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

Mr. Chairman,

At the outset, let me join other delegations in congratulating you on your election to Chair the 2018 Meeting of States Parties to the Biological Weapons Convention.

My delegation has full confidence in your constructive leadership to lead this meeting to a successful conclusion.

We align our statement with the statement delivered by Venezuela on behalf of the NAM State Parties to the BWC.

We appreciate the role of Implementation Support Unit (ISU) in coordinating support and assistance for the comprehensive implementation and universalisation of BWC.

We also appreciate the support extended by the EU under the extended assistance program.

Mr. Chairman,

Nepal's unwavering commitment and continued support to the norms of world peace, international security and disarmament are enshrined in our constitution. These values are also the guiding principles of our foreign policy.

Nepal reaffirms its principled position that the universal peace and security can only be ensured through the time-bound, general and complete disarmament of nuclear and radiological and other weapons of mass destruction including biological weapons.
As a party to the BWC, CWC and NPT and the host to the Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament for the Asia-Pacific, Nepal attaches great importance to our collective will and commitment to disarmament and non-proliferation.

The BWC provides a multilateral framework of international cooperation and assistance for the promotion of the peaceful uses of biological science and technology.

It is also aimed at facilitating capacity building to respond to disease outbreaks and developing national capabilities in areas such as disease surveillance and diagnosis; biosafety and biosecurity; training and awareness-raising; and regulatory and administrative measures.

Unprecedented advances in biological science and technology have brought immense opportunities for humankind. But at the same time there are concerns of their potential uses contrary to the provisions of the Convention.

Effective implementation of the BWC cannot be overemphasised for ensuring effective tackling of the possibilities of wrong hands finding it easy to develop and misuse for ulterior motives.

We need a common understanding and collective efforts directed towards maximizing the opportunity provided by the convention through well-regulated and controlled mechanism for the welfare and advancement of humankind.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is before us. My delegation believes that besides the broader objectives of the Convention, our common efforts should also be directed towards utilizing life and biological sciences and technologies to forge a deeper cooperation in realizing the SDGs.

In this regard, we welcome the UN Secretary General’s Disarmament Agenda which underscores the need to ensure more effective implementation of the Convention by improving linkages in the domain of global health security and Sustainable Development Goal 3 on health and well-being.
Mr. Chairman,

Nepal has always remained in compliance with the Biological Weapons Convention. Since becoming a party to it in 2016, we are putting our best efforts for its full and sincere implementation at the national level.

We do neither have any facility whatsoever to develop, produce, acquire or transfer any of these dangerous weapons, nor have any intention to acquire the capability to produce them in the future.

The National Penal Code of Nepal which was enacted in 2017 has entered into force from August 2018. The Penal Code expressly prohibits any act to develop, produce, acquire, purchase, sale, possess, handover, stockpile, retain, export or import any type of nuclear, chemical, biological or toxin weapons as well as investment in or management of such activity. Any such crime shall warrant harsh penalty.

The National Authority for the implementation of BWC, which is in place at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, has started fresh initiatives and consultation among the implementing agencies and relevant stakeholders for drafting the national legislation.

To further give momentum to this process, the Ministry is organising an Awareness-Raising and Legislative Drafting Workshop in Kathmandu next month.

Nepal underlines the importance of Confidence Building Measures to address the existing challenges in the implementation of the Convention. We stress that cooperation, collaboration and consensus building among the States Parties is vital to further enhance the objective and purpose of the Convention.

Mr. Chairman,

In closing, I would like to reiterate Nepal's commitment for sincere implementation of the Convention and we also remain constructively engaged with the international community in this endeavour.
I thank you.