

Norway

Mr. Chair,

Let me express appreciations of seeing you chairing this important meeting. My delegation would also like to thank the outgoing chair, amb. Masood Khan, for the very constructive way he presided over the Sixth Review Conference and the first meeting of States Parties under the current inter-sessional programme of work.

My delegation is impressed by the extensive preparation, by you Mr. Chair and the Implementation Support Unit, for this meeting. Let me also express gratitude to you personally and to the Richard Lennane for taking part at the seminar in Jakarta on June 4 and 5 on biosafety and biosecurity. We were pleased with the active and highly valuable contribution by you and the ISU in the preparations for and organisation of the seminar.

Indonesia and Norway have submitted a working paper on the presenting observations made by the conveners of the Jakarta-seminar. At the ISU web-page more information will be made available. In addition there will be a presentation on a very practical project of significance to our discussions this week being carried by DNV out at the leading Indonesian research centre, the Eijkman Institute.

At this juncture let me limit myself just to state that the seminar was truly an expression of partnerships, among state parties, with the ISU and with research institutions and enterprises. We hope that this expert meeting will deliberate on some the outcome from Jakarta. Indeed, we need to forge new and enhance existing partnerships among relevant stakeholders, nationally, regionally and globally.

Biosafety and biosecurity are key areas for further strengthening of the BTWC norm. We should take into account that biosecurity and biosafety relate to the whole Convention, especially art. IV and art. X of the Convention.

Security considerations, resting on the assumption that the pathogens may also be used maliciously, add new dimensions to the traditional safety risk management: Biosecurity covers the deliberate unauthorized use of materials. Biosafety and biosecurity are closely interlinked, and common systems are required to manage both effectively. In this way we would facilitate and enhance international cooperation in life sciences, which also forms a vital element in social and economic development.

We fully recognise the importance of adequate national measures and standards. We should recognise the crucial responsibility of all those working at or with laboratories to be engaged in safety and security. Awareness raising is indispensable for promoting security and safety. In this regard codes of conduct will clearly be of great importance. Such codes must be adapted to the different sectors and institutions. There is no one size fits all, but they should all sustain the norm set by the BTWC.

Norway fully supports the working papers prepared by Canada and Japan in consultations with the JACKSNNZ countries. They present core topics for strengthening the compliance with BTWC, i.a. oversight, control, codes of conduct, education and awareness.

Mr. Chair,