

5/12/05
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**MEETING OF THE STATES PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION ON THE
PROHIBITION OF THE DEVELOPMENT, PRODUCTION AND STOCKPILING
OF BACTERIOLOGICAL (BIOLOGICAL) AND TOXIN WEAPONS**

**THIRD MEETING, 5-9 DECEMBER 2005
GENEVA**

NEW ZEALAND STATEMENT, 5 DECEMBER 2005

**Delivered by Mr Nik Kiddle
Deputy Permanent Representative**

Mr Chairman,

I hardly need underscore New Zealand's ongoing commitment to achieving the objectives of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention. We continue to see it as an essential and valuable pillar in the multilateral framework to achieve disarmament and non-proliferation objectives and to foster international peace and security.

We have supported the work of the Meetings of States parties, and will continue to do so here. We have remained engaged in the Meetings of Experts, and will continue to participate constructively in future ones as well.

Our delegation derived a great deal of value from last June's discussions on codes of conduct for scientists. The meeting usefully raised awareness of this important issue. And it highlighted a range of codes that have been established by academic and professional associations (as well as others) which could serve as models for the life sciences.

The fact that the existence of those codes has not held back exponential growth in research and development in the life sciences sector, including for biological weapons defence purposes, makes more urgent the need to reinforce our collective determination to curtail biological and toxin weapons activities.

Discussions this week should again highlight the smorgasbord from which new, or refined, codes can be assembled.

But we need to go further than that.

Your letter, Mr Chairman, of 23 November helpfully encapsulates key elements that were identified in June. The annexed synthesis contains a wide spectrum of contributions, and we appreciate your efforts in bringing these forward.

We would like to express support not only for floating your contribution as a tool for meeting preparations, as you yourself suggested, but also for using it as a starting point for negotiation of an outcome document from this meeting.

If others were to agree with this approach, then our discussions could move at an early stage towards a constructive exchange on details. We accept that some parties may find some elements of the synthesis a little contentious. But our reading of it is that as long as it takes the form of guiding non-binding advice, then there should be no "red line" elements that states parties could not live with.

Adoption of non-binding guidance at this meeting would, in our view, constitute a valuable political signal at a delicate juncture in the disarmament agenda. It would also greatly assist in raising awareness of the risks of dual use technologies, and the need to be vigilant in guarding against those risks.

Before concluding Mr Chairman, I would like to say just a few words about the upcoming Preparatory Committee meeting and the Review Conference itself.

Along with others, we see merit in states parties beginning to reflect on new ideas to take the Convention forward in 2006.

New Zealand will certainly be among those seeking to strengthen the Convention. In that respect we welcome ideas that have been circulated informally by other participants. We support proposed action plans for universality and national implementation, including through encouragement in relevant regional forums and in bilateral contacts.

We also support strengthening the treaty secretariat, especially because we do not wish to lose sight of capacity constraints that may hinder small developing countries' implementation efforts.

Finally, Mr Chairman, the important role played by confidence building measures is one that we continue to emphasise, and we will lend our support to the expansion of CBMs, as identified at the 5th Review Conference.

Thank you for your attention.

