BACKGROUND DOCUMENT ON COMPLIANCE BY STATES PARTIES WITH ALL THEIR OBLIGATIONS UNDER THE CONVENTION ON THE PROHIBITION OF THE DEVELOPMENT, PRODUCTION AND STOCKPILING OF BACTERIOLOGICAL (BIOLOGICAL) AND TOXIN WEAPONS AND ON THEIR DESTRUCTION

1. The Preparatory Committee for the Second Review Conference of the Parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on their Destruction, in paragraph 18 of its report (BWC/CONF.II/1), requested the Secretariat to prepare a background document on compliance by States parties with all their obligations under the Convention. For that purpose, States parties were requested to provide information regarding compliance with all the provisions of the Convention.

2. The present document contains the information provided by States parties.
The People's Republic of China

The People's Republic of China has consistently opposed biological weapons and has strictly observed the Convention and the Geneva Protocol of 1925. Whether before or after it became a party to the Convention, China has never developed, produced, stockpiled or otherwise acquired or retained biological agents, toxins, weapons, equipment or means of delivery specified in article I of the Convention.

Since China is not in possession of the biological agents, toxins, weapons, equipment or means of delivery specified in article I, the question of destroying them or diverting them to peaceful purposes or of transferring them in any form does not arise at all. China has never in any way assisted, encouraged or induced any State, group of States or international organization to manufacture or otherwise acquire any of the biological agents, toxins, weapons, equipment or means of delivery specified in article I.

As regards article X of the Convention, Chinese scientific research institutes have done a considerable amount of research on the use of biological products for peaceful purposes and have applied the results of such research to the prevention and cure of disease and the development of pharmacy, food-processing, light industry and agriculture. China has taken an active part in international scientific and technological exchanges in the field of biological products (including toxins) for the prevention of infectious diseases and other peaceful purposes. Marked successes have been achieved and continued progress is being made in China's co-operation and exchanges with WHO and UNICEF as well as other international organizations and States, in the fields of medical treatment and public health.

China has participated actively in the negotiations of the Conference on Disarmament on the prohibition of chemical weapons in the hope of concluding at an early date a convention on the complete prohibition and thorough destruction of chemical weapons.

Czechoslovakia

Being a Contracting Party to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on their Destruction, the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic fully complies with the obligations enshrined in its provisions and does not carry any weapons of that sort.

In accordance with the provisions of article X of the Convention, the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic assists and participates, within its possibilities, in the exchange of devices, materials and scientific and technological appliances and information relating to the use of bacteriological (biological) agents and toxins for peaceful purposes and takes part in a number of various forms of international co-operation in the field of peaceful bacteriological (biological) activities.

The Czechoslovak Socialist Republic considers that all new results of scientific and technological development that bear a relation to the Convention are already covered in its present wording.
Denmark

With reference to paragraph 18 of the report of the Preparatory Committee, I can inform you that prior to ratification of the said Convention, the Danish governmental departments concerned ascertained that no legislation, amendments of existing national law or other measures would be necessary in order to secure compliance with the obligations of the Convention. Accordingly, the requirements contained in the Convention have already been implemented in Danish law and practice. As a party to the Biological Weapons Convention and a signatory to the Geneva Protocol of 1925, Denmark continues to comply fully with the obligations of the Convention.

With respect to the provisions of article X of the Convention, Denmark continues its traditional participation in international public health efforts comprising inter alia co-operative scientific programmes in the field of microbiology and related sciences. Thus, Denmark is presently hosting several WHO reference centres and has in recent years, through the governmental agency DANIDA, concluded a number of bilateral health agreements including exchange of pre- and post-graduate students to Danish biological institutions.

Netherlands

Article I

The Netherlands has fully complied with the provisions of this article.

Article II

The Netherlands does not fall into this category of States parties.

Article III

The Netherlands has fully complied with the terms of this article.

Article IV

The Netherlands ratified the biological weapons Convention on 22 June 1981. The Netherlands felt it necessary to lay down national regulations in accordance with this article as well. The Netherlands act of implementation was made available to the United Nations Centre for Disarmament.

Article X

In accordance with article X, the Netherlands participates in different forms of international co-operation for peaceful purposes. In this context, it is pointed out that co-operation for peaceful purposes in the Netherlands mostly takes place between the private sector, private institutions and/or semi-governmental institutions. Examples are to be found in the field of food technology, medicine and public health.

Norway

In preparation for the first Review Conference of the Parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on their Destruction
held in 1980, Norway submitted a statement to the fact that Norway had complied fully with all provisions of the Convention (ref. document BWC/CONF.I/4).

In response to the request for information regarding compliance with the Convention in connection with the second Review Conference, Norway, referring to her earlier statement, confirms that there has been no change in Norway's position.

Thus, Norway has never developed, produced or stockpiled any biological or toxin weapons. Norway has never transferred any biological or toxin weapons nor provided assistance for their production to anyone. Prohibition of activities in violation of article I of the Convention has been included in the Norwegian penal code. All research in micro-organisms and toxins is directed solely towards problems related to medical treatment and prophylaxis. In accordance with the substance and spirit of article X the research is unclassified, and the results are published in scientific literature.

Sweden

In 1970, the Swedish Government declared that Sweden does not possess and does not intend to acquire biological and chemical weapons. This declaration retains its full validity. No ongoing national activity violates the provisions of the Convention, which Sweden signed on 27 February 1975 and ratified on 5 February 1976.

Already at the Review Conference of 1980, Sweden pointed out that the provisions for international means of verification in the Convention are inadequate. This was considered an unsatisfactory situation by the Swedish Government at that time, and this remains its position.

The review of new scientific and technological developments will no doubt reveal that the potential for producing highly effective biological weapons have increased considerably during the period, and this trend can be expected to continue in the near future. In the view of the Swedish Government, these developments further underline its earlier demands that the complaints procedure of the Convention must be improved. During the first Review Conference, verification of compliance with the Convention was a main topic of discussion, and the Conference - in its Final Declaration - expressed its belief that this question should be further considered at an appropriate time. In the view of Sweden, such a consideration should be initiated at the upcoming Review Conference, with the aim of finding a practical, flexible and universally acceptable system for international verification and compliance with the Convention, which otherwise will remain inadequate.

With regard to article X of the Convention, Sweden has, during the period of review, actively participated in various international efforts to facilitate the free exchange of information on the peaceful uses of biotechnology.

A number of industrialized countries conduct, as part of their foreign aid programmes, projects to further knowledge and applications of biotechnology. Through the Swedish International Development Authority's Agency for Research Co-operation with Developing Countries (SAREC), Sweden is
actively sponsoring biotechnological research and co-operation in several
developing countries. These include Kenya, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh. This
research focuses on improving agricultural production and health care by using
biotechnology. This agency also helps sponsor the International Center for
Diarrhoeal Diseases in Bangladesh and the International Board for Plant Growth
Resources in Rome, through FAO. Through international organizations like
UNIDO, WHO, FAO, UNESCO and IBRD, Sweden also takes part in international
programmes in this area. One of the more ambitious projects for biotechnology
transfer is UNIDO's establishment of the International Centre for Genetic
Engineering and Biotechnology (ICGEB) for the advancement of research in the
developing countries. One important aim is to spread information and
techniques in this area to developing countries. These efforts may lead to
genetic engineering and to biotechnology becoming more easily available to the
developing countries. In this same vein, Sweden has participated in a number
of international conferences with the aim of identifying problems of those
countries and of providing solutions based on biotechnology.

In this connection, it should be noted that the increase in commercial
interest in the area of biotechnology and genetic engineering has led to
measures that might have ramifications as regards the free exchange of
information as has been observed previously for instance in the area of
electronics.

Switzerland

Switzerland signed the Convention on the day on which it was concluded,
10 April 1972, and ratified it on 4 May 1976. Switzerland possesses no
bacteriological (biological) or toxin weapons, and has no stocks to destroy.
As in the past, the Swiss army has a biological service. This service deals
exclusively with the troops' health, and would have the task of taking
protective measures in the event that bacteriological weapons were used
against Switzerland during an armed conflict.

United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

The following information is supplied in response to the request for
information regarding compliance with obligations under the Convention:

Article I

Since its ratification of the Convention, the United Kingdom has not
acquired microbial or other biological agents and toxins of types or in
quantities which could be employed for weapons purposes. The United Kingdom
maintains only small quantities of biological warfare agents for peaceful
purposes, primarily prophylaxis and research. These are held under strict
supervision and control. No systems designed to apply these agents for
hostile purposes exist, nor are any being developed.

Article II

The provisions of article II of the Convention impose obligations only
upon those States parties which possess, or have under their jurisdiction or
control, agents, toxins, weapons, equipment and means of delivery, specified
in article I. Since its ratification of the Convention, the United Kingdom
has not fallen into this category of States parties.
Article III

The United Kingdom has fully complied with the terms of this article.

Article IV

The Biological Weapons Act was enacted on 8 February 1974. This legislation takes the necessary measures under domestic law in order to enable the United Kingdom to fulfil its obligations under the Convention.

Article V

The United Kingdom has not found cause formally to implement the provisions of article V.

Article X

It is the private sector in the United Kingdom which undertakes much of the work in the fields of exchange of bacteriological and biological technology and the training of personnel. Nevertheless the United Kingdom Government plays its full part in fulfilling this part of the Convention by its contributions to international bodies such as the World Health Organization and the European Molecular Biology Organization.

The United Kingdom also plays its full part in further co-operation on such matters through negotiating international agreements designed to permit free exchanges on the use of bacteriological (biological) agents and toxins for peaceful purposes. Examples of these agreements include:

United Kingdom/USSR Agreement on Co-operation in the Field of Medicine and Public Health (1975)

United Kingdom/Czechoslovakia Agreement on Co-operation in the Field of Medicine and Public Health (1976)

United Kingdom/German Democratic Republic Agreement on Co-operation in the Field of Medicine and Public Health (1977)

United Kingdom/Hungary Agreement on Co-operation in the Field of Medicine and Public Health (1978)

United Kingdom/Finland Agreement on Co-operation in the Field of Medicine and Public Health (1978)

United Kingdom/Egypt Agreement on Co-operation in the Field of Public Health (1981)

The United Kingdom has also entered into arrangements with China in the field of health co-operation.