Statement by Professor Graham S Pearson of the University of Bradford, Division of Peace Studies, to the Preparatory Committee to the 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

Mr. Chairman and Distinguished Representatives. It is a great honour to be invited to make a Statement to the Preparatory Committee meeting to the Eighth Review Conference of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention which I am doing on behalf of the Division of Peace Studies of the University of Bradford in Yorkshire in the United Kingdom. We consider that this Preparatory Committee meeting is of particular importance as it provides an opportunity for States Parties to consider comprehensively all provisions of the Convention in preparing for the Eighth Review Conference in November 2016.

As biological warfare is the deliberate use of disease against humans, animals or plants, all the States Parties to the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention need to seize the opportunity provided by the Eighth Review Conference to strengthen the Convention. The briefing book1 entitled "Strengthening the Biological Weapons Convention: Key Points for the Eighth Review Conference" edited by Nicholas Sims of the London School of Economics, Malcolm Dando and myself of the University of Bradford is intended to help achieve ambitions which are both realistic and effective.

Mr. Chairman

These Key Points for the Eighth Review Conference have been prepared to provide the States Parties to the BTWC with an Article by Article review of the Convention. Each chapter commences by stating the relevant Article of the Convention and recalling the section relating to that Article in the Final Declaration of the Seventh Review Conference in 2011. The developments since the Seventh Review Conference relevant to that Article are then outlined before addressing the issues for the Eighth Review Conference and each chapter ends by recommending points to be considered both for the section dealing with that Article in the Final Declaration and, where appropriate, for the Decisions and Recommendations part of the Final Document.

Most chapters deal with one Article apiece. However, two chapters are devoted to Article IV – one on Providing Reassurance and the other on Education, Outreach and Codes of Conduct – and two to Article V – one on Consultation and Cooperation and the other on Confidence-Building Measures. In regard to Article IV and biosecurity education, Bradford Review Conference Paper No. 32 entitled Effective Biosecurity Education Implementation: The Vital Importance of a Coordinated Approach2 issued in June 2016 provides further relevant information. It should also be noted that, after the Article by Article chapters, additional

1 Available at: http://www.brad.ac.uk/acad/sbtwc/briefing/KeyPoints8.pdf
2 Available at: http://www.brad.ac.uk/acad/sbtwc/briefing/RCP_32.pdf
chapters are devoted to the review of the Preamble and Purposes of the Convention, including points for the Solemn Declaration, under Agenda Item 10(c); and to each of Agenda Items 11 and 12. Finally, for the convenience of delegations, Appendices contain the texts of the Convention and of Parts II and III of the Final Document of the Seventh Review Conference.

Mr. Chairman

The introductory chapter entitled *Time for Structural Changes to make the BTWC more effective* provides our appreciation of a set of entirely achievable and realistic ambitions. In this chapter we recognize the last Intersessional Period has produced disappointing results and the practice at the annual Meetings of States Parties has been to agree the substantive paragraphs of their Reports by using the approach of consensus by deletion rather than recognizing that an objective can be achieved by various alternatives. We consider that States Parties need to prepare for the Eighth Review Conference by considering structural changes which will enable them to work together more **effectively** to strengthen the Convention and its implementation.

We recommend that the Eighth Review Conference should consider whether a more effective arrangement would be to have an Annual Meeting of States Parties with a clear mandate to agree actions as appropriate, supported by Open-Ended Working Groups (OEWG) and a Technical Working Group. One OEWG should address the topic of relevant advances in science and technology whilst a second OEWG should address providing reassurance that States Parties are implementing all Articles of the Convention. A Technical Working Group should address enhancing the effectiveness of the Confidence-Building Measures (CBM) process, increasing participation therein, revising the forms as necessary and further developing the electronic platform.

We also recommend that in order to provide leadership and continuity during the next Intersessional Period, a Steering Committee should be established that would be made up of the Chair and Vice-Chairs of the Annual Meeting of States Parties together with the Chairs of the Open-Ended and Technical Working Groups. This Steering Committee would also be responsible for an Action Plan on Universalisation (see chapter on Article XIV) and for achieving progress in regard to the 1925 Geneva Protocol (see chapter on Article VIII), working in both cases closely with the respective Depositaries. There is also a clear need for enhanced resources for the Implementation Support Unit (see chapter on Agenda Item 11) and we show that this would annually cost individual States Parties less than 4½ per cent of the cost of OPCW membership.

These are all realistic and achievable objectives that will effectively strengthen the Convention.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
