Statement by Mr. Jerzy Makarowski
Mission of Sweden to the United Nations in Geneva
2018 Meeting of States Parties to the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention
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Mr. Chairman,

Sweden is fully aligned with the statement to be delivered by the European Union. I would like to make a few brief additional comments from a national perspective.

First, allow me to welcome your appointment as the chairman of this Meeting of States Parties, and assure you of the full support of my delegation. We applaud your efforts to secure the holding of this year’s Meeting of States Parties despite the dire financial situation.

Let me also express Sweden’s appreciation for the work of the Implementation Support Unit, notwithstanding financial uncertainties.

Sweden welcomes the new States Parties to the BTWC. The membership now stands at 182 States Parties. The goal of the universalization of the Convention is steadily coming closer.

Sweden would like to encourage all States Parties to adopt a gender perspective in the context of the BTWC and on disarmament in general.

Mr. Chairman,

The legal norm against biological weapons established in the BTWC continues to be imperative for international peace and security.

New technical advances in the life sciences hold promise to help control some of the most prevalent diseases facing mankind. But some of them also pose challenges to the biological weapons convention. Technical knowledge and equipment used for legitimate purposes – in some cases holding great progress for curing some of the most dangerous and deadly diseases - could sometimes also be exploited to develop new types of biological weapons. As States Parties, we must join forces to monitor such science and technology to avoid their misuse.

In August of this year we saw the beginning of the practical implementation of last year’s decision on the intersessional process: the five Meetings of Experts. Sweden, through my colleague Mr Daniel Nord, had the honour to chair Meeting of Experts IV on Assistance, Response and Preparedness. We are pleased to note that the meetings of Experts were result-oriented and forward-looking – just the way there were meant to be. We must now carry the work forward in the run up to the Ninth Review Conference in 2021. Sweden would like to see reflected in the report from this meeting those proposals put forward in working papers where there is general agreement among States Parties, so that these may be taken forward in a more focused way during the intersessional period.
Mr. Chairman,

It is important to keep and further develop the synergies between the BTWC and other instruments and mechanisms such as UN Security Council resolution 1540, relevant work of the WHO, FAO and OIE, as well as the Secretary General’s Mechanism. In this context, I would like to invite you all to a side-event on efforts to strengthen the Secretary General’s Mechanism. This event organised by Germany, Switzerland and Sweden will be held on Thursday, 6th of December, at 13.00 in room XVII.

Mr. Chairman,

Decisions taken by the States Parties to the Convention must be implemented. In order to do so, we must ensure adequate and predictable financing. It is deeply worrying that we have not delivered on last year’s decision to hold a four-day MSP. The current financial situation is unattainable. It undermines our goals to strengthen the Convention and ensure its implementation and universalisation.

States Parties must comply with their financial obligations under the Convention.

Sweden greatly appreciates your efforts, Mr. Chairman, to find sustainable solutions to the pressing financial crisis. We will contribute constructively to finding a way to secure a stable financial situation.

Arriving at decisions on the financial situation under the Convention, including on the continued services of the ISU, as well as on the proposals outlined by the Chairs of the Meetings of Experts will require all States Parties to show responsibility and flexibility. Anything less would risk having serious consequences for the Convention.

Thank you.