



The International Council for the Life Sciences

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Statement of the International Council for the Life Sciences To the Meeting of States Parties to the Biological Weapons Convention Geneva, Switzerland

Thank you, Mr President, Distinguished Representatives, Ladies and Gentlemen for this opportunity to address you today on behalf of the International Council for the Life Sciences (ICLS).

The mission of the ICLS is to help promote and advance global public health, safety and security. To this end, we promote best practices, standards and codes of conduct, with the aim of ensuring the responsible conduct of science.

By its very nature, this requires governments and the scientific and corporate communities to work together. Governments can put in place the regulatory environment and enforcement infrastructure, but they cannot look over the shoulders of every scientist to ensure that biology is not being misused. Rather, governments must engage life scientists in positive ways as partners in developing and promoting the safe and responsible conduct and exploitation of science and, through this, also create a culture which makes the deliberate misuse of biology for warfare and terrorism unthinkable.

The ICLS continues to work in this vein. As you will hear in the next statement, we are very active in the Middle East and North Africa, partnering with the Biosafety and Biosecurity International Consortium, to promote the development of strategies and capacities in that region to prevent and protect against harmful biological events. We continue our work with corporations, academics, governments, international organisations (including your own Implementation Support Unit) and private citizen scientists to ensure the development of synthetic biology continues in a safe and responsible manner. And we are continuing our efforts to partner with other civil society organisations in South Asia to promote the responsible conduct of science across all scientific disciplines.

The ICLS considers the BWC to be one of the cornerstones of global health security and look forward to continuing to work with BWC partners towards our common objectives.

The mission of the Council is to help ensure global public health, safety, and security by safeguarding the opportunities offered by advances in the life sciences and their application through the promotion of best practices, standards, and codes of conduct.