, and attaches a high degree of priority to international exchanges and cooperation, in which it participates actively. China has established cooperative relationships with many countries, regions and international organizations in the spheres of infectious-disease response, biosafety and health, and has carried out research cooperation, technical exchanges and external assistance on a broad scale with positive results, thereby contributing to the development of the States implementing the Convention in the aforementioned areas.

2. China hereby reports to the Eighth Review Conference on major international cooperation it has undertaken in the aforementioned areas since the Seventh Review Conference, as follows:

A. Bilateral cooperation

3. China has undertaken cooperation with many countries in the spheres of infectious-disease response, biosafety, health, etc., and has actively provided assistance to developing countries to the limits of its ability.

1. Human health

(a) *Actively combating the Ebola epidemic*

4. In 2014, when the Ebola epidemic broke out in West Africa, China, along with the rest of the international community, actively provided practical assistance to the West African countries fighting the epidemic. This was the biggest international cooperation operation in the field of biosafety ever conducted by China.

5. After the outbreak of the epidemic, China considered the situation to be of the utmost importance and took decisive action, providing four rounds of assistance for control of the epidemic in Africa totalling some 750 million yuan renminbi, including funding, food, prevention and disease control materials, specialist staff, mobile laboratories and treatment centres. China sent mobile biosafety laboratories and complete detection and safety equipment sets to Sierra Leone, provided detection staff, doctors and nurses and built a stationary BSL-3 laboratory for their use.

6. The Chinese contingent included nearly 1,200 health-care and medical staff and examined nearly 9,000 specimens, observed, diagnosed and treated over 900 cases, and trained over 13,000 local health and prevention workers. It quickly adapted the Sierra Leone-China Friendship Hospital so that it was capable of accommodating 60 severely infectious patients at once. In Liberia, it quickly established a 100-bed Ebola diagnosis and treatment centre that made an important contribution towards effectively preventing and controlling the epidemic. Within a short time frame, China carried out work to develop diagnostic reagents, antiviral drugs and antibiotics, and in 2014 it quickly took the lead in the world's first research into genetic freeze-dried Ebola vaccines.

(b) *Strengthening bilateral exchanges for infectious disease prevention and control*

7. From November 2015 to the present, China has been actively planning for cooperation with Africa in the field of health for the post-Ebola period. China has established a cooperation and exchange programme for infectious diseases with Sierra Leone; it will assist with the construction of an infectious diseases unit at the military hospital and dispatch a specialist team to direct the assistance and provide guidance. China has also sent specialists to Sierra Leone to carry out phase II clinical trial assessments of Ebola haemorrhagic fever vaccines and to promptly report on the status of such work to the World Health Organization (WHO).

8. In May 2015, a Chinese military medical team specialized in infectious disease surveillance, prevention and control visited the United States of America Armed Forces Health Surveillance Center for an exchange between the two countries' militaries on infectious disease prevention and control.

(c) *Cooperation on biosafety in laboratories*

9. China has cooperation exchanges with scientific research institutions, including in the United States, France, Germany, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and Singapore. It is actively establishing a Chinese-African disease control and research sub-centre for microbiology and epidemic diseases. China takes part in the European Virus Archive goes global programme of the European Union and assists in establishing platforms for virus resource collections and for sharing information and carrying out studies. In the framework of newly established cooperation between France and China in the field of infectious diseases, the two sides carry out joint research for a comparative analysis of biosafety laws and regulations.

2. Animal health

(a) *Assistance and support for prevention and treatment of epizootic diseases*

10. In 2012 specialists were sent to Egypt to assist in the control of a poultry epidemic, and some 200,000 hoof and mouth disease vaccines were donated to the Lao People's Democratic Republic. In 2013, for example, standardized porcine reproductive and respiratory syndrome samples were provided for the South African Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries' veterinary service laboratory, and assistance was provided to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea for the diagnosis of avian influenza and of viral subtypes.

(b) *Mechanisms for joint prevention and control of transboundary animal diseases with neighbouring States*

11. With the support of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), China has already established and developed joint transboundary animal disease prevention and control mechanisms with neighbouring countries including Mongolia, the Russian Federation, Viet Nam, the Lao People's Democratic Republic and Myanmar.

3. Plant health

Active promotion of joint bilateral programmes for crop disease and pest prevention and control

12. China and Kazakhstan operate a joint locust control programme. They have established mechanisms for bilateral joint surveys, exchanges of information, work

exchanges and technical cooperation. China and Viet Nam carry out a prevention and control programme for migratory insect pests affecting rice paddies, with expert exchange visits, technical training activities and the sharing of information on diseases and pests.

B. Regional cooperation

13. China places a great deal of importance on regional cooperation and is actively carrying out a series of training activities and exchanges in the Asia-Pacific region and in Africa so as to improve the infectious disease prevention and control capabilities in the regions concerned.

1. Human health

(a) Tropical infectious diseases: cooperation and exchange

14. Since 2014, China has advocated for the establishment with the United States and Thailand of a trilateral mechanism for cooperation and exchange in dealing with tropical infectious diseases. By 2016 four trilateral tropical infectious disease symposiums had been held.

(b) Building up disease control capacities in the African region

15. From January 2016 to the present, China has actively taken part in the work to establish Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention of the African Union and the West African Tropical Disease Research and Prevention Centre located in Sierra Leone and has successively sent specialists to the countries in question to carry out field inspections to help locate the sites of the African Union Centres and secondary level centres.

2. Animal health

Active participation in the regional work of the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE)

16. As the vice-chair of the implementing council for the South-East Asia and China Foot and Mouth Disease (SEACFMD) Campaign of the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE), China has on numerous occasions convened national coordinators' meetings, carried out research into the epidemiology of hoof and mouth disease in the region and set out a road map for the prevention and control of the disease. At the same time, as the chair of the OIE Asia and Pacific committee, China presides over the regional meeting.

3. Plant health

(a) Cooperation in training in the Asian and African regions

17. China has stepped up its foreign aid in the area of cooperation for human resources development to help developing countries to train their personnel and increase their own development capacity. From 2005 to the present, it organized seven biotechnology training sessions for officials and technical specialists in the field of agriculture from 34 Asian and African countries, with a total of 174 persons taking part in the training activities.

(b) *Active participation in the Asia and Pacific Plant Protection Commission (APPPC)*

18. China actively takes part in the plant quarantine exchanges and training activities of the Asia and Pacific Plant Protection Commission.

C. Multilateral cooperation

19. China attaches a great deal of importance to cooperation with international organizations such as WHO, OIE and FAO and actively develops cooperation activities for infectious disease prevention and control, participates in the development of the relevant international standards, and reports epidemiological information to the respective international organizations as required.

1. Human health

20. Cooperation with WHO is constantly growing; China is strengthening its communication and cooperation with WHO and the relevant international organizations. It regularly communicates information on the epidemiological situation to WHO and other international organizations and the relevant countries and promptly takes the appropriate measures. It actively shares viral strains with WHO Collaborating Centres for Reference and Research on Influenza and with designated laboratories.

2. Animal health

(a) *Stepping up cooperation with OIE*

21. China actively participates in the work of OIE to establish and amend the relevant international standards, and it promptly and accurately reports epidemiological information to OIE on a regular basis. It carries out research into the OIE Terrestrial Animal Health Code and the Manual of Diagnostic Tests and Vaccines for Terrestrial Animals and actively puts forward the relevant positions and arguments of the Chinese Government to establish and amend standard-setting regulations. It accurately reports animal epidemiological information to OIE in a timely manner on the emergence of avian influenza, hoof and mouth disease and other diseases within China and at the same time, through its biannual and annual reports, provides information on other animal epidemics. Furthermore, China plays an active role in OIE certification of animal disease-free status for specific diseases.

(b) *Substantive cooperation with FAO*

22. China has carried out numerous substantive cooperation programmes with FAO in the field of veterinary medicine. The Chinese Field Epidemiology Training Programme for Veterinarians has conducted joint symposiums with FAO on animal epidemic prevention and disease control, for example for African swine fever; it has also organized and carried out value chain risk assessment activities for live poultry markets and raised biosafety levels at live poultry markets. It has completed phase 2 of the strengthened emerging pandemic threats (EPT+) programme.

3. Plant health

Active implementation of the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC)

23. China actively takes part in activities of the IPPC secretariat, such as the drawing up of international plant quarantine standards, international plant quarantine cooperation and the resolution of international technical trade disputes.

Colombia

24. Under article X of the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC), Colombia took part in the "*Workshop on Installations, Visits and Interviews*", which was held in Madrid, Spain, from 16 to 18 June 2014, at which, jointly with Chile, Mexico and Spain, it prepared a Working Document entitled *Aplicación Nacional de la Convención: Una herramienta para la evaluación de las instalaciones con agentes biológicos* (National application of the Convention: a tool for the assessment of installations with biological agents). This document offers States parties to the Convention a questionnaire designed to improve national capacities in terms of the acquisition of relevant information concerning installations working domestically with biological agents, and was presented at the 2014 BWC meeting of States parties (BWC/MSP/2014/WP.6), sponsored by Colombia.

25. In addition, this voluntary tool facilitates the unification of biosecurity and biosafety criteria in installations working with biological agents, thus helping to foster trust between the States parties that apply it and supplementing the mechanism of the United Nations Secretary-General for investigation in cases of the suspected use of biological weapons.

Mexico

Introduction

26. The Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction, which was the first binding instrument negotiated multilaterally in the framework of the United Nations to ban an entire category of weapons of mass destruction, entered into force over 40 years ago.

27. In line with its long-standing, unwavering commitment to disarmament and the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and also to international instruments, the Government of Mexico recognizes the importance of the Biological Weapons Convention as a pillar that strengthens the international security framework and contributes to the common goal of building a peaceful and safer world for present and future generations.

28. The Government of Mexico believes that full compliance with the undertakings outlined in article X of the Convention is essential to help developing countries to establish and develop their national capacities and address this multidimensional issue from a global public health perspective through cooperation and assistance in various forms while at the same time contributing to progress towards the goal of the Biological Weapons Convention to eliminate bacteriological (biological) and toxin weapons.

29. The exchange of scientific and technological information and equipment for peaceful purposes envisaged under the Convention is vital for building national capacities, preventing and responding to outbreaks of infectious disease and addressing the risk of biological attack.

30. To achieve this exchange, it is necessary to build on the principle of international assistance and cooperation between State parties using existing bilateral and multilateral mechanisms to address any current emergencies or crises, whether related to public health or security, and matching requests for technical assistance with offers of support.

31. States parties should consider the benefits of cooperation in its various forms, including the exchange of information, experience, lessons learned, best practices, education and technical expertise that can complement traditional forms of assistance, ensure the sustainability of projects and reduce inequalities between countries that have attained a high level of scientific and technological development and those that are developing their national capacities.

Activities of the Government of Mexico related to implementation of article X of the Biological Weapons Convention

32. Since there is no dedicated body responsible for overseeing the implementation of the Biological Weapons Convention in Mexico, this document was put together through the coordinated efforts of various government bodies whose duties are related to the issue. The information presented herein was gathered by the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Rural Development, Fisheries and Food.

33. The National Centre for Preventive Programmes and Disease Control (CENAPRECE), the Directorate General of Epidemiology (DGE), the Subdirector General of Epidemiology (DGAE) and the Institute of Epidemiological Diagnosis and Reference (InDRE), made contributions on behalf of the Ministry of Health.

34. The National Service for Agrifood Health, Safety and Quality made contributions on behalf of the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Rural Development, Fisheries and Food.

Activities of the Government of Mexico related to implementation of article X of the Biological Weapons Convention 2012-2016

2012

2012

Update of the National Plan for Health Protection and Preparedness for Bioterrorism and Biological Emergencies, with input from health-sector institutions and other bodies with directly or indirectly related duties.

Mexico City, 28 February-2 March 2012

Seminar on weapons of mass destruction and safety during high-impact events to give health personnel at all three levels a broader knowledge of these topics.

Mexico City, 10-13 April 2012

Workshop on high-impact event safety to build the capacities of health personnel at all three levels in high-impact event preparedness and response.

7-9 May 2012

Provision of an instructor for the biorisk management course organized in Panama by the Executive Secretariat of the Council of Central American Ministers of Health (SE-COMISCA), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO/WHO).

Mexico City, 14-18 May 2012

Second symposium on updating molecular tools in biomedical research. Participation in course on techniques for gathering useful information to update manuals and operating procedures.

La Paz, Baja California, 16-18 May 2012

Workshop on bioterrorism and radiological terrorism to build the capacities of health personnel at all three levels in high-impact event preparedness and response.

June 2012

Instructor and trainee participation in Commodity Identification Training (CIT) and Instructor Training (chemical/biological and bioagents and toxins) for customs personnel (two participants).

Online, 19 June 2012

Participation in course on the application of techniques, to update knowledge of Commission Regulation (EC) No. 2073/2005, as amended by Regulation (EC) No. 1441/2007, on microbiological criteria for foodstuffs. Gathering of useful information to update manuals and operating procedures.

2012

Valencia, Spain, 15-26 June 2012

Participation in course on the application of techniques, session on mycotoxins, to update knowledge of sampling and analysis methods used in the context of official food and feed controls. Gathering of useful information to update manuals and operating procedures.

Cuautitlán, State of Mexico, 30-31 June 2012

Participation in course on the application of techniques at symposium on veterinary drug bioequivalence in order to update knowledge. Gathering of useful information to update manuals and operating procedures.

July 2012

Instructor and trainee participation in Commodity Identification Training (CIT) for customs personnel (four participants).

30 July-3 August 2012

Provision of an instructor for biorisk workshop (biosafety and biosecurity) organized by the Gorgas Memorial Institute in Panama.

27-29 August 2012

Organization of a workshop on Laboratory Response Network (LRN) rapid techniques at the InDRE Biosafety Level Three laboratory, in collaboration with the United States Department of Health and Human Services. Cooperation with CDC and PAHO/WHO by providing an instructor for the biorisk management advanced trainer programme organized for staff of the Chilean public health laboratory network.

Jiutepec, Morelos, 19-21 September 2012

Participation in a course on the application of techniques, to update knowledge in the field of veterinary epidemiology. Gathering of useful information to update manuals and operating procedures.

Tecámac, State of Mexico, 13-15 November 2012

World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) regional workshop for advanced training of OIE national focal points for veterinary laboratories. Knowledge update and participation in course on the application of techniques. Gathering of useful information to update manuals and operating procedures.

27 events, various states in Mexico

Recognition, monitoring, prevention and control of the main emerging and exotic animal diseases. Raising students' awareness of the importance of timely reporting of exotic animal pests and diseases. Theoretical training for students of veterinary medicine, animal husbandry and related fields. Training of 1,537 students.

2012

3 events, various states in Mexico

Simulation exercise seminar on the main exotic animal diseases, systems and emergency plans (AUTOSIM I) to train staff in the monitoring, prevention, diagnosis, control and potential eradication of the main exotic animal pests and diseases. Theoretical training with a simulation exercise on foot-and-mouth disease, for staff of federal, state and/or municipal institutions involved in animal health. Training of 115 participants.

3 events, various states in Mexico

Simulation exercise seminar on systems and emergency plans for classical swine fever (AUTOSIM II) to train staff in the monitoring, prevention, diagnosis, control and potential eradication of classical swine fever. Theoretical training with a simulation exercise on classical swine fever, for staff of federal, state and/or municipal institutions involved in animal health. Training of 136 participants.

Cuautitlán, State of Mexico

Simulation exercise seminar on systems and emergency plans for African swine fever (AUTOSIM II) to train staff in the monitoring, prevention, diagnosis, control and potential eradication of African swine fever. Theoretical training with a simulation exercise on African swine fever, for staff of federal, state and/or municipal institutions involved in animal health. Training of 19 participants.

2013

2013

Panels attended: Global Health Security Action Group (GHSAG) panel on unknown pathogens, composed of the G7 countries and Mexico, to evaluate capacities to respond to emergency events involving unknown pathogens (including GR1, GR2, GR3 and GR4 pathogens).

Online, 15 January- 15 April 2013

Course on transboundary animal diseases as a tool for improving veterinary services related to emerging and exotic animal diseases. Theoretical training, including a specific module on bioterrorism. Introduction to methodological tools used in other countries for the prevention, control and eradication of transboundary animal diseases.

2013

31 January 2013

Vazquez-Perez, J.A., Isa, P., Kobasa, D., Ormsby, C.E., Ramírez-Gonzalez, J.E., Romero-Rodríguez, D.P., Ranadheera, C., Li, Y., Bastien, N., Embury-Hyatt, C., González-Duran, E., Barrera-Badillo, G., Ablanedo-Terrazas, Y., Sevilla-Reyes, E.E., Escalera-Zamudio, M., Cobián-Güemes, A.G., Lopez, I., Ortiz-Alcántara, J., Alpuche-Aranda, C., Perez-Padilla, J.R., Reyes-Terán, G., “A (H1N1) pdm09 HA D222 variants associated with severity and mortality in patients during a second wave in Mexico”, *Virology Journal*, vol. 10, 2013, p. 41.

March 2013

Martinez-Guarneros, A., Rastogi, N., Couvin, D., Escobar-Gutierrez, A., Rossi, L.M.G., Vazquez-Chacon, C.A., Rivera-Gutierrez, S., Lozano, D., Vergara-Castañeda, A., Gonzalez-Y-Merchand, J.A., Vaughan, G., “Genetic diversity among multidrug-resistant *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* strains in Mexico”, *Infection, Genetics and Evolution*, vol. 14, March 2013, pp. 434-443.

Mexico City, 12-15 March 2013

Second Fahrenheit 161 workshop on bioterrorism to identify key issues relating to coordination, management, monitoring, communications and response capacity among participating institutions; identify the steps to be taken at local, state and federal level, in accordance with the institutions’ responsibilities; and analyse the management capacity of workshop participants. Simulation exercise to determine the ability of different departments to make decisions based on limited information in a complex situation.

15 March 2013

Fahrenheit 161 workshop on bioterrorism, Directorate General of Epidemiology (DGE) (10 participants, 2 speakers).

Online, 16 April-31 May 2013

Course on transboundary animal diseases, as a tool to improve veterinary services related to emerging and exotic animal diseases. Theoretical training, including a specific module on bioterrorism. Introduction to methodological tools used in other countries for the prevention, control and eradication of transboundary animal diseases.

Guanajuato, Mexico, 6 June 2013

Course on risk assessment from a biosecurity perspective in the framework of the Fifth International Symposium on Biosafety and Biosecurity, to learn how to carry out a risk analysis, taking into account various issues relating to defence against biological agents. Theoretical and practical training on the subject. Introduction to methodological and information technology tools for conducting biological risk analysis and assessment.

Guanajuato, Mexico, 7-8 June 2013

Fifth International Symposium on Biosafety and Biosecurity. An opportunity for professionals to present and exchange specialized information on biosafety. Series of presentations on themes related to biosafety. Gathering of useful information to update manuals and operating procedures.

Calamanda, Querétaro, 30 July 2013

Course/workshop on trigeminal nerve sampling and diagnosis of Aujeszky's disease. Technique and method for trigeminal nerve sampling, preservation and transport for diagnosis. Theoretical and practical training on the subject. Follow-up on the agreements reached by states in the eradication phase and states where there is low prevalence of the disease. Increased certainty of diagnostic tests to detect the virus.

Ames, Iowa, 2-14 August 2013

International diagnostic laboratory network training course at the USDA/APHIS National Veterinary Services Laboratories. Participation in course on the application of techniques. Gathering of useful information to update manuals and operating procedures.

Jiutepec, Morelos, 16 August 2013

Symposium to update knowledge on anaplasmosis and babesiosis. Exchanging and broadening knowledge of anaplasmosis and babesiosis at a global level.

Brasilia, Brazil, 18-21 August 2013

Second international workshop for regulation of animal biotechnology. Participation in course on application of techniques and gathering of useful information to update manuals and operating procedures.

2013

September 2013	Lopez-Martinez, I., Balish, A., Barrera-Badillo, G., Jones, J., Nuñez-García, T.E., Jang, Y., Aparicio-Antonio, R., Azziz-Baumgartner, E., Belser, J.A., Ramirez-Gonzalez, J.E., Pedersen, J.C., Ortiz-Alcantara, J., Gonzalez-Duran, E., Shu, B., Emery, S.L., Poh, M.K., Reyes-Teran, G., Vazquez-Perez, J.A., Avila-Rios, S., Uyeki, T., Lindstrom, S., Villanueva, J., Tokars, J., Ruiz-Matus, C., Gonzalez-Roldan, J.F., Schmitt, B., Klimov, A., Cox, N., Kuri-Morales, P., Davis, C.T., Diaz-Quiñonez, J.A., “Highly pathogenic avian influenza A(H7N3) virus in poultry workers, Mexico, 2012”, <i>Emerging Infectious Diseases</i> , vol. 19, No. 9 (September 2013), pp. 1531-1534.
Berlin, Germany, 24-25 October 2013	Global Health Security Action Group Laboratory Network (GHSAG-LN) events attended by InDRE staff: one person attended the working meeting of the twenty-first meeting of the GHSAG-LN, Toronto, Canada on 4 and 5 June 2013; two persons attended the twenty-second meeting of the GHSAG-LN, Rome, Italy on 9 and 10 December 2013; and two persons received training at the GHSAG wet-lab workshop on diagnostic electron microscopy.
Mexico City, 13-14 November 2013	Regional workshop on national implementation of the Biological Weapons Convention for Central America and the Caribbean.
December 2013	Opening of new InDRE facilities, including laboratories that meet international biosafety and biosecurity standards. The InDRE facilities consist of 6,712 m ² of Biosafety Level Two (BSL-2) laboratories, 886 m ² of Biosafety Level Three (BSL-3) laboratories, and 40,000 m ² of facilities for technical, administrative and service activities. Staff moved into the facilities in December 2013, after it had been confirmed that the systems were working properly, and biological material was moved according to a schedule planned and executed by the relevant departments in coordination with one another. InDRE transferred all of the biological material registered in its inventory to the new facilities on 14 and 15 December 2013.
26 events, various states in Mexico	Recognition, monitoring, prevention and control of the main emerging and exotic animal diseases. Training provided by the Directorate General of Animal Health (DGSA) to raise students’ awareness of the importance of timely reporting of exotic animal pests and diseases. Theoretical training for 1,440 students of veterinary medicine, animal husbandry and related fields.

2013

1 event, Tuxtla Gutiérrez, Chiapas

Simulation exercise seminar on the main exotic animal diseases, systems and emergency plans (AUTOSIM I) to train staff in the monitoring, prevention, diagnosis, control and potential eradication of the main exotic animal pests and diseases. Theoretical training, including a simulation exercise on foot-and-mouth disease, for 15 members of staff of federal, state and/or municipal institutions involved in animal health.

2 events, various states in Mexico

Simulation exercise seminar on systems and emergency plans for classical swine fever (AUTOSIM II) to train staff in the monitoring, prevention, diagnosis, control and potential eradication of classical swine fever. Theoretical training, including a simulation exercise on classical swine fever, for 74 members of staff of federal, state and/or municipal institutions involved in animal health.

1 event, La Paz, Baja California

Simulation exercise seminar on systems and emergency plans for *Rhipicephalus (Boophilus)* spp tick infestations (AUTOSIM II) to train staff in the monitoring, prevention, diagnosis, control and potential eradication of *Rhipicephalus (Boophilus)* spp tick infestations. Theoretical training, including a simulation exercise on ticks, for 27 members of staff of federal, state and/or municipal institutions involved in animal health.

Mexico City, 6-7 November 2013

Series of presentations on bioterrorism and food defence, to share information on key national security issues relating to these fields. Gathering of useful information to update manuals and operating procedures.

2014

January 2014

Escobar-Escamilla, N., Ramírez-González, J.E., González-Villa, M., Torres-Mazadiego, P., Mandujano-Martínez, A., Barrón-Rivera, C., Bäcker, C.E., Fragoso-Fonseca, D.E., Olivera-Díaz, H., Alcántara-Pérez, P., Hernández-Solís, A., Cícero-Sabido, R., Cortés-Ortíz, I.A., “Hsp65 phylogenetic assay for molecular diagnosis of nontuberculous mycobacteria isolated in Mexico”, *Archives of Medical Research*, vol. 45, No. 1 (January 2014), pp. 90-97.

June 2014

Martínez, E.N., Dzul-Manzanilla, F., Gutiérrez-Castro, C., Ibarra-López, J., Bibiano-Marín, W., López-Damián, L., Martini-Jaimes, A., Huerta, H., Chemendoza, A., Ayora-Talavera, G., Manrique-Saide, P., “Natural vertical transmission of Dengue-1 Virus in *Aedes aegypti* populations in Acapulco, Mexico”, *Journal of the American Mosquito Control Association*, vol. 30, No. 2 (June 2014), pp. 143-146.

7-9 April 2014

In the framework of World Health Day, three events were organized: the official inauguration of InDRE; the second national meeting of health service directors (DGE/InDRE); and a meeting of the national network of public health laboratories (DGE/InDRE), attended by 32 directors of public health laboratories.

Public Health England (PHE) in Porton Down, 22-26 April 2014

Two InDRE representatives attended the twenty-third meeting of the GHSAG-LN, at which they presented a brief concluding report on the cholera outbreak in Mexico, shared information on the flu season in Mexico and reported on the experience of moving from the Casco de Santo Tomás facilities to the new facilities in Lomas de Plateros. PHE requested further detail on specific aspects of the move, because it will be centralizing its laboratories at a national headquarters over the coming years. The InDRE representatives provided further technical information and confirmed that the Government of Mexico was committed to holding the twenty-fourth meeting of the GHSAG-LN in the InDRE facilities in early November 2014. Contact: Dr. Alberto Diaz Quiñonez, Deputy Director General of InDRE

Finlandia Hall congress centre, Helsinki, Finland, 5-6 May 2014

Global Health Security Agenda — Commitment Development Meeting. Attended by representatives of the health and foreign affairs ministries of Finland and the United States of America. The discussions focused on the alignment of the Agenda with commitments under the International Health Regulations issued by the World Health Organization (WHO); antimicrobial resistance; emerging zoonotic diseases; national biosafety and biosecurity systems; monitoring capacities; communication; operations centres; response teams; and event reporting. The talks were held in working groups (Prevent, Detect, Respond) and the outcomes and conclusions then discussed. Other topics covered included methods used to measure progress towards targets and the importance of a multisectoral approach to the Agenda, with a focus on sustainability of commitments and the development of the sectors involved. The One Health initiative was presented by representatives of the OIE.

26-28 May 2014

Regional meeting of heads of national tuberculosis (TB) control programmes, attended by one InDRE representative. Discussion of regional initiatives to prepare for implementation of the WHO post-2015 End TB Strategy.

29 May 2014, InDRE/PAHO/WHO

Attendance at the regional meeting on collaborative TB/HIV activities, with participants from Argentina, the Bahamas, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Saint Lucia, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, Uruguay and Venezuela. Objectives: to analyse progress in the implementation of collaborative TB/HIV activities in the Americas following the 2011 Panama Call for Action; to review the situation regarding TB/HIV coinfection and the latest international programme recommendations; to share experiences of progress made in joint TB/HIV work in the region, with a focus on integration; to discuss ways of integrating TB and HIV services; and to make specific commitments for the next steps to be taken in the short and medium term.

2014

Madrid, Spain, 14-19 June 2014

Workshop to review and improve the interview questionnaire to be used in the framework of the United Nations Secretary-General's Mechanism for Investigation of Alleged Use of Chemical and Biological Weapons. Location: offices of the Spanish Directorate General for Foreign Policy and Multilateral, Global and Security Affairs. Representatives from the following countries were present: Mexico (two participants, one from InDRE), Argentina, Chile, Colombia and Spain. They worked on a document in which InDRE, as an expert and in view of the complexity of the issue, proposed including definitions accepted by the international community to clarify terms relating to biorisk management (including definitions used by WHO, CDC, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and in European Committee for Standardization (CEN) agreements). The document was submitted at the meeting of experts held at the United Nations Office at Geneva, Switzerland, from 4 to 8 August 2014.

Atlanta, Georgia, 26-27 June 2014

Visit to the CDC of the United States Department of Health and Human Services. Location: CDC facilities. The visit was attended by CDC national centre directors and divisional directors representing the United States of America, and representing Mexico, the Deputy Minister for Prevention and Health Promotion and four other participants from CENAPRECE, DGE and InDRE. There were presentations on advances in CDC-InDRE collaboration and the move to the new facilities, as well as a visit to the CDC Emergency Operations Center.

Mexico City, 30 June to 11 July 2014

Advanced instructor training on the identification of the dual-use goods, coordinated by the General Customs Department of Mexico and the Export Control and Related Border Security (EXBS) Program of the United States of America. One instructor from InDRE attended. Contact: Nachieli Carmona Quiroz, Central Office of International Customs Affairs, General Customs Department, Tax Administration Service (SAT).

3 July 2014

Escalera-Zamudio, M., Nelson, M.I., Cobián Güemes, A.G., López-Martínez, I., Cruz-Ortiz, N., Iguala-Vidales, M., García, E.R., Barrera-Badillo, G., Díaz-Quiñonez, J.A., López, S., Arias, C.F., Isa, P., Members of the Colegio de Pediatría del Estado de Veracruz, "Molecular epidemiology of influenza A/H3N2 viruses circulating in Mexico from 2003 to 2012", *PLOS ONE*, vol. 9, No. 7 (July 2014). pp. 1-11.

2014

August 2014

InDRE issued standardized guidelines for the epidemiological surveillance and laboratory diagnosis of Ebola virus disease, available at: http://portal.salud.gob.mx/ebola/pdf/lineamientos_estandarizados_ebola.pdf (in Spanish). Coordinated by DGE/InDRE, Ministry of Health. Contact: Belem Torres Longoria M.Sc.

8 August 2014

Two national training workshops for 60 health professionals of the National Health System, on biorisk management and use of personal protective equipment. Certification for the packaging and shipment of biological material. Contact: Lucía Hernández Rivas (biopharmaceutical chemist), Director of Services and Technical Support at InDRE.

September 2014

Díaz-Quiñonez, J.A., Hernández-Monroy, I., López-Martínez, I., Ortiz-Alcántara, J., González-Durán, E., Ruiz-Matus, C., Kuri-Morales, P., Ramírez-González, J.E., “Genome Sequence of *Vibrio cholerae* Strain O1 Ogawa El Tor, Isolated in Mexico, 2013”, *Genome Announcements*, vol. 2, No. 5 (September/October 2014).

Veracruz, Veracruz, 22-26 September 2014

Tabletop exercise on the Central American and Caribbean Games to raise awareness of the importance of coordination, management and response capacities in crisis situations linked to high-impact events involving biological agents. Exercise based on the presentation of a scenario, followed by questions for discussion and agreement on the responses. The event served as training for participating health personnel.

Panama City, Panama, 24-26 September 2014

Workshop on designing public health laboratories. Two participants from InDRE gave a presentation on the logistics of moving InDRE to its new facilities and the lessons learned (move reported in the 2014 confidence-building measures (CBM) form). Contact: SE-COMISCA and PAHO/WHO.

Mexico City, 3 October 2014

“Molecular diagnosis of bacterial wilt caused by *Ralstonia solanacearum* (Smith 1896) Yabuuchi *et al.* 1995.” Training provided by DGSA on techniques for detecting the bacterium *Ralstonia solanacearum* using end-point polymerase chain reaction (PCR) to differentiate between races 1 and 3, and related protocol issued to authorized signatories. Laboratory signatories learned how to detect the bacteria in susceptible crops that are of economic and nutritional importance, such as potatoes, tomatoes and chillies.

2014

Mexico City, 20-22 October 2014

Course on transporting dangerous goods by air in which participants learned how to apply the International Air Transport Association regulations on the packaging and air transport of dangerous goods in order to obtain certification, which is valid for two years.

1 November 2014

Esteves-Jaramillo, A., Estívariz, C.F., Peñaranda, S., Richardson, V.L., Reyna, J., Coronel, D.L., Carrión, V., Landaverde, J.M., Wassilak, S.G., Pérez-Sánchez, E.E., López-Martínez, I., Burns, C.C., Pallansch, M.A., "Detection of vaccine-derived polioviruses in Mexico using environmental surveillance", *The Journal of Infectious Diseases*, vol. 210, suppl. 1 (November 2014), pp. S315-S323.

<http://www.polioeradication.org>

http://www.who.int/csr/don/2013_07_15/en/

Mexico City, 4-5 November 2014

As a member of the GHSAG-LN, InDRE hosted the twenty-fourth meeting of the GHSAG-LN, which was attended by two representatives of Mexico. The main issues discussed were global security, the Ebola situation, agreements for the transfer of biological material and the organization of the third workshop on unknown pathogens and bioinformatics. Contact: Dr. Theodore Kuschak, Director, Network & Resilience Development, National Microbiology Laboratory, Public Health Agency of Canada, 1015 Arlington Street, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada, R3E 3R2.

2-4 December 2014, financed and coordinated by PAHO/WHO

InDRE hosted the international meeting on preparedness and response in case of the introduction of Ebola virus disease in the Americas. Consultation with experts in virology, laboratory diagnosis and biorisk management. Review of technical subjects such as diagnostic algorithms, collecting, packaging and transporting samples and safe disposal of waste. Tour of the InDRE facilities. Attended by representatives of seven Latin American countries.

Geneva, Switzerland, 24-26 November 2015

Participation in the Extended Biosafety Advisory Group meeting. Presentation of the country's experiences and progress made in the implementation of biorisk management systems at InDRE. During the meeting, discussions covered the progress made by regional offices and representatives bodies, training and certification programmes for biosafety officers, the current status of document CWA (CEN Workshop Agreement 15793 on Laboratory Biorisk Management in International Organization for Standardization (ISO) procedures and the revision of the WHO laboratory biosafety manual.

38 events, various states in Mexico

Recognition, monitoring, prevention and control of the main emerging and exotic animal diseases. Raising students' awareness of the importance of timely reporting of exotic animal pests and diseases. Theoretical training for 2,059 students of veterinary medicine, animal husbandry and related fields.

3 events, various states in Mexico

Simulation exercise seminar on the main exotic animal diseases, systems and emergency plans (AUTOSIM I) to train staff in the monitoring, prevention, diagnosis, control and potential eradication of the main exotic animal pests and diseases. Theoretical training, including a simulation exercise on foot-and-mouth disease, for 89 members of staff of federal, state and/or municipal institutions involved in animal health.

1 event, Ensenada, Baja California

Simulation exercise seminar on systems and emergency plans for *Rhipicephalus (Boophilus)* spp tick infestations (AUTOSIM II) to train staff in the monitoring, prevention, diagnosis, control and potential eradication of *Rhipicephalus (Boophilus)* spp tick infestations. Theoretical training, including a simulation exercise on ticks, for 29 members of staff of federal, state and/or municipal institutions involved in animal health.

1 event, Ciudad Obregón, Sonora

Simulation exercise seminar on systems and emergency plans for highly pathogenic avian influenza (AUTOSIM II) to train staff in the monitoring, prevention, diagnosis, control and potential eradication of highly pathogenic avian influenza. Theoretical training, including a simulation exercise on highly pathogenic avian influenza, for 25 members of staff of federal, state and/or municipal institutions involved in animal health.

2015

1 event, Oaxaca de Juárez, Oaxaca

Simulation exercise seminar on systems and emergency plans for small hive beetle infestations (AUTOSIM II) to train staff in the monitoring, prevention, diagnosis, control and potential eradication of small hive beetle infestations. Theoretical training, including a simulation exercise on small hive beetle infestations, for 36 members of staff of federal, state and/or municipal institutions involved in animal health.

2 events, various states in Mexico

Simulation exercise seminar on systems and emergency plans in aquaculture (AUTOSIM II) to train staff in the monitoring, prevention, diagnosis, control and potential eradication of diseases that affect aquaculture. Theoretical training, including a simulation exercise on diseases that affect aquaculture, for 47 members of staff of federal, state and/or municipal institutions involved in animal health.

Online, 2 February to 30 April 2015

Course on transboundary animal diseases to improve veterinary services for emerging and exotic animal diseases. Theoretical training, including a specific module on bioterrorism. Introduction to methodological tools used in other countries for the prevention, control and eradication of transboundary animal diseases.

Mexico City, 5 March 2015

Workshop on completing the CBM (confidence-building measures) form, held at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in conjunction with the Centre for Investigation and National Security, with the aim of bringing together representatives and researchers from national BSL-2 and BSL-3 laboratories that produce human or animal vaccines, making them aware of how important it is for Mexico, as a State party, to submit the CBM form in a timely manner, and promoting the principle of transparency and accountability in the framework of the Biological Weapons Convention.

22-25 March 2015

Lloret-Sánchez, L., Fragoso-Fonseca, D., Corona-Valdespino, E., Esteban-Valencia, M. del C., Gonzalez-Villa, M., Ramirez-Gonzalez, J.E., Diaz-Quíñonez, J.A., Escobar-Escamilla, N. (InDRE. Ministry of Health), “Implementación de un método de RT-qPCR para la determinación de la carga viral del VHC”, National Microbiology Congress, Querétaro, 22-25 March 2015.

7 May 2015

Díaz-Quinonez, J.A., Ortiz-Alcántara, J., Fragoso-Fonseca, D.E., Garcés-Ayala, F., Escobar-Escamilla, N., Vázquez-Pichardo, M., Núñez-León, A., Torres-Rodríguez, M. de L., Torres-Longoria, B., López-Martínez, I., Ruíz-Matus, C., Kuri-Morales, P., Ramírez-González, J.E., “*Complete genome sequences of chikungunya virus strains isolated in Mexico: first detection of imported and autochthonous cases*”, *Genome Announcements*, vol. 3, No. 3 (May/June 2015).

27-30 May 2015

Esteban-Valencia, M. del C., Lloret-Sánchez, L., Corona-Valdespino, E., Fragoso-Fonseca, D., Gonzalez-Villa, M., Escobar-Escamilla, N., Ramirez-Gonzalez, J.E. (InDRE, Ministry of Health), “*Distribución de los Genotipos del Virus de la Hepatitis C en una Población Mexicana*”, *Fortieth National Congress of Infectious Diseases and Clinical Microbiology*, San Luis Potosí, 27-30 May 2015.

Mexico City, 3 June 2015

Course on the maintenance and operations of a BSL-3 laboratory, during the Seventh International Symposium on Biosafety and Biosecurity, highlighting the critical points that need to be monitored in a BSL-3 laboratory to ensure that operations are being conducted properly. Theoretical training on the subject. Acquisition of information useful for planning and implementing a laboratory maintenance plan.

Mexico City, 5-6 June 2015

Seventh International Symposium on Biosafety and Biosecurity. Opportunity for professionals to present and exchange specialized information on biosafety. Series of presentations on themes relating to biosafety. Gathering of useful information to update manuals and operating procedures.

9 July 2015

Garcés-Ayala, F., Rodríguez-Castillo, A., Ortiz-Alcántara, J.M., Gonzalez-Durán, E., Segura-Candelas, J.M., Pérez-Agüeros, S.I., Escobar-Escamilla, N., Méndez-Tenorio, A., Diaz-Quinonez, J.A., Ramirez-González, J.E., “*Full-Genome Sequence of a Novel Varicella-Zoster Virus Clade Isolated in Mexico*”, *Genome Announcements*, vol. 3, No. 4 (July/August 2015).

Mexico City, September 2015

National scientific conference on health regulations and reference standards.

Tecámac, State of Mexico, 2 and 4 September 2015

Course on biosafety in pig farming, in the framework of training for animal health testing laboratories, to update the skills and knowledge of technical staff involved in pig breeding and maintain biosafety in production units. Series of presentations on topics related to pig health.

2015

Tecámac, State of Mexico, 7-10 September 2015

Training workshop on diagnosis and surveillance of plant diseases caused by *Xylella fastidiosa* to develop a regional contingency plan. Implementation of a comprehensive four-day training programme on plant disease diagnosis (two days of laboratory training for staff who carry out diagnosis) and epidemiological surveillance of plant diseases (two days for staff who carry out field work).

Guadalajara, Jalisco, 17-18 September 2015

Course on major diseases in pig farming, in the framework of training for professionals and third-party specialists in good husbandry practices on pig farms, to train professionals in how to apply best practices and enable them to obtain certification from the Directorate General of Agrifood, Aquaculture and Fishery Product Safety (DGIAAP).

Ciudad Obregón, Sonora, 24-25 September 2015

Course on major diseases in pig farming and their movement through national territory, in the framework of training for professionals and third-party specialists in good husbandry practices on pig farms, to train professionals in how to apply best practices and enable them to obtain certification from the DGIAAP.

22-25 September 2015

Lloret-Sánchez, L.T., Díaz-Quiñonez, J.A., Fragoso-Fonseca, D.E., Corona-Valdespino, E., Esteban-Valencia, M.C., Torres-Cosme, H.M., González-Villa, M., Ramírez-González, J.E., Escobar-Escamilla, N. (InDRE, Ministry of Health), “*Desarrollo de un método de RT-qPCR para la determinación de la carga viral del virus de la Hepatitis C*”, National Virology Congress, Morelos, 22-25 September 2015.

22-25 September 2015

Pérez-Agüeros, S.I., Ortiz-Alcántara, J.M., Garcés-Ayala, F., González-Durán, E., Hernández-Moreno, A.L., Méndez Tenorio, A., Escobar-Escamilla, N., Iguala-Vidales, M., García Lozano, H., Barrera-Badillo, G., Cruz-Ramírez, E., Vázquez Pichardo, M., Torres Longoria, B., López Martínez, I., Díaz-Quiñonez, J.A. and Ramírez-González, J.E. (InDRE), “*Aplicación de la secuenciación masiva para la obtención de la secuencia del genoma completo de diferentes virus de RNA de importancia médica*”, National Virology Congress, Morelos, 22-25 September 2015.

22-25 September 2015

González Durán, E. (1), Núñez León, A. (1), Torres Rodríguez, M.L. (1), Rosales Jiménez, C. (1), Vázquez Pichardo, M. (1), Ortiz Alcántara, J. (2), Barrón Romero, B.L. (2), López Merino, A. (2), Wong Arámbula, C. (1), Hernández Moreno, A.L. (1), Garcés Ayala, F. (1), Salas Benito, J.S. (3), Salazar Sánchez, M.I. (2), Méndez Tenorio, A. (2), Torres Longoria, B. (1), Hernández Rivas, L. (1), López Hernández, I. (1), Díaz-Quiñones, J.A. (1), Ramírez González, J.E. (1), “Variability analysis of E, Ns5 And Ns3 proteins for DENV-1 in cases of severe dengue during the 2012-2014 season in Mexico”, National Virology Congress, Morelos, 22-25 September 2015.

(1) Molecular Biology Laboratory and Arbovirus Laboratory, InDRE, Francisco P. Miranda 17, Lomas de Plateros, 01480 Álvaro Obregón. Tel.: +52 (55) 5062-1600.

(2) Escuela Nacional de Ciencias Biológicas (National School of Biological Sciences), Prolongación Carpio y Plan de Ayala s/n, Col. Santo Tomás, CP 11340, Miguel Hidalgo. Tel.: +52 (55) 5729-6300.

(3) Escuela Nacional de Medicina y Homeopatía (National School of Medicine and Homeopathy).

6 November 2015

Ortiz-Alcántara, J.M., Segura-Candelas, J.M., Garcés-Ayala, F., Gonzalez-Durán, E., Rodríguez-Castillo, A., Alcántara-Pérez, P., Wong-Arámbula, C., González-Villa, M., León-Ávila, G., García-Chéquer, A.J., Diaz-Quiñones, J.A., Méndez-Tenorio, A., Ramírez-González, J.E., “Fatal *Psychrobacter* sp. infection in a paediatric patient with meningitis identified by metagenomic next-generation sequencing in cerebrospinal fluid”, *Archives of Microbiology*, vol. 198, No. 2 (March 2016), pp. 129-135.

Irapuato, Guanajuato, 19-20 November 2015

Course on major diseases in pig farming and their movement through national territory, in the framework of the Pig Product System training programme for professionals and third-party specialists on good husbandry practices on pig farms, to train professionals in how to apply best practices and enable them to obtain certification from the DGIAAP.

2015

25-28 November 2015

Rodríguez Castillo, A., Mandujano Martínez, A. del P., Bäcker, C.E., González Villa, M., Martínez Rivera, I.I., Andrade Montiel, E., Torres Mazadiego, B.P., Dávila Reyes, E., Torres Cosme, M., Hernández Rivas, L., Ramírez González, J.E. (InDRE, Ministry of Health), “Estandarización de la técnica de PCR para la diferenciación de las especies del complejo *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*”, First International Congress on Molecular Biomedicine, Mazatlán Sinaloa, 25-28 November 2015.

45 events, various states in Mexico

Recognition, monitoring, prevention and control of the main emerging and exotic animal diseases. Raising students’ awareness of the importance of timely reporting of exotic animal pests and diseases. Theoretical training for 2,610 students of veterinary medicine, animal husbandry and related fields.

2 events, various states in Mexico

Simulation exercise seminar on the main exotic animal diseases, systems and emergency plans (AUTOSIM I) to train staff in the monitoring, prevention, diagnosis, control and potential eradication of the main exotic animal pests and diseases. Theoretical training, including a simulation exercise on foot-and-mouth disease, for 55 members of staff of federal, state and/or municipal institutions involved in animal health.

3 events

Simulation exercise seminar on systems and emergency plans in aquaculture (AUTOSIM II) to train staff in the monitoring, prevention, diagnosis, control and potential eradication of diseases that affect aquaculture. Theoretical training, including a simulation exercise on diseases that affect aquaculture, for 83 members of staff of federal, state and/or municipal institutions linked to animal health.

2016

La Paz, Baja California Sur, 17-29 May 2016

Participation in a course on the application of techniques and updating of knowledge on DNA microarrays and bioinformatics.

2016

22 events, various states in Mexico

Recognition, monitoring, prevention and control of the main emerging and exotic animal diseases. Raising students' awareness of the importance of timely reporting of exotic animal pests and diseases. Theoretical training for 1,333 students of veterinary medicine, animal husbandry and related fields.

2 events, various states in Mexico

Simulation exercise seminar on the main exotic animal diseases, systems and emergency plans (AUTOSIM I) to train staff in the monitoring, prevention, diagnosis, control and potential eradication of the main exotic animal pests and diseases. Theoretical training, including a simulation exercise on diseases, for 46 members of staff of federal, state and/or municipal institutions involved in animal health.

1 event, Villahermosa, Tabasco

Simulation exercise seminar on systems and emergency plans in aquaculture (AUTOSIM II) to train staff in the monitoring, prevention, diagnosis, control and potential eradication of diseases that affect aquaculture. Theoretical training, including a simulation exercise on diseases that affect aquaculture, for 17 members of staff of federal, state and/or municipal institutions involved in animal health.

Qatar

35. Medical institutions in Qatar and biological laboratories in the country's universities monitor scientific and technological advances relevant to the Convention. Qatar also supports applied biological research and encourages peaceful international scientific and technological cooperation and the exchange of biological information. It also attends scientific conferences and workshops and provides backing for specialized scientific research.

36. The National Committee for the Prohibition of Weapons has organized four awareness-raising seminars on the Biological Weapons Convention. The seminars were aimed at persons whose work in State institutions or in the private sector involves contact with biological materials. The purpose was to train them in the application of the Biological Weapons Act of Qatar, make them familiar with the provisions of the Biological Weapons Convention and show them how to combat bioterrorism through the application of biosecurity protocols.

37. It must be pointed out that Qatar applies international health laws in its integrated contagious-disease monitoring system and in the containment of microbial diseases. In such emergency disease-control situations, the Ministry of Health's health directorate steps in to respond, take charge and dispense treatment.

38. The system relies on notification from doctors, laboratory reports, the general public and any information regarding situations of contagious disease. At the international level, Qatar cooperates with the World Health Organization by submitting weekly, seasonal and annual reports on disease outbreaks.

39. Qatar believes that responding to biological weapons and bioterrorism, which threaten national, regional and international security, and confronting the perils that menace the health of humans, animals and plants, and the safety of food, requires a redoubling of efforts and effective cooperation to implement the Convention, as well as a focus on implementing Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) and other relevant international resolutions.
