Statement On behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and Other States Parties to the BWC
Delivered by Mr. Mohammad Hassan DARYAEI, Consoler Permanent Mission of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Geneva

International cooperation with a focus on the full, effective and non-discriminatory implementation of Article X

Madame Chair,

NAM and Other States Parties to the BWC welcome the decision of the Seventh Review Conference to include cooperation and assistance as one of the standing agenda items in this inter-sessional process. The particular focus of this agenda item should be strengthening the implementation of Article X of the Convention, which has been a priority for the Group for a long time.

We also welcome the Review Conference's decision to establish a database system to facilitate requests for and offers of exchange of assistance and cooperation among States Parties, and we hope that this database and its modality of work will contribute to increased cooperation among States Parties. We look forward to the report of the ISU on the operation of the database.

NAM and Other States Parties believe that the full, effective and non-discriminatory implementation of Article X is essential for the realization of the objective and purpose
of the Convention and there is a legal obligation under Article X to promote the fullest possible exchange of equipment, materials and scientific and technological information for the use of biological agents and toxins for peaceful purposes and not to hamper the economic and technological development of States Parties. The developed countries bear special responsibility to promote international cooperation in the framework of the Convention for the benefit of developing countries and to remove and avoid all restrictions that are contrary to the letter and spirit of the Convention. NAM and Other States Parties to the BWC therefore reiterate their firm position on the need for an effective mechanism to ensure the full, effective and non-discriminatory implementation of the Article X.

1- Ways and means to target and mobilize resources

The Group recognizes the fundamental importance of enhancing international cooperation and assistance, States Parties should work together to mobilize resources to address needs for assistance and cooperation, in particular from developed to developing States Parties, and from international and regional organizations. In light of rapid developments in the life sciences, there is a need to strengthen cooperation among States Parties in order to bridge the ever increasing gaps in the fields of biotechnology, genetic engineering, microbiology and other related areas between developed and developing countries. The submission of clear, specific, and timely national reports on implementation of Article X as agreed at the Seventh Review Conference and also an effective utilization of the electronic database for international cooperation in the context of Article X of the Convention could play a useful role in mobilizing and targeting resources.

2- Challenges and obstacles to developing international cooperation, assistance and exchange in the biological sciences and technology

The Group emphasizes the importance of overcoming challenges and obstacles to international cooperation, assistance and exchange in the biological sciences and technology. In this regard one of the main challenges for the full, effective and non-discriminatory implementation of Article X is the existence of unjustified restrictions and or limitations, including the politically motivated ones, imposed against States Parties in contravention of the provisions and inconsistent with the spirit of the Convention. There is an urgent need for the removal of any such restrictions. States Parties should work together to develop procedures to promote the full, effective, and
non-discriminatory implementation of Article X and develop procedures for the settlement of disputes arising from concerns about the implementation of Article X.

3-Capacity-building through international cooperation

The Group underlines the importance of capacity-building through international cooperation in detecting, reporting, and responding to the outbreaks of infectious disease or biological weapons attacks, including in the areas of emergency preparedness, response, management, and mitigation. States Parties should work to build capacity and reduce inequalities between developed and developing countries in the life sciences and related technologies. We believe that all developed countries bear a special responsibility to promote international cooperation for capacity building to the benefit of developing countries in the framework of the Convention and remove all restrictions and limitation that are contrary to the letter and spirit of the Convention. The NAM and Other States Parties also attach importance to promoting South-South cooperation in the field of capacity building.

The following measures could facilitate capacity building:

(a): identifying and addressing the need for, and facilitating the exchange of equipment, materials, and scientific and technological information for the use of biological agents for peaceful purposes, particularly to developing countries;

(b) Supporting states especially developing countries in building defences against new and emerging diseases and developing national capacity for responding to biological threats through detection, containment, and decontamination;

(c) Promoting interagency coordination and multi-sectoral cooperation to prepare for, detect, and respond to infectious disease outbreaks whether natural, accidental, or deliberate in nature;

(d) Developing and implementing appropriate, sustainable, and effective laboratory safety and security measures, through international cooperation on exchange of the new technologies, training materials and resources.

While we welcome the progress made at the Seventh Review Conference in taking a step in facilitating the implementation of Article X, a lot still remains to be done. In this regard, NAM and Other States Parties reaffirm their proposal for strengthening Article X
implementation as outlined in their Working Paper submitted to the Review Conference. Briefly, we would like to recall some of the tasks identified in that Working Paper:

(i) Identify and address the needs in terms of equipment, materials and scientific and technological information regarding the use of the bacteriological and toxin agents for peaceful purposes;

(ii) Identify and overcome the obstacles hampering the full, effective and non-discriminatory implementation of Article X of the Convention, including by addressing the denial cases of States Parties;

(iii) Mobilize the necessary resources, including financial resources, to facilitate the widest possible exchange of equipment, material and scientific and technological information regarding the use of biological and toxin agents for peaceful purposes, in particular from developed to developing States Parties;

(iv) Facilitate the development of human resources in developing States Parties in the implementation of the Convention, taking into account the special situation faced by them;

(v) Coordinate cooperation with other relevant international and regional organizations for financial and technological support of activities for the use of biological and toxin agents for peaceful purposes.

We value the discussions in this inter-sessional program on some of the tasks identified above. We hope that these discussions would enable us to move forward towards an effective mechanism which would result in full, effective and non-discriminatory implementation of Article X obligations.

4. Education, training, exchange and twinning programmes and other means of developing human resources in the biological sciences and technology relevant to the implementation of the Convention, particularly in developing countries

NAM and Other States Parties believe that exchanges in education and training are of fundamental importance for the development of human resources in the field of biological sciences. It is only through international cooperation in education and training that we will be able to bridge the gap between the capabilities of developing
and developed countries. In this regard, NAM would like to stress the following specific points:

- First, developed countries should provide full access to students, scientists and other personnel from developing countries to their universities, advanced laboratories, research institutions, production facilities etc and remove any restrictions or limitations in this regard such as through restrictive visa regimes.
- Second, it is important that access is given to developing countries in institutions of higher learning and those with cutting edge technology. For example, developing countries should be given opportunities for training in advanced laboratories. This is important for them to keep pace with new S&T developments and would help them build defences against diseases, whether naturally occurring or deliberate.
- Third, the sharing of results of advanced research in life sciences is especially important for the scientists, engineers, students and teachers in developing countries to take full advantage of new developments in biological sciences and technology. There is scope for further work in BWC on this issue with the aim of evolving institutional measures.
- Fourth, twinning programmes could be especially useful in capacity building and sharing of advanced expertise in developing countries and in improving global capacity for disease detection and control.

5. Capacity-building, through international cooperation, in biosafety and biosecurity, and for detecting, reporting, and responding to outbreaks of infectious disease or biological weapons attacks, including in the areas of preparedness, response, and crisis management and mitigation

NAM and Other States Parties while noting that there is no agreed definition of biosafety and biosecurity in the Convention emphasize the value of international cooperation in these two areas as well as in detecting, reporting and responding to outbreaks of infectious diseases whether naturally occurring or deliberate. Disease knows no borders and all international efforts must be made to enable States to strengthen their capacities for detecting, reporting and responding to outbreaks of infectious diseases. From a humanitarian point of view it is essential that developing countries receive full
and timely cooperation and assistance in the form of medicines, vaccines, diagnostics and related equipment and materials for peaceful purposes as enshrined in Article X.

6. Coordination of cooperation with other relevant international and regional organizations and other relevant stakeholders

NAM and Other States Parties believe that relevant international and regional organizations such as WHO and OIE play an important role in disease surveillance, prevention, detection and response and there is merit in coordination of cooperation with them in accordance with their respective mandates. However, the unique role of BWC as a Convention which deals with security related issues needs to be recognized and further efforts made for full and effective implementation of Article X within the Convention itself. Thank you