



Statement by the

**Research Group for Biological Arms Control
Carl Friedrich von Weizsäcker Centre for Science and Peace
Research at the University of Hamburg, Germany**

to the Meeting of the States Parties to the
Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention

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Mr. Chairman, Distinguished Representatives, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me start by thanking you for the opportunity to speak to you today. I make this statement on behalf of the Research Group for Biological Arms Control at the Carl Friedrich von Weizsäcker Centre for Science and Peace Research at the University of Hamburg in Germany. The mission of our Research Group is to contribute, through innovative research and outreach activities, to the universal prevention of biological weapons development, production, and use. The focus of our activities is twofold. First, we work to prevent the erosion of the universal bioweapons prohibition by opposing activities that violate treaty regulations. Second, we develop new concepts and instruments to monitor activities relevant to bioweapons, and to verify and enforce compliance with the regulations against them.

We look forward to working constructively toward the strengthening of the regime; however, we cannot refrain from expressing our dissatisfaction with some aspects of the actual state of the multilateral bioweapons ban. The Seventh Review Conference of the BWC can hardly be called a success. The final document represents a standstill in the regime's development. Many basic necessities were not implemented, such as a substantial update of the CBMs, the enlargement of the ISU, the incorporation of compliance issues into the new intersessional process, and the provision of the annual meetings of States Parties with a decision making mandate. We fear that the regime is not keeping pace with developments in its subject field. Especially disappointing at the Review Conference is that, with the absence of a verification mechanism, no institutionalised transparency gains were realized.

Furthermore, participation in the one available transparency mechanism remains limited. Only 68 of the total 165 treaty members have submitted a CBM in 2012. Despite this fact, we applaud those states that participate in the CBM mechanism. 29 of the 68 submitting states decided to use the CBM mechanism not only as an inter-state transparency mechanism, but to actively promote public transparency by releasing their CBMs to the general public on the ISU website, or by sending their CBM directly to us. As in the previous years, the Research

Group for Biological Arms Control has summarized the information of the publicly available CBMs in a reader, which is available at the door.

Transparency should, however, not be limited to the CBM mechanism, but should rather be a guiding principle for the entire regime. This also applies to the standing item "cooperation and assistance, with a particular focus on strengthening cooperation and assistance under Article X". States interpret the implementation of Article X differently, and representatives on both sides of the debate call for empirical data to create a common base for further political deliberation. One facet of the implementation of Article X is trade in biotechnological items. We propose to investigate this issue more in-depth, because we believe that greater transparency in knowledge about the participation of countries in the increasingly global biotechnology market contributes to a better basis for discussion.

Trade data is used in several multilateral regimes to monitor legal trade in items relevant to their respective conventions, and could be applied in the BWC as well. We invite the distinguished representatives to the side event "Technology, Trade and Transparency – Lessons from Other Treaty Regimes" on Wednesday. The event is co-organised by the ISU and our Research Group, and will provide delegations with information on the compilation and use of trade data by and in multilateral regimes and organizations. More detailed information is available at the door.

Mr. Chairman,

The absence of an institutionalized mechanism for monitoring and verification makes the evaluation of open source data by independent actors a central tool in producing transparency in the regime. In this context I would like to allude to the launch of the 2012 BWPP BioWeapons Monitor in a side event on Wednesday morning.

Thank you for your attention!