

**Joint NGO Statement to Biological Weapons Convention  
Meeting of Experts 1  
Geneva  
7 August 2018**

*Delivered by Dr Filippa Lentzos, King's College London*

Thank you, Madame Chair, for providing the NGO community an opportunity to speak.

The global anti-biological weapons regime is a multi-stakeholder endeavour, where states, intergovernmental organisations, NGO organisations, industry, academics, scientists and independent experts, all play important parts in strengthening norms against the misuse of biology.

Increasingly, in the biological field, the NGO community can - and does - achieve significant, tangible results, including in areas where States Parties themselves have not been able to do so over many years. We therefore welcome your recognition, Madame Chair, of the importance of ensuring that our voices, perspectives and experiences are brought to the table.

In preparing for the 2018 Meetings of Experts, the first set in this intersessional cycle, the NGO community has drafted a Position Paper setting out our collective views on key action points for the five meetings. The Position Paper has to date been endorsed by around 50 institutions and individuals, a list of which is provided in the Paper.

Today, I will brief you on our key action points for MX1.

On cooperation and assistance, we encourage States Parties to:

- 1) Develop a common format for Article X reporting, delineating state requirements and activities, [both from states providing assistance, and states receiving assistance].
- 2) Establish an ISU Cooperation Officer [or capacity-building officer as referred to by the US], mandated and resourced to play a more active role in promoting contacts and programmes for scientist exchange and in identifying opportunities for capacity-building and funding.

- 3) Facilitate regional S&T dialogues focused on regional BWC-related interests and problems drawing in regional and international expertise to exchange information and stimulate collaboration and cooperation.
- 4) Cooperate and collaborate with non-governmental entities.
- 5) [and finally, as picked up on by Cuba and Chile in the discussion earlier today, we encourage SPs to:] Establish an Open-Ended Working Group on Cooperation to meet at regular intervals to identify opportunities for, and good practices in, international cooperation, and to promote capacity-building opportunities.

Madame Chair, these are our key action points for MX1. Hardcopies of the Position Paper, laying out these action points, as well as those for MX 2 through 5 are available at the back of the room, and an electronic version is available on the ISU website.

With this I thank you for your attention and wish you a productive meeting.