Joint Statement on Finances

delivered by

H.E. Robbert Gabriëlse, Permanent Representative of the Netherlands to the Conference on Disarmament

at the

Meeting of the States Parties to the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention

Geneva, 5 December 2019
Mr. Chair,

I am taking the floor on behalf of the following delegations: Austria, Canada, Czech Republic, Germany, the Netherlands, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

At the Meeting of the States Parties in 2018 important decisions were taken on financial matters because of the financial problems the Convention has been experiencing.

We would like to thank the Chairman for his “Report on the Overall Financial Situation of the BTWC” dated 28 November 2019 that is based on information provided by the UN Secretariat in Geneva. With regard to that report we would like to state the following:

We welcome that the establishment of a working capital fund has facilitated the extension of contracts of ISU staff for a period longer than would otherwise have been possible. Providing enhanced job security to the dedicated ISU staff is essential for securing a continuation of the high-quality work of the ISU for the operation of the Convention.

We note with appreciation that the collection rate of assessed contribution for the financial year 2018 now stand at 98.6%, i.e. higher than the average rate for the past years. However, the collection rate for the current year only stands at 92.3%. We therefore call on all States Parties in arrears to pay their contributions in full and on time.

We are of the opinion that the use of credits of States that have paid their assessed contributions on time and in full remains at the discretion of that State in line with the agreed measures. Second, payments of States that have paid on time and in full cannot be used to cover the arrears of non or late paying States. There can be no write offs. Finally, arrears for unpaid contributions should remain in the amount of the initial assessment invoiced to the relevant State Party for the year in question and should remain receivable after closure of the accounts.

The Meeting of the States Parties in 2018 decided that the accounts for each financial year are to remain open for the subsequent 12 months. The Secretariat informed, however, that the accounts for 2018 were closed in August of 2019. We, therefore, request the Secretariat to follow strictly the decision taken by the States Parties in this regard. This is to ensure a transparent and accurate allocation among States Parties of the credits for any given financial period.

Finally, we seek confirmation from the Secretariat that arrears in contributions paid by States Parties after the closure of the accounts for any given financial period are credited to the accounts of the financial year in which they are received. This ensures that these funds will be included in the final cash balance of that year. They will, thus, be taken into account when the allocation of the credits among States Parties is calculated.

Thank you, Mr. Chair