2019 BWC Meeting of States Parties
Agenda item 6: Consideration of the factual reports of the Meetings of Experts reflecting their deliberations, including possible outcomes

Statement on MX2 by the United States of America

- Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My Delegation would like to thank our Belarusian colleague, Mr. Yury Nikolaichik, for chairing MX2 and for preparing Annex 1 of its factual report. In August, we were encouraged by the interest of many States Parties in the topic of science and technology.

- Upon reflecting on these fruitful discussions, we also see widespread interest in deepening discussion around a few topics in advance of the upcoming Review Conference.

- From the August discussions and the Chair’s Summary Report, we perceive three areas of widespread interest.

- First: Developing a systematic and structured science and technology review process. We recognize that differences exist among the various proposals, but the chairman identified areas of commonality in his report. These include: the need for geographical diversity, a broad range of scientific expertise, insulation from political influence, and adequate personnel and financial resources. We believe these would be good starting points as we begin to negotiate our differences on a science and technology process.

- A second area of widespread interest is sharing approaches for risk and benefit assessment and management methods. We found this morning’s side event on qualitative frameworks useful. We believe many States Parties would like to learn more about these methods – especially as they could apply to the benefits of scientific capabilities.

- The third area is in developing a voluntary code of conduct, or perhaps voluntary biosecurity ethical guidelines. These broad guidelines ought to be from the ground up, from the practitioner communities and be adaptable to be
incorporated into existing codes. My delegation is actively exploring how to further the scientific community’s role in developing such ethical guidelines.

- For all of these efforts, now is the time to take practical steps. My delegation is ready and willing to work with other States Parties to develop mutually acceptable approaches.

- In advance of our next meeting of experts, my delegation welcomes further work on practical, concrete steps.