
Meeting 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

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2023 Meeting
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National declaration of France

Submitted by France

1. France congratulates South Sudan for acceding to the Convention on the Prohibition of Biological Weapons and Toxins. This is an encouraging signal towards the complete universalization of the Convention. In this regard, France urges the 12 states that have not yet joined the Convention to do so without delay.
2. This year, following the 2022 Review Conference, States Parties have come together to advance discussions on establishing a mechanism for cooperation and assistance under Article 10 and a mechanism for developments in science and technology. Finalizing these two mechanisms in 2024 is possible if we accelerate efforts and make full use of the intersession between January and July 2024.
3. Furthermore, the historic opening of discussions on verification last week is encouraging and has demonstrated the keen interest of delegations. The establishment of a comprehensive framework for various verification options based on common objectives, drawing inspiration from existing models while adapting them to our convention, appears to be the most suitable method to initiate discussions toward a useful and effective verification regime.
4. The financial sustainability of the Convention is a prerequisite for the smooth functioning of our work. France reiterates its call for all States Parties to fulfill their mandatory contributions. In this regard, France notes that the European Union will once again finance our convention this year with a contribution of 2.8 million euros and will launch a program to strengthen legislative and regulatory frameworks for biosafety and biosecurity in Latin America. France remains fully committed by supporting the Implementation Support Unit to contribute to the universalization of the Convention and to provide support for its implementation.
5. Confidence-building measures are currently the primary mechanism for exchanging information among States Parties, contributing, through national reports, to compliance with the obligations of the Convention. The priority is to achieve their universalization. Therefore, France advocates making them legally mandatory in exchange for increased assistance to States Parties to support them in submitting their initial national reports.
6. France supports the strengthening of the Implementation Support Unit (ISU) in conjunction with the strengthening of the BWC. Its evolution into a permanent secretariat would enable it to fully assume the new tasks assigned to it once the two mechanisms on cooperation and assistance and science and technology are established. The institutional evolution of our convention should be in harmony with its human and financial strengthening.

