

# 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

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English only

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## Statement by Pakistan

### Submitted by Pakistan

The BWC regime remains distinct even after five decades of its inception. While registering progress in strengthening the normative framework against biological weapons, its development of institutional and organizational arrangements has not kept pace with the requirements of this regime.

Today we find ourselves in an environment that is increasingly shaped by major transformations in life sciences, revolution in technology such as Artificial Intelligence and increased participation of variety of actors. The breathtaking pace of these developments offers new avenues of cooperation.

At the same time, these developments are giving rise to unprecedented risks. The established norms under the Convention are threatened by the potential misuse of these advancements.

In this context, we see the establishment of a new Working Group to strengthen the BWC as a system reset for the Convention after almost two decades. It offers a unique opportunity to revitalize the Convention, tap its full potential and to contemporize it in ways that it is able to measure up to the promise and perils in the decades ahead.

Pakistan is participating actively in the Working Group and has submitted a tangible “Proposal for Cooperation and Assistance Mechanism under Article X” of the BWC.

Establishing a mechanism to implement obligations of Article X in a more structured and an institutionalized manner will help harness the benefits of biological sciences and technologies for peaceful purposes while also help in mitigating the associated risks.

In addition, a structured and continuous review of scientific and technological developments within life sciences is also imperative.

Therefore, developing common understandings on the establishment of two mechanisms on international cooperation and assistance as well on review of science and technology during the early stages of our Working Group will help build confidence and trust among the States Parties.

Pakistan ratified the BWC in 1974 as a non-possessor State and remains committed to the full, effective and balanced implementation of the Convention. Our top priorities include the universalization of the Convention, and enhancing the implementation of all articles of the Convention in a balanced, non-discriminatory and comprehensive manner.

We strongly reiterate the widely held view that the most effective method of strengthening the BWC is through the conclusion of a legally-binding Protocol including a multilateral verification mechanism.

Over the years, Pakistan has worked closely with other States Parties to strengthen the BWC regime in ways that promote and facilitate sharing of biological technology, equipment,



good practices for research and peaceful purposes in the fields of medicine, agriculture and industry.

Pakistan is investing in the development of life sciences and biotechnology for its socio-economic development. We have a good institutional base, a sound infrastructure, and a pool of scientists to sustain this effort. We have enforced stringent measures on bio-security, bio-safety, bio-ethics, dual-use education, export controls and Code of Conduct for Life Scientists. These measures should elicit greater international exchange, collaboration and cooperation. On our part, we are willing to share our experiences and help in our own modest ways in terms of capacity building of other interested States Parties.

Strengthening the implementation of Article VII in relation to preparedness, assistance and response has assumed further significance over the years. It remains imperative for affected States Parties to receive timely and adequate assistance. The provision of such assistance should not be conditional on the action or finding by the UN Security Council with respect to the investigation of alleged use. Assistance should be provided promptly on the basis of the request by the affected state. Concrete and practical measures in this regard should be considered.

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