

Meeting of the States Parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction

13 December 2023

English only

2023 Meeting
Geneva, 11–13 December 2023

Statement of the Delegation of Brazil

Submitted by Brazil

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson,

Brazil attaches great importance to the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) in light of the pioneering and prominent position it occupies within multilateral disarmament machinery. When its negotiation was finalized, in 1972, the BWC broke new ground as the first disarmament treaty to ban and prohibit a whole category of weapons of mass destruction. It took almost two decades for the Chemical Weapons Convention to achieve a similar feat and almost fifty years for the Treaty on the Prohibition of nuclear weapons to enter into force. It is also noteworthy that the BWC had horizontal commitments applicable equally to all States Parties.

Since 1975, the Convention has achieved much with the dismantling of then existing biological weapons programs, contributed to non-proliferation of such weapons and significantly facilitated cooperation in Life Sciences for peaceful purposes. The balance of the implementation of the Convention is, therefore, eminently positive and for that reason, my government believes that the regime anchored in the BWC should not only be upheld but also updated. It is essential to equip further the Convention so that it continues to perform at high level and to be in a position to face current and emerging challenges.

Mr. Chairperson,

We have to acknowledge that the early successes of the BWC with the dismantling of existing programs and stocks of biological weapons led us to a certain degree of complacency. We might have basked in the glory of this impressive achievement and ruled out the notion of biological weapons as a threat.

Rapid and widespread technological progress in life sciences, breakdown in the confidence among states parties and widespread clamor after major public health scares exposed over again the need to address aspects in the structure of the Convention that need to be enhanced. Indeed, the COVID-19 pandemic was a sober wake-up call on the catastrophic risks that humankind face from biological hazards.

It is our firm belief that BWC states parties should not shy away from the challenge posed by the current situation. This moment of crisis is also a moment of opportunity to upgrade our regime and we ought to seize it.

In this spirit, I would like to commend the IX Review Conference, under the distinguished presidency of Ambassador Leonardo Bencini of Italy, hailing it as the most important achievement in the field of disarmament for the year 2022. Its success underscores our collective dedication to peace and security, and it is a testament to our shared commitment to a world free of biological weapons threats.

Brazil views the progress achieved in the first three meetings of the Working Group with great optimism. We pledge our full and unwavering commitment to its activities in 2024,



reaffirming our dedication to upholding and advancing the principles enshrined in the Convention.

Thank you.
