STATEMENT BY TURKEY

MEETING OF STATES PARTIES OF THE CONVENTION ON THE PROHIBITION OF THE DEVELOPMENT, PRODUCTION AND STOCKPILING OF BIOLOGICAL AND TOXIN WEAPONS AND THEIR DESTRUCTION

4 DECEMBER 2018

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Mr. Chair,

We align with the EU statement, in our national capacity I would like to deliver following statement.

At the outset, we would like to congratulate Macedonia for the assumption of the office as the Chair of the 2018 Meeting of States Parties of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention. You have the full support of our Delegation.

Turkey considers the BWC as one of the key components of the international non-proliferation and disarmament regime and the cornerstone of the efforts to prevent biological agents and toxins to be used as weapons. The BWC has an essential role to play today and tomorrow.

Mr. Chair,

It was disappointing that the Eighth Review Conference was unable to reach a consensus on a new program of work. Nevertheless, last years’ MSP enjoyed consensus on the ISP until the next RevCon. This was a prospective step forward. Besides, agreement on organizing Meetings of Experts was another important step for effective functioning of the Convention and strengthening its implementation.

Turkey supports strengthening the implementation of Article X, including consideration of detailed procedures and mechanisms for the provision of assistance and cooperation by States Parties. In this regard, we believe that the discussions at MX1 will make its positive contributions to the Convention.
There is a gap in efforts to catch up with the developments in the field of science and technology. In this regard, establishment of MX2 to review the developments in this field was a good opportunity. Turkey is aware of the positive developments in science and technology, which have brought many benefits to areas such as health, environment and agriculture. However, we are also conscious of the risks that go in parallel with this progress.

Lack of a noteworthy increase on the level of CBM reports provided, continues to be a challenge. In this regard, we hope that works of MX3 would help to cover this gap.

In case of any biological attacks, assistance, response and preparedness are essential tools. We are all to be ready for such conditions in advance. Therefore, this issue needs to be given the utmost importance and precautions to be kept up to date. We believe MX4 has a unique place in these efforts.

Turkey supports the efforts aimed at establishing stronger structures that would enable better functioning of the Convention, including intersessional decision-making. In this regard, we expect MX5 to play an important role. We believe that “decision making mechanism” of the Convention should also be carefully considered.

Stepping up the universalization efforts can be another area to concentrate. All possible efforts should also be devoted in this vein. Turkey calls upon the remaining states not party to the BWC to adhere to it without further delay. That said, we welcome Palestine, Niue, Central African Republic and Tanzania as new members.

Mr. Chair,

We share the expectations towards having better exchange of CBMs both in terms of quality and quantity. We commend State Parties which submitted reports, but it is obvious that level of submission has not reached to a desirable stage yet. Turkey submits CBM reports regularly.

Besides, a verification regime in the Convention would be useful for its purpose. Turkey believes that an improved system like the one in Chemical Weapons Convention can strengthen the efficacy of the Convention. Cognizant of the differences in opinions on the matter, States Parties should keep taking up this matter as well.

Mr. Chair,

Globalization and information technology render scientific knowledge more accessible; which in turn increases the chances of its possible misuse by ill-intended people or organizations, including terrorists. In this regard, bio-terrorism, as with other forms of
weapons of mass destruction related terrorism, constitutes to be a major threat to the humanity and international security.

The facilitated access to materials, technology and know-how on different forms of weapons of mass destruction has been and continues to be a major cause for concern for the entire international community.

Last but not least, keeping and strengthening the ISU is an essential issue. This also goes hand in hand with the financial predictability and stability of the Convention. In this regard, we would like to thank you Mr. Chair for the Information Paper you prepared and proposals on the finance issue. We hope this august body will approve necessary measures in this regard.

I thank you Mr. Chair.