



General Statement
2008 Meeting of State Parties of the Biological Weapons Convention
1 December 2008

PLEASE CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Mr. Chairman,

1. Allow me at the outset to congratulate you on your assumption as the Chair of the 2008 Meeting of State Party to the Biological Weapons Convention. We believe that with your able leadership we should be able to achieve a fruitful result as we have done during the Meeting of Expert held in August 2008.
2. Our appreciation also goes to the Implementation Support Unit for their excellent preparation of the meeting.
3. Indonesia associate itself with the statement made by (representative/ambassador) of Cuba on behalf of the Non Aligned Movement.
4. The development and increasing role of biological science has provided opportunities in dealing with different challenges such as fighting infectious disease and improving human health. At the same time, we realize that there are some risks associated with the research in this field. The intentional and unintentional release of dangerous biological and toxin materials pose great challenge not only to the scientists and practitioners but also to public and the environment.
5. Effective biosafety and biosecurity measures could serve as important tools to ensure that the research will greatly benefit the society while at the same time minimize and avoid the danger of release of biological materials.
6. This year's meeting of expert has provided useful inputs as well as identified several challenges on how to strengthen biosecurity and biosafety measures. The transboundary nature of biological agents requires a concerted global biosafety and biosecurity measures. However, different countries have different capabilities in its implementation. We believe that international cooperation is pertinent in improving biosecurity and biosafety measures of different countries, which in turn will contribute to the global effort of combating the possible misuse of biological weapons.
7. The risk associated with biological agents is also exacerbated with the lack of awareness and knowledge of different stakeholders. We are of the view that it is important for the researchers and practitioners to understand their role and responsibilities. The establishment of code of conduct, awareness raising and education is important aspects in minimizing those risks.

8. However, biosafety and biosecurity measures as well as the establishment of code of conduct should not hamper biological research for peaceful purposes. On the contrary it should encourage further development of life science and international cooperation aimed at facilitating economic and social development.

Mr. Chairman

9. Indonesia views that international cooperation is an integral part in strengthening the implementation of the BWC as well as in promoting common understanding on different issues related to the convention. On June 2008, Indonesia and Norway have co-hosted the Southeast Asia regional seminar on promoting and implementing biosafety and biosecurity. We have also presented some observations made during the said meeting on the 2008 BWC Meeting of Expert. We would like to reiterate our conviction that international cooperation is important in avoiding the misuse of biological agents as well as fighting infectious diseases, especially in developing countries.

Mr. Chairman,

10. As part of our effort to contribute to strengthening the convention, we have also submitted our Confidence Building Measures document to the ISU this year. Indonesia have never possessed biological weapons program in the past and is of the view that the use of such weapons should be prohibited universally. We further believe that the multilaterally negotiated legally binding protocol will ensure the total elimination of the biological weapons.
11. To conclude, Mr. Chairman, allow me to express my delegation's sincere hope that this meeting will produce a positive and tangible result.

I thank you Mr. Chairman.