Since 1972, the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention has emerged as a key pillar of international security. It has become the first disarmament treaty banning an entire class of weapons of mass destruction.

The original purpose of the BWC, as it is formulated in its preamble, has remained relevant over the years: "to exclude completely the possibility of bacteriological (biological) agents and toxins being used as weapons". Its continuing importance is reaffirmed against the backdrop of the ever increasing pace of developments in the areas of dual-use science and technology relevant to the Convention.

As part of its collective security mandate, the BWC contains provisions for the delivery of assistance in situations whereby its Parties have been exposed to danger as a result of violation of the Convention. Though such mechanism has been dormant in the past, it remains an important assurance against the vicissitudes that may lie ahead.

The founding fathers of the Convention envisaged that the BWC should have a significant promotional aspect so that its implementation may contribute to the socioeconomic development of the membership. An important benefit available to the Parties is the right to participate in the fullest possible exchange of equipment, materials and scientific and technological information for the use of bacteriological (biological) agents and toxins for peaceful purposes. States Parties also undertook to cooperate in contributing individually or together with other States or international organizations to the further development and application of scientific discoveries in the field of bacteriology (biology) for prevention of disease, or for other peaceful purposes.

The BWC’s norm against the weaponisation of disease must be nurtured and strengthened through collective action by its States Parties to ensure that the Convention serves its purpose in an effective and sustainable manner. The credibility of such collective action may be enhanced by achieving a universal adherence to the Convention. Therefore, we call upon all States that have not yet done so to become Parties to the Convention at the earliest opportunity. As one of the Depositaries of this Treaty, Russia stands ready to advise on the accession formalities and deposit the instruments of accession in Moscow.