



PAKISTAN

PERMANENT MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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**Statement by
Ambassador Tehmina Janjua
Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the
United Nations in Geneva
and Conference on Disarmament**

at the

**First Committee Thematic Debate on
Other Weapons of Mass Destruction**

New York
22 October 2015

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Permanent Representative of Pakistan
to the UN in Geneva and Conference on Disarmament
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Chairperson,

Pakistan aligns itself with the statement made by the Non-Aligned Movement.

The Biological and Chemical Weapons Conventions represent two important pillars of the international security architecture. Both conventions have reinforced global norms against the production, possession and use of these weapons. Accordingly, these instruments have made an important contribution to the goal of general and complete disarmament.

The success of these conventions endorses the continued relevance of cooperative multilateralism. This unique feat also reaffirms the vitality and value of treaties negotiated multilaterally on the basis of inclusiveness, good faith and equality, while taking into account the security interests of all states.

It is this spirit of cooperative multilateralism that can and should guide the international community in navigating and addressing new and emerging challenges in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation.

Pakistan shares the concerns arising from the threat of possible production and acquisition of chemical and biological weapons by States and non-State actors. Early elimination of remaining stockpiles by possessor States is essential.

Pakistan continues to believe that sensitive technologies and materials must be adequately controlled to ensure their use for peaceful purposes alone. However, this objective cannot justify practices and cartels which hinder legitimate trade in chemicals, equipment and technology among States Parties for demonstrably peaceful purposes. It is vital to restore balance and even-handedness in the implementation of these Conventions.

Pakistan remains fully committed to ensuring the full and effective implementation of these Conventions.

Chairperson,

Pakistan remains strongly opposed to the use of chemical weapons by anyone and under any circumstances. We have repeatedly condemned the use of chemical weapons in Syria. It is indeed reprehensible that chemical weapons could still be used in the 21st Century. Perpetrators of such heinous crimes must be held accountable.

We are also deeply concerned about recent reports regarding the possible use of chemical weapons in Iraq. These reports must be thoroughly investigated. In this regard, Pakistan notes the decision of Director General to send a team of experts to Iraq.

Pakistan welcomes the significant progress achieved in the elimination of the Syrian chemical weapons and the destruction of the chemical weapons production facilities. Pakistan also takes note of the Director General's note regarding the establishment of the OPCW-UN Joint Investigative Mechanism (JIM). We hope that the JIM will conduct its mission in an objective, impartial and comprehensive manner.

Chairperson,

Over the years, Pakistan has interacted closely with and extended full cooperation to the OPCW on a range of activities. In active collaboration with the Technical Secretariat, we have hosted several regional and international capacity building courses in Pakistan.

A sub-regional Assistance and Protection Center has been established in Pakistan to serve as center of excellence for countries in the region. Pakistan is also one of the first countries to support the National Authority Mentorship Programme and is closely sharing with another State Party our national experience in implementing the CWC.

In regard to future priorities of the OPCW, it is important to faithfully adhere to the original intent reflected in the Convention. The CWC establishes a hierarchy of threats that different types of chemicals and related facilities pose to the object and purpose of the Convention. Pakistan stresses the need for advancing the goals of the CWC in a comprehensive, balanced and non-discriminatory manner.

Allocation of adequate financial and human resources is necessary for the implementation of Article XI related programmes and initiatives within the Technical Secretariat. It is important to follow up the recommendations of the Third Review Conference regarding implementation of Article XI.

The provisions of the Convention relating to International Cooperation and Assistance are essential to keep a large number of States without chemical industry engaged with the work of the OPCW. Cooperation in the field of assistance and protection provides a platform to a large number of developing countries to improve their capacities against use or threat of use of Chemical Weapons.

The CWC is supported politically and legally by 192 countries i.e. 99 % of the world. This is significant milestone. We welcome the decision by Myanmar and Angola to join the Convention and call for early universalization of the Convention.

Chairperson,

Pakistan attaches great importance to the Biological and Toxins Weapons Convention. We remain committed to implementing all provisions of the Convention by taking practical steps in this regard.

Pakistan ratified the BTWC in 1974 as a non-possessor State. We have instituted comprehensive legislative, regulatory and administrative measures to regulate life sciences in Pakistan and to strengthen our export control systems on biological agents and toxins, bringing them at par with best international standards.

Pursuant to the Export Control Act-2004, the Government of Pakistan has notified in March 2015 a revised Control List of Goods, Technologies, Material and Equipment related to Nuclear and Biological Weapons and their Delivery Systems. The Control List, first promulgated in 2005, has been periodically revised. Early this year, the List was further revised and contained a total of 408 changes and amendments with a view to fully harmonizing it with the control lists of the Australia Group as well as NSG and MTCR.

Chairperson,

Threats posed by the dual-use nature of biotechnology are real. Recent advances in synthetic biology raise immediate concerns related to ethics, safety and security. States should therefore employ utmost transparency and confidence building measures during all their activities related to this form of biology. Strict regulations in this area are also required to guard against its misuse, as well as incidents of proliferation that have no justification for prophylactic, protective or other peaceful purposes.

The malicious use of biosciences can kill humans, animals and plants, trigger wars and disrupt infrastructure. Addressing these issues necessitates continued engagement with the scientific, medical, commercial and educational communities. A coordinated approach needs to be developed for prevention of such misuse.

The outbreak of Ebola virus in West Africa last year, besides posing a grave public health challenge for the directly affected countries, also highlighted risks to the international community. Although it was not a BW event, it demonstrated that such outbreak cannot be contained or localized geographically, and hence require a global response especially in the form of cooperation and assistance to developing countries.

A balance must however be struck between addressing new threats and keeping open avenues for assistance and cooperation. The new discoveries in the field of biological sciences which makes their application simpler and cheaper should be made widely available for the developing countries.

The potential dual nature of the emerging technologies in this area should not be used as a pretext for proscribing or restricting their availability to developing countries. No steps should be taken to curb legitimate scientific inquiry or economic activity.

Chairperson,

We are witnessing the growing marginalization of the need to possess real scientific knowledge or "tacit knowledge" due to easy access to wide-ranging scientific information

on the internet. These trends underscore the need for an early conclusion of a non-discriminatory, legally binding agreement on verification provisions.

The absence of a dedicated verification mechanism for the Biological and Toxins Weapons Convention, to ensure compliance with the Convention, also remains a source of concern. While the Secretary General's mechanism is the only existing tool for investigation after an actual "use" of biological and toxin weapons has occurred, this mechanism does not substitute the need for a dedicated verification mechanism for the Convention which would ensure that biological and toxin weapons are never developed, produced, stockpiled or otherwise acquired or retained, thereby precluding their use by the States Parties.

Thank you Chairperson.