

Excellencies, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen,

IAP: The Global Network of Science Academies recognises the important contribution developments in science and technology can make to international policy processes such as the Biological Weapons Convention. The members of its Biosecurity Working Group, which includes the national academies of Australia, China, Cuba, Egypt, India, Nigeria, Pakistan, Poland (the chair), Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States, note with satisfaction that the last review conference established a platform for linking science and policy-making through a standing agenda item under the intersessional work programme. We congratulate you on taking this initiative and stand ready to assist you in finding an optimal approach for making science-based policy.

The IAP has played an important role in past efforts to consider the implications of developments in science and technology for the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention and to help foster discussions among members of the scientific community and scientific and technical experts from national governments and ministries.

During the course of its work, for example, the IAP hosted an international workshop with the Royal Society and the International Council for Science in 2006 to review relevant developments in preparation for the treaty's Sixth Review Conference (1) and an international workshop with the US National Academy of Sciences and the Chinese Academy of Sciences in 2010 in advance of the Seventh Review Conference (2). These meetings each convened approximately 75 participants in multiple areas of expertise and from multiple countries and international organizations. The subsequent reports were provided to national delegations and are available online.

In preparation for the BWC's Eighth Review Conference next year, the IAP Biosecurity Working Group, in collaboration with the Royal Society, the US National Academy of Sciences, and the Polish Academy of Sciences is pleased to announce that it will once again support efforts to consider the implications of recent advances in science and technology.(3)

Our efforts will cover advances already discussed by the BWC during the current intersessional work programme as well as advances in production, dispersal and delivery technologies of biological agents and toxins, identified as the focus of this year's work, as well as other emerging trends and advances in the life sciences and biotechnology.

The IAP has already commissioned a review of relevant developments that could further the aims of this treaty as well those that could be applied to uses contrary to its purposes. . In September 2015, we will convene an international meeting of scientists, technologists and national technical experts to further examine these issues. Preliminary findings will be ready to

feed into the Meeting of States Parties in December. We hope that our efforts will help States Parties in their work under the relevant standing agenda item this year and assist in preparations for the review conference next year.

The IAP wishes you a constructive Meeting of Experts and through our ongoing policy work hopes to provide timely, independent and authoritative advice to policymakers such as yourselves.

(1) https://royalsociety.org/~media/Royal_Society_Content/policy/publications/2006/8245.pdf

(2) <http://www.nap.edu/catalog/13130/life-sciences-and-related-fields-trends-relevant-to-the-biological>

(3) <http://www.iapbwg.pan.pl/>