



**CHAIRMANSHIP
NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT
GENEVA CHAPTER**

**2019 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**

Geneva, 3 - 6 December 2019

Statement on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and other States Parties to the Biological and Toxin Weapon Convention delivered by the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Azerbaijan to the United Nations Office in Geneva

Agenda Item 6: Consideration of the factual reports of the Meetings of Experts reflecting their deliberations, including possible outcomes

(e) Meeting of Experts on Institutional Strengthening of the Convention (MX5)

Mr. Chairman,

1. I have the honor to speak on behalf of the States Parties of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) and other States Parties to the BTWC.
2. The Group recognized the particular importance of strengthening the Convention through the resumption of the multilateral negotiations for a legally binding Protocol dealing with all Articles of the Convention, in a balanced and comprehensive manner, including through verification measures bearing in mind that the lack of such verification regime poses a challenge to the effectiveness of the Convention, and urged the party rejecting negotiations to reconsider its policy.
3. The Group would like to reiterate its deep concern about the potential use and/or threat of use of biological agents and toxins as an instrument of war and terror. In this regard, the Group feels that there is a great necessity and urgency for the States Parties of the BTWC to work towards strengthening and improving the effectiveness and implementation of this Convention so that together we can fully address this concern.

4. Pending a consensus on a comprehensive legally binding instrument on the balanced and non-discriminatory implementation of all provisions of the Convention, the Group reaffirms that the Review Conference, as the forum to make substantive and procedural decisions, constitutes as the only authority for reviewing the operation of the Convention with a view to ensuring that the purposes of the Preamble and provisions of the Convention are being realized.
5. While the Group recalls its position on proposals related to compliance assessments, it reiterates that such proposals should not distract the attention of States Parties away from strengthening the Convention in all its aspects including the need for a verification mechanism. Effective international action against biological threats needs to be universal, legally binding, and non-discriminatory. In addition, this cannot be achieved without strengthening national capacity.
6. Recent developments once again highlight the need to conclude a legally binding instrument to strengthen the Convention in all its aspects. In the past, useful work has been done in this regard under the BWC in the Ad hoc Group and NAM continues to attach high importance to preserving and eventually resuming that work.
7. NAM believes that the lack of a comprehensive Protocol to strengthen implementation of all aspects of the Convention has created a gap in the provision of prompt and effective assistance under Article VII to States Parties to the BWC. NAM further reaffirms that providing and/or supporting timely assistance in accordance with Article VII is a legal obligation of States Parties. While noting that States Parties' national preparedness contributes to international capabilities for response, investigation and mitigation of outbreaks of disease, NAM reaffirms that this should not be imposed as a precondition for either provision or receipt of assistance. To this end, while welcoming the establishment of a database open to all States Parties to facilitate assistance under the framework of Article VII, a detailed procedure and mechanism for a timely, effective and adequate response needs to be developed.
8. NAM reiterates its conviction that the multilateral negotiations aimed at concluding a non-discriminatory, legally binding agreement is the only sustainable method of strengthening the Convention, it recognizes however the value of the inter-sessional ad hoc mechanism for promoting the objectives of the Convention.”

Thank you.