Regulations and guidelines in the Islamic Republic of Iran on national mechanisms to establish and maintain the security and oversight of pathogenic microorganisms and toxins

Prepared by the Islamic Republic of Iran

I. Bio-security Regulations

1. In accordance with the function and objective of the Ministry of Health and Medical Education as well as Islamic punishment law adopted in 1985 and 1993 respectively, any activities concerning production, import, distribution and use of pathogenic microorganisms which threaten or put in jeopardy the health and life of people are considered as crime and would imply penalties and punishment.

II. Guidelines on early warning and epidemic preparedness

2. The Ministry of Health and Medical Education based on WHO guidelines had approved guidelines in June 2002 on early warning, epidemic preparedness and outbreak response. Moreover, for awareness of its staff, the Ministry has conducted several workshops for emergency situations, created provincial expert teams for rapid assessment, epidemic preparedness and response.

III. Regulations on communicable disease surveillance and reportable diseases

3. The said regulations contain definitions for suspected or confirmed cases of communicable diseases as well as method of reporting and responses.

IV. Guidelines on Bio-hazardous Waste Management

4. These guidelines contain definitions of the bio-hazardous waste and recommendations on collection, separation, transportation, decontamination and sterilization of disposals.
V. The Customs Regulations

5. Based on the Export & Import Act adopted by the Islamic Consultative Assembly (Parliament) in September 1993, the latest version of export and import regulations of goods including biological and toxin agents were upgraded and approved by the cabinet in 2003. The regulations are in accordance with the harmonized based on the system of tariffs of the Custom.

VI. The Plant Protection Act

6. Following the adoption of the Plant Protection Act in 1967, the Plant Protection Organization (PPO) has been established. In accordance with the Article IV of the Act, the duties of the PPO are as follows:
   a. Controlling plants, pests and diseases as well as domestic quarantine pests and diseases free of charge and on public expense upon the decision of the Council of the PPO and approval of the Ministry of Agriculture.
   b. Participation in controlling the pests and diseases not listed as common pests but announced by the Ministry of Agriculture to be controlled nation wide.
   c. Informing the public through proper channels of the type and composition of pesticides, time and mode of control, methods of prevention from poisoning, in human and animals and the health instructions regarding the latter in each region.

VII. National Program for Surveillance and Control of Animal Diseases

7. The Islamic Republic of Iran pays particular attention to safeguarding and protecting animal population as one of the most important sources of food products and socioeconomic factors. The major exotic diseases covered by such program include Rinderpest, Foot & Mouth Disease (FMD), Tuberculosis, Brucellosis and parasitic diseases.

8. This program comprises of the following milestones:
   a. Detection and identification of affected animal;
   b. Diagnosis of exotic diseases through the reference laboratories;
   c. Separation of affected animals;
   d. Decontamination of infected farms;
   e. Mass vaccination of animals;
   f. Establishment of quarantine stations to control animals transportation;

VIII. National Bio-Safety Committee Guidelines

9. Pursuant to the presidential decree, National Bio-Safety Committee (NBSC) has been established in August 2000, and drafted guidelines and regulations for working with biological materials.

IX. The Draft of Anti Terrorism Act

10. The Draft of Anti Terrorism Act covers all kinds of terrorist activities involving inter-alia the use or threat of use of Weapons of Mass Destruction including Biological and Toxins Weapons as well as stockpiling, acquiring, development, transfer or development of biological and toxin agents that have no justification for prophylactic, protective or other peaceful purposes.
as terrorist crimes. In chapter three of the aforementioned draft, penalties and punishment have been devised to prevent such crimes.

11. Moreover in accordance with the said draft a “National Anti-Terrorism Committee” consisting of intergovernmental agencies is to be established to monitor its enforcement.