



Permanent Mission of the Islamic Republic of Iran

to the United Nations Office and
other International Organizations in Geneva

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

Statement

by

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before

the 2025 Meeting of States Parties to the Biological Weapons Convention

Geneva, 15 December 2025

Thank you, Madam Chair.

At the outset, allow me to join previous speakers in congratulating you on your appointment as Chair of the Meeting of States Parties to the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC), and to assure you of the Iranian delegation's full cooperation for the successful conduct of our collective work.

The Biological Weapons Convention, as the first international treaty to comprehensively prohibit an entire category of weapons of mass destruction, constitutes a cornerstone of the global disarmament and non-proliferation architecture. By banning the development, production, stockpiling, and acquisition of biological and toxin weapons and their means of delivery, the Convention plays an indispensable role in promoting international peace and security.

The significance of the Convention, as it commemorates the fiftieth year since its entry into force, has become even more evident in the present context, particularly in light of rapid scientific and technological advances in biotechnology, genetic engineering, and other life sciences. Full, effective, and non-discriminatory implementation of the Convention is essential to ensure that all States benefit from scientific progress for peaceful purposes, while preventing potential misuse with catastrophic consequences.



To strengthen the effectiveness and improve the implementation of the Convention in all its aspects, the Ninth Review Conference established an open-ended Working Group “to identify, examine and develop specific and effective measures, including possible legally binding measures, and to make recommendations to strengthen and institutionalize the Convention in all its aspects.” The Islamic Republic of Iran, while expressing its sincere appreciation for the efforts of the Chair of the Working Group, the Members, and the ISU, will continue its serious, active, and constructive engagement until the adoption of a comprehensive report that effectively ensures the balanced and non-discriminatory strengthening of all aspects of the Convention.

Madam Chair,

Peaceful cooperation and equitable access to science and technology, particularly for developing countries, are an integral and inseparable component of any disarmament regime. Within the framework of the Biological Weapons Convention, Article X serves as the legal guarantor of this right. Accordingly, the balanced implementation of the Convention is contingent upon the effective and non-discriminatory application of Article X. We welcome the decision of the Ninth Review Conference to develop, with a view to establishing a mechanism open to all States Parties, measures to facilitate and support full implementation of international cooperation and assistance under Article X.

Illegal sanctions and Unilateral Coercive Measures (UCMs) remain major obstacles to the full realization of Article X, as they adversely affect States Parties’ ability to enjoy their rights under the Convention. The imposition of such restrictions is clearly incompatible with the obligations under Article X. States that have imposed such measures are therefore obliged to remove them without delay to ensure the full, effective, and non-discriminatory implementation of the Convention. In our view, any mechanism under Article X can only achieve its objectives if it is empowered to identify and address obstacles and challenges to cooperation and assistance, including unilateral coercive measures.

Madam Chair, distinguished colleagues,

The Islamic Republic of Iran expresses grave concern over deliberate acts of aggression by the Zionist regime against peaceful and declared biological and



public health facilities in Iran in June, including those engaged in the production of vaccines and medical supplies. These attacks constitute serious violations of international law and the fundamental principles of the Convention, undermine Iran's legitimate public health capacities, and pose risks to regional and global biosafety by disrupting peaceful scientific activities. Iran unequivocally condemns these unlawful actions and calls upon the international community to denounce them in the strongest terms and to ensure accountability. Attacks against peaceful biological facilities and personnel are not merely assaults on a sovereign State but represent a serious threat to the integrity and credibility of the global disarmament and non-proliferation regime.

The repeated vetoes in the Security Council underscore its serious limitations and politicization, raising grave concerns about its capacity to take timely, substantive, and impartial decisions in providing assistance and protection to any State Party exposed to danger from biological weapons. In the event of a biological attack, decision-making processes—even under the most favorable circumstances—are inherently time-consuming. Such delays hinder the prompt initiation of investigations and create critical gaps in the timely provision of assistance under Article XII. It is therefore imperative to develop clear procedures or guidelines to facilitate rapid humanitarian assistance, independent of Security Council deliberations.

We welcome the accession of two new States Parties to the Convention and reiterate our principled position on the importance of universality, particularly in the Middle East. More than fifty years have elapsed since the Convention entered into force, yet its universality remains unrealized. Regrettably, a number of States have neither acceded to nor signed the Convention. Of particular concern is a non-signatory State in the Middle East, possessing advanced biotechnological capabilities, currently engaged in the killing of women and children, thus posing a grave threat to regional and international peace and security.

Iran firmly believes that the international community must exert sustained and effective pressure on non-signatories to accede to the Convention without further delay. In this regard, we support the adoption of a concrete action plan, including specific measures and targeted timelines, aimed at achieving



universality. Pending such accession, States Parties should refrain from transferring biological agents, toxins, equipment, materials, or related technologies to non-Parties.

The withdrawal of existing reservations to the 1925 Geneva Protocol would constitute an important and timely step toward reinforcing the integrity, credibility, and universality of the prohibition against the use of chemical and biological weapons. Reservations, particularly those predicated on reciprocity or retaliation, introduce conditionality into what should be an absolute and unconditional norm, thereby weakening the humanitarian and legal foundations of the Protocol. In the present international security context, the removal of such reservations would enhance legal clarity, strengthen mutual confidence among States, and further consolidate the long-standing prohibition as a firmly established norm of international law.

To conclude, Madam Chair, allow me to emphasize that the establishment of a legally binding instrument—whose adoption was obstructed in 2001 by the United States—is indispensable to ensuring accountability and fostering a collective commitment by States Parties to their obligations under the Convention. While voluntary measures, including confidence-building measures, have their role, they cannot substitute for an effective verification and compliance mechanism.

A legally binding instrument would serve multiple essential functions: it would deter non-compliance by fostering a culture of responsibility and adherence to agreed norms; provide a clear, established, and impartial framework for resolving disputes or allegations, minimizing unilateral actions and unfounded accusations; regulate multilateral and agreed export controls; and simultaneously ensure States' access to medicines, medical supplies, and related services for peaceful purposes.

Full compliance by all States Parties with their obligations, the strengthening of the Convention, and sustained support for multilateralism are indispensable to preserving the credibility and effectiveness of this treaty and to ensuring a world free from the threat of biological weapons. The international community must, with shared resolve, prioritize comprehensive implementation



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of the Biological Weapons Convention and refrain from any actions contrary to its object and purpose, thereby safeguarding collective security, protecting human health, and promoting sustainable development for present and future generations.

Thank you.