
Geneva, 19-30 September 1994

NEW ZEALAND SUBMISSION TO THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

21 September 1994

New Zealand is committed to strengthening the aims and objectives of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on their Destruction. We share other States Parties' desire to prohibit the development, production and stockpiling of biological and toxin weapons, and to enhance compliance with the Convention, to promote transparency and thereby confidence amongst States Parties that these objectives are being met.

The conclusions of the VEREX Report were that verification is possible, but that a legally binding protocol going beyond the current confidence building measures would be required. New Zealand is in agreement with these conclusions and supports the establishment of a mandatory regime to secure our objectives as outlined above.

New Zealand supports the establishment of an open-ended Ad Hoc Committee to begin work on this protocol. In line with our belief that wide participation in the Special Conference process is desirable, we consider that the proposed Ad Hoc Committee should meet with a frequency which enables participation by non-European States Parties.

Our aim would be for the Committee to conclude its work in time to circulate a draft protocol to States Parties prior to the Fourth Review Conference in 1996. We recognise this is a short time frame, but given the significance of the Protocol, we are sure States Parties will give the negotiations their fullest cooperation.

Therefore, our preferred chain of events to bring together the elements for a legally binding protocol to the Convention for a decision by the 1996 Conference are the following:

- i the acceptance of the Report of the VEREX meetings by the Special Conference;
- ii the establishment of an intersessional process which would negotiate the protocol (the proposed Ad Hoc Committee);
- iii the mandating of the intersessional process to consider the full range of measures necessary for a mandatory regime.

With regard to the mandate for this Committee, we believe the following main elements should be included:-

- * a combination of both off- and on-site measures incorporating to some degree all of the 21 measures identified and examined during the VEREX process, but without revisiting the work done during VEREX;
- * mandatory and effective declarations and notifications;
- * both routine and short-notice on-site inspections using the guidelines suggested in VEREX, including validation visits;
- * provision for multilateral information sharing, on a voluntary basis, to both develop cooperation between States Parties and to enhance compliance with the Convention.