

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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State of Palestine's Views on the Effective Implementation of the BWC

Submitted by the State of Palestine

Mr. President.

At the outset, please allow me to congratulate you on your assumption of the presidency of this Conference, and to assure you of my delegation's full support.

Over the past two months, after issuing genocidal calls publicly—with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu vowing to turn Gaza into a “deserted island” and Israeli Minister of War calling Palestinians “human animals”—Israel, the occupying Power, proceeded to drop over **25,000 tonnes of explosives on Gaza, equivalent to nearly two nuclear bombs**. A territory that is 25 miles long and packed with around 1 million children. **Experts now consider this to be the most sustained and intense bombing campaign of a populated area in history.**

Israel's immediate targeting of medical staff and hospitals, refusal the access of humanitarian aid and medicines, deprivation of water, electricity and fuel, facilitating the spread of epidemics alongside with the Bodies of our People piled up in the streets, all of this, expose its intent of using the brutal policy of spreading epidemics and toxins, as a method of biological warfare, to facilitate its genocide in Gaza.

The WHO stated that many cases of infectious diseases in shelters have been detected, including acute respiratory infections, skin infections and outbreaks like **hepatitis A** and potential spread of Colera.

In this context, I recall that the colonial occupying power has not allowed the newborn premature babies in Gaza, to leave al **Nasr hospital** it attacked, they died alone in their beds, **and their bodies were found decomposing, decomposing, let that sink in.** We are facing an emergency biological disaster and humanitarian catastrophe in Gaza. We demand an immediate ceasefire and an immediate access of humanitarian aid. Millions of lives are at stake. The credibility of the international legal order is on the line, not just in Palestine, but the World over.

Here, we recall the treaty's purpose that is for the sake **of all mankind**, to exclude completely the possibility of (biological) agents and toxins being used as weapons, Convinced that such use would be repugnant to the conscience of mankind and that no effort should be spared to minimize this risk.

Mr President,

The State of Palestine has acceded to several disarmament and non-proliferation treaties and conventions, given its firm belief in the importance of international cooperation and multilateralism in countering the humanitarian consequences of weapons, avoiding the existential threats posed by weapons of mass destruction, and promoting peace and sustainable development.



The BWC remains one of the core pillars of disarmament and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and is of special importance in the Middle East region.

Mr President,

Since its accession to the Convention, the State of Palestine continues to fulfill its obligations with appreciation to the Implementation support unit. However, the State of Palestine faces major challenges to the implementation of BWC, due to the illegal colonial occupation of our Land.

Israel, the colonial occupying power, is not party to the Biological Weapons Convention. Therefore, as it continues to colonize the land of the State of Palestine, we cannot guarantee whether there are any biological weapons, agents or facilities situated or produced under its control, including in illegal Israeli settlements, or might be used by the Israeli terrorist settlers, nor can we guarantee effective customs control over such agents.

The fact that Israel exerts illegal control over our borders also impedes our ability to implement Article X, according to which States Parties to the Convention have the right to participate in the fullest possible exchange of equipment, materials and scientific and technological information for the use of bacteriological (biological) agents and toxins for peaceful purposes.

Mr President,

Biological Weapons are a category of WMD that is nearly impossible to contain once used. The diseases they spread can cross borders, cause serious destruction to human and zoological life, and major disruption of economies and public spheres.

In this regard, the State of Palestine recognizes the important and challenging task ahead of us as an international community to enhance implementation of the Convention. We support all initiatives aimed at promoting accountability and verification of the convention, especially in these challenging times, when more than ever, international institutions and multilateralism must be supported and reinforced.

I thank you.
