International Workshop on Responding to the Alleged Use of Biological Weapons
Madrid, 16-18 June 2010

OPENING REMARKS DELIVERED BY
THE EU PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE ON NON-PROLIFERATION,
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Seul le texte délivré fait foi.
Es gilt das gesprochene Wort.
Good morning, Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen. On behalf of EU High Representative Ashton, welcome to the second international workshop organized in the context of the EU Joint Action in support of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention. I am pleased that so EU Member States, partner countries and international organizations are participating in this workshop.

Let me welcome in particular the representatives of our guests from Brazil, Canada, Cuba, Kenya, Malaysia, the Philippines, South Africa, the USA, the FAO, the ICRC, Interpol, OPCW, the OIE and the WHO.

I would like to thank the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Spain and the International Affairs and Foreign Policy Institute, INCIFE, for hosting the workshop. I would especially like to thank INCIFE's director, Professor Vicente Garrido for his great support. I would also like to thank Karin Hjalmarsson and Sarka Krcalova from the Implementation Support Unit and the staff at INCIFE for all their efforts in preparations of this workshop.

The EU strongly supports all multilateral non-proliferation and disarmament instruments, including the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention. We believe that discussion with partners is key to tackle the challenges we face in the bio-area together. We have invited you to discuss in this small, informal format this year's intersessional topic, response to the alleged use of biological weapons. We look forward to learning from all of you. Our objective is to submit a chairman's summary of the discussions as an EU working paper for this year's expert meeting. We hope that our discussions here will be a useful contribution to the BTWC inter-sessional process. The outcome of our
previous workshop, held in Brussels in November 2009, was also distributed as a working paper at last year's states parties meeting.

Chatham House rules will apply to this meeting. This means that information obtained from this meeting may be used, but may not be attributed to an individual, country or organization.

2010 and 2011 are important years for the BTWC. The EU has started to discuss its position for the 2011 Review Conference. In the run-up to the RevCon, the EU looks forward to close consultations with partners. We believe that next year will be an important opportunity to make progress on the BTWC and we hope that this workshop will contribute to the positive momentum in the BTWC.

As you know, 2010 is also a challenging year for the EU: The Lisbon Treaty entered into force in December 2011. It is meant to strengthen EU foreign policy. The EU is in the process of establishing a European External Action Service, which is not easy. The rotating Presidency will not exist anymore in foreign affairs. My service, for example, will be transferred to the EEAS. We hope that the EEAS will be operational by the end of the year.

I wish you all a successful workshop and I look forward to discussing with you during the sessions and in the margins.