Preparatory Committee of the Eight Review Conference of the States Parties of the Convention on
The Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction, Geneva, 8-12 August 2016

Statement On behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and Other States Parties to the BWC

by H.E. Mr. Mohsen Naziri Asl, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Geneva

Geneva, 8 August 2016

Mr. Chairman,

I have the honor to speak on behalf of the States Parties of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) and other States Parties to the Convention. NAM congratulates you, Ambassador György Molnar, on your election as the President-Designate of the Eighth Review Conference of the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC). We are confident that with your diplomatic skills and ability we will be able to take forward the work of the Conference. The Group stands ready to engage constructively with you and other States Parties to bring the coming Eight Review Conference of States Parties to a successful conclusion.
The Group would like to re-emphasize its position as reflected in the Tehran final document of the NAM Summit, as reiterated by the NAM XVII Ministerial Conference held on 26-29 May 2014, Algers, Algeria in which:

“The Ministers of NAM States Parties to the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC) recognized the particular importance of strengthening the Convention through multilateral negotiations for a legally binding Protocol and universal adherence to the Convention. They reiterated their call to promote international cooperation for peaceful purposes, including scientific-technical exchange. They underlined the importance to maintain close coordination among the NAM States Parties to the Convention and highlighted that the BTWC forms a whole and that, although it is possible to consider certain aspects separately, it is critical to deal with all of the issues interrelated to this Convention in a balanced and comprehensive manner,

The Ministers of NAM States Parties to the BTWC welcomed the active participation by NAM States Parties in the Seventh BTWC Review Conference held in Switzerland from 5-22 December 2011, to advance their positions on this Convention, particularly their key role in the adoption of the important decisions related to the implementation of Article X of the BTWC, especially by emphasizing the need for enhancing international cooperation, assistance and exchanges in toxins, biological agents equipment and technology for peaceful purposes, bearing in mind the Action Plan on the implementation of Article X submitted by the NAM States Parties at the Sixth Review Conference, and the additional NAM States Parties’ proposal on a mechanism for the full,
implementation of Article X of the Convention on 2013.

The Ministers of NAM States Parties to the BTWC emphasized the importance of the BTWC role in the total prohibition on all biological and toxin weapons. They reiterated that multilateral negotiations aimed at concluding a non-discriminatory legally binding agreement, dealing with all Articles of the Convention, in a balanced and comprehensive manner, would sustainably strengthen the Convention.”

Mr. Chairman,

The Group of NAM and Other States Parties to the BWC attaches great importance to the issue of international cooperation as the first priority of the Group and continue to believe that there is need for an effective mechanism to ensure the full, effective and non-discriminatory implementation of Article X. The enhancement of international cooperation for the use of biological agents for peaceful purposes is an essential part of compliance with the Convention and is crucial for the realization of the purpose and objective of the Convention.

Any measures identified within the framework of the Convention to mitigate biological risks should be implemented in a manner to ensure that legitimate peaceful activities including international cooperation would not be hampered.

Mr. Chairman,

These recent developments once again highlight the need to conclude a legally binding agreement on appropriate multilateral verification arrangements.
In the past, useful work has been done in this regard under the BWC in the Ad hoc Group and NAM continues to attach high importance to preserving and eventually resuming that work.

NAM stresses that the national implementation under Article IV of the Convention requires commitments towards the implementation of all provisions of the Convention. In this regard, NAM is of the firm view that the full, effective and non-discriminatory implementation of Article X is of high importance.

It is imperative that any export control measures adopted by States Parties at national level should be in full conformity with Convention obligations and create an environment conducive to the full, effective and non-discriminatory implementation of all Convention provisions, and should not in any way adversely affect the rights and obligations of States Parties under the Convention. Non-proliferation efforts through maintaining export controls are best addressed through multilaterally, non-discriminatory negotiated guidelines to preserve the integrity and the delicate balance that exists in the Convention.

It is crucial to note that the Convention has established a system with equal rights and obligations based on the principle of equal treatment of all States Parties. Therefore, national implementation measures should not create undue restrictions among States Parties which would hinder the full, effective and non-discriminatory implementation of Article X.
Mr. Chairman,

NAM welcomes preparatory process for the coming Review Conference. NAM Looks forward to engage constructively to consider and review proposals along with its principle positions during this preparatory work as well as the Eight Review Conference on reviewing the Convention’s operation with a view to reach a consensual outcome. NAM urges all States Parties to the BWC to show the necessary flexibility and political will to strengthen the Convention at the Eighth Review Conference.

The Group of NAM and its Other States Parties to the BWC look forward to productive and forward-looking discussions in this Preparatory Committee meeting and assure you of our full cooperation in your work. NAM also looks forward to holding of a successful Eight Review Conference in 2016.

Thank you.