Meeting of States Parties to the Biological Weapons Convention
General Debate
(Geneva, 4 December 2018)

JOINT STATEMENT IN SUPPORT OF THE BWC

Mr. Chairman,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the following delegations: Armenia, Belarus, Brazil, China, Cuba, India, Iraq, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Serbia, Tajikistan, Venezuela and my own country Russia.

Since 1975, the Biological Weapons Convention has remained one of the pillars of disarmament and international security prohibiting an entire category of weapons of mass destruction. The international community’s action to ban the weaponisation of disease is a laudable step towards making this world a safer place.

The BWC, as a collective endeavour, enshrines commitments by its State Parties to promote co-operation for peaceful purposes and provide assistance and protection from biological weapons.

We remain committed to the BWC and its effective implementation. However, the BWC continues to face challenges and requires institutional strengthening of the Convention. These technical, legal, financial and other challenges need to be addressed collectively by the States Parties.

The intersessional programme leading up to the Ninth Review Conference in 2021 provides a valuable opportunity for the States Parties to make efforts to resolve these challenges. The States Parties should endeavor to achieve concrete and meaningful outcomes and decisions in order to promote the object and purpose of this Convention.

We emphasize the indispensable and important nature of multilateral processes within the BWC based on its provisions. This should be pursued in a universal, inclusive, transparent and non-discriminatory manner. In order to maintain the credibility, universal acceptance and legitimacy, it is essential to uphold the BWC as the only multilateral forum to address matters pertaining to biological weapons.

We believe that only multilaterally negotiated decisions agreed to by the States Parties by consensus can provide the necessary assurances of compliance by the States Parties and act as an effective deterrent against non-compliance and use or threat of use of biological weapons.

We request that the statement be attached to the records of the meeting and uploaded on the website. Thank you.