



### NOTE BY THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL

#### RESPONSE TO THE REPORT OF THE EIGHTEENTH SESSION OF THE SCIENTIFIC ADVISORY BOARD

1. The Scientific Advisory Board (SAB) met in The Hague, the Netherlands, for its Eighteenth Session from 16 to 19 April 2012. The report of the session has been issued as SAB-18/1, dated 19 April 2012.
2. Science and technology is a key element of the Chemical Weapons Convention (hereinafter “the Convention”): An understanding of science and technology is important to the full and effective implementation of Articles III, IV, V, VI, VII, VIII, IX, X, and XI of the Convention. Therefore, robust technical advice from the SAB is crucial to the work of the Technical Secretariat (hereinafter “the Secretariat”), and to the States Parties.
3. The Director-General would like to take this opportunity to remind States Parties that the terms of office of four members of the SAB will end in 2012 and that a call for nominations has been issued (see S/985/2012, dated 7 February 2012). In addition, a call for voluntary contributions (S/983/2012, dated 8 February 2012) to support the work of the SAB has also been made. The Director-General encourages States Parties to carefully consider both Notes.
4. After a careful study of the report of the Eighteenth Session of the SAB, the Director-General is pleased to submit to the Executive Council (hereinafter “the Council”) the following comments and recommendations on the work of the SAB.

#### Developments in science and technology (paragraph 8 of SAB-18/1)

5. The Third Special Session of the Conference of the States Parties to Review the Operation of the Chemical Weapons Convention (hereinafter “the Third Review Conference”) is less than 12 months away. In that context, the Director-General welcomes the work that the SAB has already undertaken in regard to preparing its report on developments in science and technology. This report will provide crucial input for the Third Review Conference. The Director-General expects to receive this report very soon after the SAB meets for its Nineteenth Session (in September); this timeframe will allow States Parties to consider it carefully. In addition to the SAB’s



report, the Director-General intends to submit to the Third Review Conference his views on science and technology.

6. The Director-General is grateful that the temporary working group (TWG) on the convergence of chemistry and biology will address the potential benefits of convergence at future meetings and that it has revised its terms of reference accordingly. He encourages the TWG to continue to work intersessionally on the recommendations made after its first meeting in November 2011.
7. With regard to the SAB's recommendations on the topic of "production by synthesis", the Director-General requested the SAB and the TWG to continue to study this issue and to report back to him. Once the SAB has concluded its deliberations on this topic, the Director-General will consider how best to engage National Authorities (for example during annual and regional meetings) on necessary action. However, to aid the deliberations of the SAB, the Director-General invites States Parties to submit additional information on this topic, which he will then pass to the SAB.

Education and outreach in science and technology (paragraph 9 of SAB-18/1)

8. The Director-General expresses his thanks to the members of the TWG and to its Chairperson, Djafer Benachour, for the comprehensive report and would like to restate his view that education and outreach plays a vital role in the full and effective implementation of the Convention. Education and outreach is a collective effort that requires the active support of States Parties and that also involves collaboration with other actors, including international organisations, professional associations, industry associations, and scientific unions. The Director-General greatly appreciates the contribution of such organisations to the TWG, and the presentations by the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organisation (CTBTO) and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). The Director-General is pleased that the TWG has already begun to identify sustainable and practical activities for the Secretariat and States Parties to consider.
9. The report of the first meeting of the TWG contains a large number of proposals for consideration by States Parties and the Secretariat. Given that there is no allocation in the Programme and Budget for such activities, the Director-General in principle endorses the suggestion by the TWG for voluntary contributions from States Parties (paragraph 9.2 of the TWG report (see Annex 2 of SAB 18/1) to support these activities.
10. The Director-General agrees with the TWG that the National Authorities can play a key role in education-and-outreach activities. It would be useful if National Authorities could inform the Secretariat of their activities in this area. The Secretariat will consider the feasibility of organising a meeting in conjunction with the annual National Authorities meeting or the Seventeenth Session of the Conference of the States Parties (hereinafter "the Conference"), during which National Authorities could exchange information and share best practices.
11. The Director-General will endeavour to raise awareness about education and outreach in his contacts with States Parties. He also encourages States Parties to take steps to enhance their domestic outreach activities to both the academic and industrial sectors. The Secretariat stands ready to support such activities if possible, for example by

making available e-learning modules on the Convention and the OPCW. In addition, in September 2012, the Secretariat will host a meeting for chemistry teachers and lecturers based in the Netherlands, with the aim of increasing their awareness of the Convention, and encouraging them to incorporate discussions on the Convention into their teaching programmes.

12. Within the Secretariat, the lead unit on issues relating to education and outreach in science and technology is the Policy and Review Branch.

Scientific and technological elements of verification methodologies, emerging technologies, and new equipment (paragraph 10 of SAB-18/1)

13. The Director-General thanks the TWG on sampling and analysis (S&A), and its chairperson Robin Black for the work it has conducted since 2007. The Director-General notes the briefing note on fast gas chromatography, which will enable the Secretariat to improve its expertise on this issue.

14. The Director-General would like to express his appreciation to VERIFIN for its work in editing the “Recommended Operating Procedures for Analysis in the Verification of Chemical Disarmament, 2011 Edition”, the so-called “Blue Book”, and to the other institutions involved for their contributions. The publication is of great use to designated laboratories and those interested in becoming designated.

Scheduled chemicals and advice on the Annex on Chemicals (paragraph 11 of SAB-18/1)

15. The Director-General notes the fact sheets on saxitoxin and ricin, which the SAB had prepared. He greatly appreciates the work of the SAB in producing these papers, which will be of use to the Secretariat.

Further scientific and technological advice relevant to the Convention (paragraph 12 of SAB-18/1)

16. The Director-General appreciates the readiness of the SAB to provide advice on chemical safety and chemical security, and the Secretariat will continue to keep the SAB informed of developments in this area.

Future work of the Scientific Advisory Board (paragraph 13 of SAB-18/1)

17. The Director-General emphasises the importance of intersessional work by members of the SAB and the relevant TWGs. The Secretariat is ready to facilitate this work in practical ways, including through personal interactions among the members of the Board and also through the use of web-based tools.

18. Interaction between the SAB and the policy-making organs has increased in recent years. The Director-General welcomes this development and recognises the significant attendance by delegations at the informal briefing on the SAB on the margins of the Sixty-Eighth Session of the Council. This demonstrates the interest in the activities of the SAB among States Parties, and such briefings also help to sensitise the members of the SAB to the issues under consideration in the policy-making organs. The Chairperson of the SAB will continue to be invited to

provide such briefings on the margins of sessions of the Council and the Conference. Additional means by which interaction can be enhanced will continue to be explored; such means could include the following: Having a standing item on science and technology on the agenda of the annual meetings of National Authorities; organising a workshop on the margins of the Seventeenth Session of the Conference; and discussing science and technology during preparations for the Third Review Conference and during the conference itself.

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