

TURKEY

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**CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY**

**BIOLOGICAL AND TOXIN WEAPONS CONVENTION**

**Meeting of Experts**

**24 August 2009**

**Mr. Chairman,**

I wish to start by congratulating you, Ambassador Grinius, on your assumption of the chairmanship of BWC meetings in 2009. I should also like to commend you for your able leadership in preparing for this meeting. This week we are going to continue our work within the comprehensive inter-sessional programme of 2007-2010, that was set by the Sixth Review Conference in 2006. Turkey has been fully supporting and contributing to this inter-sessional programme. We shall continue as such. You can count on my Delegation's support for the success of this experts meeting, on which the Meeting of States Parties in December will build.

**Mr. Chairman,**

On the road to the Seventh Review Conference of 2011, we have already addressed very important topics in 2007 and 2008.

This year's topic is also key to the full implementation of the BWC regime. This week, we shall be discussing promotion of capacity building in the fields of disease surveillance, detection, diagnosis and containment of infectious diseases; and we shall be reporting to the Meeting of States Parties in December. When the inter-sessional program is hopefully completed at the end of 2010, we shall have accomplished our goal to strengthen and advance the implementation of the Convention, on the eve of the Seventh Review Conference of 2011.

On the other hand, I take this opportunity to state that we shall be providing our input in the working session on: “National Disease Surveillance Arrangements”.

As an initial resumé, today, I wish to briefly share with you the fact that recent changes in disease epidemiology and developments in diagnostic capability necessitated a thorough review of the Turkish communicable disease notification system. Initiated in 2001, the review was carried out by a committee of representatives from the Ministry of Health and academicians. Accordingly, a new communicable disease notification system was launched nationwide in 2005.

The main principles of the newly-revised Communicable Disease Notification in Turkey are as follows:

- a) Identifying the list of notifiable communicable diseases, determining the case definitions, establishing a notification system based on an appropriate communication web structure, with the aim of preventing and controlling communicable diseases,
- b) Maintaining the communication between the Ministry of Health and local health authorities responsible for collecting the relevant data,
- c) Maintaining constant communication between the Ministry of Health and local health authorities for an early warning and response system via appropriate equipment,
- d) Improving general or specific surveillance mechanisms or programs for diseases and,
- e) Determining treatment methods required for detection and control of epidemics.

As I have stated above, Mr. Chairman, we shall be expanding on that issue in our working session on: “National Disease Surveillance Arrangements”.

Today, I wish to take this opportunity to briefly reiterate the following:

We share the broad understanding within the BWC community that further efforts have to be devoted to strengthening and improving the implementation of the Convention.

States Parties may wish to make use of the 2007-2010 inter-sessional period to consider new ideas in the next Review Conference for an implementation mechanism to enhance the new effectiveness of the Convention.

Last, but not the least, the Turkish Delegation warmly welcomes the effective functioning of the Implementation Support Unit, which has tremendously assisted our work, albeit very small in size.

I wish all the success for the deliberations of the experts meeting.

Thank you.

