

**JACKSNNZ Joint Statement  
Japan, Australia, Canada, Republic of Korea, Switzerland  
Norway, New Zealand  
Biological Weapons Convention  
Seventh Review Conference**

**Monday 5 December 2011**

Thank you, Mr. President.

It is my pleasure to take the floor on behalf of the JACKSNNZ countries: Japan, Australia, Canada, Republic of Korea, Switzerland, Norway, and New Zealand. We would like to congratulate you on your election as President of this Seventh Review Conference of the Biological Weapons Convention. You can count on the support of the JACKSNNZ during this conference. We would also like to offer our congratulations and support to Indonesia and Hungary, as Chairs of the Committee of the Whole and the Drafting Committee, respectively.

Mr. President, the risk of biological weapons proliferation remains as real today as when this Convention was negotiated. While we recognize the potential benefits resulting from rapid advances in science and technology, there is also the potential for mis-use. As a result, the BWC is even more relevant now than the day it entered into force 36 years ago. As States Parties, it is our responsibility to maintain and strengthen the BWC as an effective tool to counter the threat of biological weapons proliferation.

Since the Sixth Review Conference, States Parties have had productive discussions and done significant work on challenges related to the BWC, including BWC implementation nationally and regionally, improvements in biosafety and biosecurity, capacity building in disease surveillance, detection, diagnosis, and containment, international cooperation, and provision of assistance in case of alleged use of a biological weapon. We should now be able to benefit from the collegial experts' exchange on these subjects, and base our decisions in this Review Conference on this useful work.

In the past 15 months, conferences at Wilton Park, Beijing, Montreux, Berlin, Manila, Clingendael, Lima, Belgrade and Geneva, States Parties and civil society have had the opportunity to focus on the road ahead. These advance discussions have been very useful in preparing us for this Conference, through the development of a positive and productive atmosphere and an expectation for a meaningful outcome. Our appreciation goes out to the respective organisers for facilitating these discussions.

The JACKSNNZ countries have identified seven topics that we believe require action in this conference. I would like to highlight our countries' current thinking on these issues.

First, Confidence Building Measures remain an essential instrument of transparency under the BWC. That said, there are opportunities to strengthen the current system. The JACKSNNZ believe that we must increase participation, refine the content of CBM forms, and improve the CBM submission process.

A series of seminars over the past two years, led by Switzerland, Norway, and Germany, as well as discussions online, have prepared the ground, so we can make informed and forward-looking decisions at this Review Conference. These States Parties developed a concrete proposal for improving the content of CBM forms. Switzerland, Norway, and New Zealand together offer additional proposals for improving CBMs. Canada also outlined how we might increase participation and make better use of declarations through electronic submission and review. While a number of decisions to improve the CBM system can be taken at this RevCon, further work might be necessary to follow-up in the years to come during an intersessional process. We would also like to note with appreciation in this context that a number of JACKSNNZ members have been submitting their CBMs on the ISU's public website.

Second, international cooperation under Article X has been a topic discussed extensively these past two years. JACKSNNZ believe this Conference presents a good opportunity to improve how international cooperation efforts are coordinated. Noting our submissions to the ISU's Report on the Implementation of Article X, the JACKSNNZ countries have undertaken a wide range of international cooperation activities over the past five years, including building capacity in disease surveillance, detection, diagnosis, containment, and treatment, as well as biosafety, biosecurity, and CBRNE response training, through various mechanisms including the Global Partnership Program. It is essential that these efforts be coordinated, so as to avoid duplication of work and to help identify potential partner countries. In this context, the JACKSNNZ support the proposal that the ISU be available to States Parties to help facilitate their international collaboration; we are also open to other proposals on strengthening the implementation of Article X. The G8-led *Global Partnership Against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction* has been a significant contributor to Article X cooperation. In this context, we are pleased to note among outcomes from the G8 Summit in Deauville, France this past May, the extension of the Global Partnership, and the reaffirmation of Biological Security as a priority area for cooperation.

Third, the JACKSNNZ countries recognize that the biological sciences are advancing rapidly, and the dual-use nature of biotechnology presents potential risks. Article XII provides for a review to be undertaken of scientific and technological developments relevant to the BWC over the previous five years. The JACKSNNZ believe that regular and more systematic review should replace the clearly insufficient five-yearly review. Accordingly, Australia, Japan and New Zealand have submitted a proposal for annual reviews of developments in science and technology relevant to the BWC in the 2012-2015 intersessional period through the creation of an S&T Working Group. Another issue of concern is the dual-use nature of biotechnology. We note the proposal by Australia, Canada, Japan, New Zealand, Republic of Korea, Norway, and Switzerland, on behalf of the JACKSNNZ, as well as Kenya, Pakistan, Sweden, Ukraine, United Kingdom, and United States, that dual-use education should be an essential component of BWC implementation. Furthermore, the JACKSNNZ support stronger ties between the BWC and civil society, especially academia and industry, which both play an important role in BWC implementation. Increasing civil society's role in the BWC would help States Parties improve their response capabilities to biological risks and threats, and take advantage of the advances in science and technology. Accordingly, the JACKSNNZ would welcome a collective assessment and discussion on the role of civil society, and hope we can include members of academia and industry in our discussions during the RevCon.

Fourth, it is important that this Review Conference address the issues of Compliance and Implementation, including enhancing assurance of States Parties' compliance with the BWC. In this context, we would like to highlight an Australian-Japanese-New Zealand proposal for the establishment of a Working Group within the 2012-2015 intersessional process *inter alia* to discuss and develop over the next five years common understandings on BWC compliance. Furthermore, we'd like to bring to your attention the joint Canada-Switzerland proposal on Compliance Assessment, which suggests a system of showing compliance through transparent demonstration of a State Party's implementation program.

Fifth, the JACKSNNZ view the last two intersessional processes as having been useful in promoting the implementation of the Convention. The Meetings allowed a thorough exchange of views and practices in numerous technical fields, including biosafety, biosecurity, disease surveillance, and law enforcement. The JACKSNNZ believe that the Review Conference should give greater attention to the outcomes of the work done during the 2007-2010 period and review, with a view to adopting, the recommendations made in the MSP reports. We have now the opportunity to look ahead and agree on a programme of work and a structure to engage with BWC partners for the 2012-2015 intersessional period. The JACKSNNZ consider that the arrangement can be improved and would be more adaptable to our changing world with Working Groups, which would meet annually and work intersessionally, undertaking ongoing work on topics requiring longer than one year to address. We note a Japanese-Australian proposal, for a restructured Meeting of Experts with Working Groups constituted on three 'baskets' of issues throughout the whole intersessional process. The JACKSNNZ also consider that the current arrangement could be strengthened by providing Meeting of States Parties decision-making powers on specific issues in a clearly-defined manner.

Sixth, the establishment of the Implementation Support Unit is one of the success stories of the Sixth Review Conference. During the Intersessional Process and in the lead up to this RevCon, the ISU has contributed in an outstanding manner to the implementation of the norms of this Convention and has supported so many of us with efficient and practical support. JACKSNNZ countries have had the opportunity to work very closely with the ISU, and learned first-hand the importance of this organization. We will be reviewing its work and should aim to preserve this worthy tool and try to improve, where necessary, building upon its strengths. The JACKSNNZ believe that the ISU mandate must be renewed, given the valuable support role it plays in helping States parties implement all articles of the Convention. We would see merit in a measured enhancement of the ISU so that it can undertake the activities mandated to it by States Parties at this Review Conference in a full and effective manner.

Seventh and lastly, we note the continuing challenge of BWC universality, which is necessary for the BWC to be comprehensively effective. Biological non-proliferation requires all countries join the Convention. The JACKSNNZ are very pleased to see Mozambique and Burundi join the BWC this year, and warmly welcomes Mozambique and Burundi into this community. That said, they are the only countries to ratify or accede to the Convention in the past three years. Further and more systematic work is needed to increase membership in the Convention. It is our hope that the means to promote

universality can be considered over the coming weeks, such as through coordinated, joint demarches in the capitals of States not party. It is also our hope that by strengthening the BWC, this Conference can also make the Convention more attractive to States not yet party.

Mr. President, there is much work to do. You can count on our full support over the next three weeks, so that we might have a successful Review Conference that strengthens our Convention.

Thank you.