Mr. Chairman,

At the outset, I would like to congratulate you on your assumption of the Chair to the 2019 Meeting of State Parties of the Biological Weapons Convention. We appreciate the extensive informal consultations you have undertaken in preparation for this meeting. Here, I wish to assure you of my delegation’s full support and cooperation. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the Implementation Support Unit (ISU) for its valuable work.

2. Malaysia associates itself with the statement delivered earlier by the Republic of Azerbaijan on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement States.

Mr. Chairman,

3. This Meeting of State Parties provides us with a good and timely opportunity not only to deliberate on the agenda items but also to move a step further by agreeing on an outcome document, which would reflect the common understanding of the Meeting. In this regard, we commend the work done at the Meeting of Experts held in August this year which undertook necessary discussions towards this end.

4. Malaysia recognises the importance for State Parties to consistently undertake concrete measures to strengthen national and international efforts and capabilities in accordance with the Convention. On our part,
Malaysia continues to take measures to promote capacity building in the fields such as disease surveillance, detection, diagnosis and containment, primarily through enhanced collaborative efforts, regionally and internationally.

5. Malaysia also continues to believe that effective implementation of the Convention requires non-discriminatory and balanced approach to all provisions of the Convention. In this regard, we feel that the absence of any formal verification regime poses a challenge to the effectiveness of the Convention. Here, we would like to reiterate the need to agree on possible outcomes on effective measures at this Meeting, in the run-up to the 9th Review Conference in 2021.

Mr. Chairman,

6. Let me further elaborate on the relevant effective actions that Malaysia is currently engaged in. At the national level, Malaysia has conducted various outreach programmes relating to specific obligations under BWC, including the implementation of biosecurity measures. These programmes targeted among others, institutions, policy makers, researchers and scientists and were conducted from December 2018 to November this year. The main objective was to raise awareness on the roles and responsibilities of the scientific communities in fulfilling the country’s BWC obligations, as well as to introduce the recently developed biosecurity checklist for laboratory assessment and monitoring.

7. On 10 to 12 September this year, Malaysia in collaboration with the US Health Security Partners organized a Symposium on Promoting Institutional Oversight to Address Biosecurity Threats from Emerging Technologies. The symposium had successfully raised awareness among the scientific communities on emerging technologies such as synthetic biology and gene editing system. The symposium had contributed to the establishment of institutional oversight mechanisms for biosecurity.
8. Malaysia also had the privilege of hosting a Regional Workshop for ASEAN Member States on “Response to a Deliberate Use of Biological Weapons” in Kuala Lumpur from 1st to 2nd October 2019. The workshop was held in cooperation with the Government of Japan and the ISU. 44 experts took the opportunity in the workshop to exchange knowledge, experiences and best practices in advancing and strengthening frameworks to enhance the implementation of the Convention, especially relating to issues concerning preparedness and response.

Mr. Chairman,

9. Malaysia welcomes this year’s accession of Tanzania to the BWC and strongly encourages other non-member States to also join the Convention soon.

10. In concluding, the Malaysian delegation would like to reaffirm our commitment towards the obligations under the BWC. We would also like to reassure you of our full cooperation towards ensuring the success of this Meeting.

I thank you.