

Sixth Review Conference of the BWC: Opening session, 10:00 20 November 2006**Brief for Mr. Nobuaki Tanaka, Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs****Agenda Item 1: Opening of the Conference****Agenda Item 2: Election of the President**

***** NOTE: Conference must commence at 10:00 sharp. *****

[*Bang gavel, ask delegates to take their seats, bang gavel again **hard**, etc.*]

Excellencies, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen, on behalf of the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Depositary Governments of the Convention, I have the honour to declare open the Sixth Review Conference of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction.

As you are all aware, the Biological Weapons Convention is the legal embodiment of the international community's determination to exclude forever the possibility of disease being used as a weapon. As such, it forms one of the three fundamental pillars of our collective struggle against weapons of mass destruction. It is a treaty crucial to our security, and this Conference is crucial to the treaty. You, the States Parties, have three short weeks in which to review all aspects of the operation of the Convention and to decide on what must be done to maintain and strengthen its effectiveness, and thus reduce the risk of biological agents and toxins being used as weapons. It is an important and challenging task, and there is no time to waste.

With this in mind, I would like to move on without delay to the next item on the provisional agenda, the election of the President.

Delegates will recall that the Preparatory Committee held in April this year decided to recommend to the Conference that Ambassador Masood Khan of Pakistan preside over the Conference. I would now like to ask the Conference formally if it agrees to elect Ambassador Khan as its President.

It is so decided. I declare Ambassador Masood Khan to be elected President of the Sixth Review Conference by acclamation.

Thank you. Ambassador Khan, allow me to be the first to congratulate you on your election, and to wish you every success in the important and challenging task that lies ahead of you. I would now like to invite you to come and take your place at the podium and take the Chair of the meeting.

[Amb. Khan to come to podium, take seat behind "President" nameplate, and address the Conference. Amb. Khan will then introduce the United Nations Secretary-General.]