Biological Weapons Convention (BWC)
Annual Meeting of States Parties, Geneva, 4-7 December 2018

GENERAL EXCHANGE OF VIEWS

Statement by Ambassador Farukh Amil
Head of Pakistan’s Delegation
Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the United Nations and
Other International Organization in Geneva

Mr. Chairman,

I congratulate you on your election as Chairman of the 2018 Meeting of BWC States Parties. We appreciate the extensive informal consultations undertaken by you in preparation for this meeting. I assure you of my delegation’s full support and cooperation.

We commend the work being done by the Implementation Support Unit with its modest resources and staff, and thank them for all the substantive and logistic arrangements that they have put in place for this meeting.

We welcome the State of Palestine, Niue and the Central African Republic that have joined the Convention this year, bringing the number of States Parties to the Convention to 182.

Pakistan associates itself with the statement delivered by the distinguished Ambassador of Venezuela on behalf of NAM.

Mr. Chairman,

Pakistan ratified the BWC in 1974 as a non-possessor State. We remain committed to its full and effective implementation, for which we have instituted comprehensive legislative, regulatory and administrative measures.

We attach great importance to the safety and security of biological agents, facilities, technologies and equipment. Taking necessary steps in conformity with BWC and the International Health Regulations, Pakistan has also introduced stringent bio-safety and bio-security measures.

We have strengthened our export controls and brought them in full conformity with the Australia Group as well as other multilateral export control regimes. Pakistan’s comprehensive reports to the UNSCR 1540 Committee provide a detailed matrix of information on all these procedures, mechanisms and legislations as well as on their enforcement.
Mr. Chairman,

BWC is the first multilateral disarmament treaty banning an entire category of WMDs. We deeply value its contribution to global security. This aspect of the Convention needs to be preserved and strengthened. Pakistan also shares the concerns regarding the possible use of biological weapons, including by non-State actors.

Our top priorities in the BWC context are: one, the universalization of the Convention; and two, enhancing the implementation of all its Articles in a balanced, non-discriminatory and comprehensive manner.

Pakistan believes that the most effective method of strengthening the BWC is through the conclusion of a legally-binding Protocol that covers all the Articles of the Convention and includes a multilateral verification mechanism. Without prejudice to the priority that we attach to the conclusion of a legally-binding Protocol, my delegation will continue to engage constructively to explore progress where consensus is possible.

We attach special importance to Article X of the Convention concerning transfer of knowledge and technology for peaceful uses of biology. In recent years, advances in the field of biological sciences have opened up new avenues for the peaceful application of bio-technology as well as international cooperation in this area.

We believe that there is an urgent need for States Parties to work together to develop procedures to promote full, effective, and non-discriminatory implementation of Article X. In this regard, Pakistan supports NAM’s proposal for developing an Article X compliance mechanism.

Mr. Chairman,

Pakistan participated in the five Meetings of Experts held in August which addressed many important topics related to the Strengthening of Cooperation and Assistance under Article X; Review of Developments in the Field of Science and Technology; Strengthening National Implementation; Assistance, Response and Preparedness; and the Institutional Strengthening of the Convention. The discussions initiated in those meetings will continue during the next two years of the ISP. As decided by the 8th RevCon, the “Ninth Review Conference will consider the work and outcomes it receives from the Meetings of States Parties and the Meetings of Experts and decide by consensus on any inputs from the intersessional programme and on any further action.”
Mr. Chairman,

We commend the extensive work undertaken by you this year on the financial issues confronted by the Convention. We take note of the paper submitted by you on “possible elements of a decision on measures to address the financial predictability and sustainability of the Convention”.

Pakistan has always met all its financial obligations under the Convention in full and on time. We look forward to working with other fellow States Parties during this meeting in order to put in place a durable and sustainable solution for addressing the ongoing financial challenges.

Let me conclude, Mr. Chairman, by reassuring you of our constructive participation in this meeting.

I thank you.