

**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**

14 December 2023

English only

2023 Meeting
Geneva, 11–13 December 2023

**Statement delivered by The Gambia: the Biological and
Toxin Weapons Convention at the 2023 Meeting of States
Parties to the Convention Item 5 – General Debate
(Geneva, 11 to 13 December 2023)**

Submitted by The Gambia

Thank you for giving me the floor.

Mr. President,

The Gambia congratulates H.E Cristian Espinosa Cañizares, the Ambassador of Ecuador, on his election as the President of the 2023 Meeting of States Parties to the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention and wish him success during his tenure of office.

The delegation of The Gambia associates itself with the statement on this agenda item delivered by the delegation of Nigeria on behalf of the African Member States to the Convention.

Excellencies,

We are gathered yet again to reaffirm our commitment to the Biological Weapons Convention, a treaty that effectively bans biological and toxin weapons and prohibits their development, production, stockpiling, acquisition, and means of delivery.

Article IV of the Convention requires each State Party to take necessary measures to implement the provisions of the Convention at national the level depending on their circumstances and legal systems of each country. Therefore, we call upon all States Parties to prioritize capacity building and technical cooperation in order to strengthen the Convention's universal implementation.

To address the gaps in national implementation of the Convention, the importance of international cooperation and assistance under Article X of the Convention cannot be over-emphasised. States Parties need predictable support to adopt measures related to the strengthening of national implementation mechanisms, including measures under article IV of the Convention, to promote transparency and confidence building under the Convention.

Mr. President

Apart from its utility as a disarmament tool, we also expect the Convention to be able to contribute to disease control, food security, innovation and the climate change crisis through technology transfers. Accordingly, we urge State Parties to support the work of the UN Technology Bank for the Least Developed Countries, which aims to strengthen the science, technology, and innovation capacity of LDCs towards building sustainable development and structural economic transformation.

Thus, The Gambia looks forward to further support to developing and LDC member states in the fields of disease surveillance, detection, diagnosis, and containment of infectious



diseases, as well as international cooperation in biological sciences and technology for peaceful purposes.

In this regard, we pay tribute to the BWC Implementation Support Unit in its work of building the capacities of Member States and the implementation of projects geared towards the effective implementation of BWC in Africa.

Mr. President,

In conclusion, we wish to encourage the ISU to continue to facilitate experience sharing among states parties and south–south cooperation in the areas of technology transfer, capacity building, and universalization of the Convention.

Thank you.
