

---

Geneva, 19-30 September 1994

## **Swiss View on a Mandate to Strengthen the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention**

The Special Conference should decide to establishing a working group with the mandate to negotiate a legally binding protocol to strengthen the Convention. In our view strengthening the BWC should be considered as a common task of the States Parties themselves rather than as the administration of a legal instrument by a technical body. States Parties themselves should be involved in the future regime.

1. A regime to strengthen the BWC should have a strong element of transparency. Unlike the existing Confidence Building Measures this element ought to be mandatory. The experience made with the existing Confidence Building Measures and the findings in the VEREX report should be the basis for this work. The transparency element should be flexible enough to be adapted to the new risks emerging from the ongoing rapid developments in science and biotechnology.
2. Whenever doubts emerge on violations of the BWC states parties should have the possibility to request clarification. A future regime should include rules and methods for on site fact finding missions. Fact finding is not only in the benefit of a state suspecting another of violation, fact finding is also in the interest of a suspected country to show compliance under the BWC. The question of the appropriate infrastructure, equipment and personnel to conduct fact finding missions should be addressed.
3. A Commission open to all States Parties should be established under the protocol. This Commission should meet periodically or at short notice upon request of a state party. The Commission should held substantial discussions on the results of the transparency measures and fact finding missions; lead consultations on diverging standpoints with regard to violation or compliance under the BWC; consider and, if possible, agree on specific measures to dispel doubts about compliance with the BWC; and address other matters with regard to compliance under the BWC.

Measures to protect legitimate confidential information in industry, science and for national security purpose should be elaborated.