

**MEETING OF THE STATES PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION ON THE PROHIBITION
OF THE DEVELOPMENT, PRODUCTION AND STOCKPILING OF
BACTERIOLOGICAL (BIOLOGICAL) AND TOXIN WEAPONS AND ON THEIR DESTRUCTION**

Geneva, 10 – 14 December 2012

Statement

Confidence Building Measures (agenda item 9)

Delegation of Germany

Mr. Chairman,

Germany considers the Confidence Building Measures as an important instrument to promote the purpose of the BTWC that has been under-utilized so far. We have continuously demonstrated our commitment to adapting and developing this very important tool further. Even though we would have liked to see more progress, Germany welcomes the changes made to the CBM formats by the 7th Review Conference and the decision to include enhancement of participation in the Confidence Building Measures exchange into the work programme for this intersessional process.

Mr. Chairman,

The relative lack of participation in the CBM process is particularly unfortunate as the mechanism will only create limited transparency until more States Parties honour their political commitment and submit CBM declarations. Ignoring the mechanism weakens the concept of CBMs and may ultimately reduce, rather than build, confidence among states.

Therefore since their existence Germany has consistently participated in the CBM process and has strongly encouraged all States Parties who have not yet done so to do likewise, and to do so not only before and in the aftermath of review conferences with the memory still being

fresh! We would like to congratulate Pakistan, Singapore and Zimbabwe on submitting their CBMs for the first time in 2012.

Germany aims at increasing the submission rate of CBMs and the relevance of the data collected via the CBM process. The CBM submissions are one of the BTWC's few tools to engage its members in a systematic information exchange that can build confidence. Submissions to the Confidence Building Measures should not be seen as a burden, but as a way to open the door to greater understanding of what others do. They can also be used to promote nationally a wide array of biosafety/biosecurity and regulatory measures.

In our view, the question of enhanced participation in the CBM process cannot be separated from the question of the CBM's substance, that is, their relevance to today's challenges and the adequacy of the reporting burden they pose. After all, a CBM system that is perceived to be asking the right questions without imposing superfluous burden on those reporting and collating the information is also more likely to attract a wider participation.

An improved electronic reporting process could make the data contained in CBMs much more accessible and useful than it is. Therefore Germany supports any activity in this direction and especially welcomes the project funded by the EU.

The intersessional meetings of 2013 will be the last chance for States Parties to address these questions before the 8th Review Conference in 2016. We hope that States Parties will seize this opportunity.

Finally, Germany would also like to encourage a broader use of the publication of the CBMs – to make them accessible for everyone. Germany is doing so and welcomes that 21 other governments up to now are doing the same.

Thank you, Mr Chairman.