Chairman, Excellencies, Distinguished Representatives, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Thank you for the opportunity to address you during your Meeting of Experts. We wish to make some concrete proposals of direct relevance to this Meeting.

**Relevant developments in science and technology**

The particular topic to be considered in 2014 under the Standing Agenda item on Science and Technology is “advances in the understanding of pathogenicity, virulence, toxicology, immunology and related issues”. The publication of the ISU background paper on Advances in science and technology related to the Convention and the proposed invitation of experts as guests of the meeting certainly helps to raise awareness of developments of concern and of developments that assist implementation of the Convention. It makes optimal use of the available resources. However, the overview of relevant developments is presented in rather technical terms, making it difficult for lay persons to understand the implications for the BTWC Convention and for the biosecurity of citizens in general. The tendency in the background paper to focus on scientific publications about the relevant technologies tends understandably to limit the scope to scientific work that has already been done rather than new projects or future plans. Activities of companies and do-it-yourself biologists are even less likely to be covered in such reviews of the scientific literature. Relevant trends in grey literature need also be taken into account. In addition, the convergence of biological and chemical sciences and technologies calls for more integration of similar monitoring work at the OPCW and other relevant national and international organisations. We are pleased with some recent efforts to foster such cooperation.

Pax Christi International would like to reiterate its call for the creation of a more structured common multidisciplinary global Observatory on developments in science and technology of relevance to the BTWC Convention as well as the CWC, UN Security Council Resolution 1540 and other related international agreements. Such an Observatory could act as a clearing house of information on recent publications as well as research strategies and future scenarios and interpret their relevance to the legislative process as well as human security of citizens of States Parties. The monitoring activities of the BioWeapons Prevention Project could become an element of such an Observatory.¹

¹ [www.bwpp.org](http://www.bwpp.org)
Cooperation and assistance (in particular regarding article X)

In addition, such an Observatory could be useful beyond the narrow interest of protecting citizens against biological and chemical weapons by contributing to the broader goal of fostering worldwide peaceful cooperation in life sciences. This would require coordination with ongoing work at UNESCO on reviewing the Declaration on the Status of Scientific Researchers (1974). Last November 2013, the General Conference adopted a Resolution saying that this declaration should be revised. This requires the Director General of UNESCO to prepare this revision in consultation with Member States and other stakeholders during the period 2014-2017. Pax Christi International urges that those engaged in this UNESCO consultation be invited to future meetings of the BTWC to stimulate synergies in the international dialogues about ethics and security in life sciences and converging technologies. It could be worthwhile to work closely with relevant ongoing and planned dialogue projects funded by the EU and national governments of States Parties.2

Strengthen implementation of Article VII

The new biennial topic for 1914 and 1915 on strengthening Article VII includes consideration of detailed procedures and mechanisms for the provision of assistance and cooperation by States Parties. At national level, crisis response capabilities often address Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear threats, sometimes combined with Explosives. The focus is on the need to protect citizens against intended or non-intended incidents with these agents. The present Meeting of Experts is starting discussions about strengthening mutual cooperation and assistance in case the Security Council decides that another State Party has been exposed to danger as a result of violation of the Convention. Pax Christi International recommends that such activities be integrated with the more general CBRN response activities that are already in place and some of which have already been successfully demonstrated

Strengthening national implementation

Pax Christi International welcomes the French non-paper on the Peer Review Pilot Exercise held on 4-6 December 2013. This appears a viable route towards effectively strengthening national implementation of the Convention and offers States Parties a constructive platform for learning from each other. We hope other States Parties will follow this example and contribute to a common approach.

Thank you for your attention. Pax Christi International wishes you all fruitful discussions and a successful Meeting of Experts.

Geneva, 4 August 2014

About Us

Pax Christi International is a Catholic Peace Movement inspired by Catholic Social Teaching. We strongly believe that the body of international law and international humanitarian law is essential for promoting global peace, justice and integrity of creation. The BTWC is an integral part of this legal framework that should contribute to human security and respect for human rights while avoiding imposition of unnecessary or duplicate regulatory burdens.

2 E.g. www.synenergene.eu