



**Statement by Mr. Muhammad Omar, First Secretary at the Ninth Preparatory  
Committee of the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC),  
04 April 2022**

**Agenda Item 5: General Debate.**

**Mr. Vice-Chair,**

We thank both vice-chairs for their efforts in steering the organizational aspects of the BWC process in the midst of challenging circumstances.

I assure you both of my delegation's constructive engagement.

The ISU has continued to discharge its duties ably and efficiently despite the modest resources at its disposal and we commend the ISU staff.

We associate ourselves with the statement delivered by Azerbaijan on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

**Mr. Vice-Chair,**

Within the larger arms control architecture, the BWC regime remains distinct even after five decades of its inception. It has registered progress in terms of strengthening of norms. Its organizational and institutional arrangements have evolved. Yet, there is sufficient room to fully realize the potential of this Convention in its protection and promotional aspects.

As we approach the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Convention, it may be worthwhile to not only take stock of the progress made and challenges encountered, but also chart a vibrant roadmap for the next fifty years of the BWC regime.

Together with other emerging technologies, the life sciences will also witness a range of complex, potentially dangerous but also promising developments in the

decades ahead. The BWC regime will therefore need to be enabled to prepare for and respond to future opportunities and challenges.

**Mr. Vice-Chair,**

Apart from its devastating economic and social impacts, the COVID-19 pandemic also laid bare the fragilities of the global public health architecture. Among other areas the pandemic has highlighted the need for deeper reflection on the mutually reinforcing nature of the prevention and protection aspects of the BWC as well as the critical role of meaningful operationalization of international assistance and cooperation in the field of life sciences.

**Mr. Vice-Chair,**

Pakistan remains committed to the full, effective and balanced implementation of the BWC. We share concerns over the potential use of life sciences for purposes inconsistent with the BWC. We therefore reiterate the widely held view that the most effective method of strengthening the BWC is through the conclusion of a legally-binding Protocol that covers all its articles and includes a multilateral verification mechanism.

We should also remain mindful of the different perspectives on delegating decision making and how they relate to enhanced progress on the protection and promotional aspects of the Convention.

Given the complexities that the state parties would have to navigate between now and hopefully a successful Review Conference, we are of the view that the Final Document of the Ninth Review Conference must embody a delicate balance. We look forward to working with you and all States Parties in developing a robust, balanced and forward looking Final Document by consensus.

**Mr. Vice-chair,**

Pakistan and China will submit a joint working paper on Tianjin Biosecurity guidelines for code of conduct for scientists. This voluntary model is aimed at making an important contribution to raising biosafety and biosecurity awareness and enhancing ethical self-discipline among biological researchers.

It is our sincere hope that the 9<sup>th</sup> Review Conference would endorse it and task the subsequent intersessional process to exchange information, experiences and good practices on its dissemination and adoption.

We also recognize the importance of regularly reviewing science and technology related developments. We support the establishment of a States Parties-led, inclusive and representative mechanism. It should not only increase awareness

about potential risks, but also help enhance cooperation on sharing of new technologies for peaceful purposes.

**Mr. Vice-Chair,**

Before concluding, I wish to note the situation that we find ourselves in at the Preparatory Committee i.e. the lack of a Chairperson. It is unfortunate that choices exercised by two countries during the last Meeting of State Parties and first part of the Preparatory committee have led to the current state of affairs. My delegation would be submitting a working paper on this matter under the relevant agenda item to the Preparatory Committee.

We will also continue to work with you and other state parties to find an agreeable path on all organizational matters.

**I thank you, Mr. Vice-Chair.**

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