

**Ninth Review Conference 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**

8 December 2022

English only

Geneva, 28 November to 16 December 2022

Item 10(c) of the agenda

Review of the operation of the Convention as provided for in its Article XII

Preambular paragraphs and purposes of the Convention

**Proposals for the Final Document of the Ninth Review
Conference of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention
(BTWC): Final Declaration**

**Submitted by the Republic of Azerbaijan on behalf of the Group of the
Non-Aligned Movement and Other States to the BWC**

1. At the XVII Non-Aligned Movement Summit, held in Baku, the Republic of Azerbaijan, on 25-26 October 2019, the Heads of States or Governments of the Non-Aligned Movement:

(a) Reaffirmed that the possibility of any use of bacteriological (biological) agents and toxins as weapons should be completely excluded, and the conviction that such use would be repugnant to the conscience of humankind;

(b) 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;

(c) Stressed the importance of universal adherence to the Convention and, in this context, welcomed the recent accession of Samoa, State of Palestine, Niue, Central African Republic, United Republic of Tanzania and Namibia to the Convention;

(d) Reiterated their call to promote international cooperation for peaceful purposes, including scientific-technical exchange;

(e) Underlined the importance to maintain close coordination among the NAM States Parties to the Convention and highlighted that the BTWC forms a whole and that, although it is possible to consider certain aspects separately, it is critical to deal with all of the issues interrelated to this Convention in a balanced and comprehensive manner;

(f) Welcomed the active participation by NAM States Parties in the 8th BTWC Review Conference, held from 07-25 November 2016, and the BTWC Meeting of States Parties (MSP) of 2017, 2018, 2019 and 2020, the BTWC Meetings of Experts of 2018, 2019 and 2020, to advance their positions in this Convention. They welcomed the consensus outcome adopted at the 2017 MSP under the able Chairmanship of India and the 2020 MSP under the able Chairmanship of Kenya;

(g) Reaffirmed the importance of strengthening the full effective and balanced implementation of all articles of the Convention and, in this regard, reiterated their commitment to work in the inter-sessional period, in particular on Cooperation and Assistance, with a particular focus on strengthening cooperation and assistance under



article X, review of developments in the field of Science and Technology (S&T) related to the Convention, strengthening national implementation, assistance, response and preparedness, and institutional strengthening of the Convention;

(h) Welcomed their key role in the adoption of the important decisions related to the implementation of Article X of the BTWC, especially by emphasizing the need for enhancing international cooperation, assistance and exchanges in toxins, biological agents equipment and technology for peaceful purposes, bearing in mind the Action Plan on the implementation of Article X submitted by the NAM States Parties at the Sixth Review Conference, and the additional NAM States Parties' proposal on an institutional mechanism for international cooperation and compliance with Article X presented more recently;

(i) Encouraged the BTWC States Parties to implement the Article X, as set forth in the Final Documents of the seventh and eighth BTWC Review Conferences. They reiterated the importance to strengthen the operationalization of cooperation database which was established by the Seventh Review Conference to ensure that specific, timely and concrete offers of cooperation under Article X are provided by States Parties in the database and to consider the ways to improve reporting on this issue, taking into account the current lack of effectiveness of the referred database and welcomed the VIII Review Conference decision regarding the maintenance of a Sponsorship Programme, funded by voluntary contributions from States Parties, in order to support and increase the participation of developing States Parties in the meetings of the inter-sessional programme in the framework of the BTWC;

(j) Emphasized the importance of the BTWC role in the international legal architecture related to WMD and in particular in the total prohibition on all biological and toxin weapons;

(k) Emphasized the need for enhancing, without restrictions, international cooperation and assistance and exchanges in toxic biological agents, equipment and technology for peaceful purposes without any discrimination, in conformity with the Convention;

(l) Reaffirmed that the respective mandates of this Convention and other international organizations should be respected, while utilizing the experiences of the relevant multilateral organizations dealing with human and animal health on issues that are of direct relevance to the Convention, and that no actions should be taken to undermine the Convention and/or interfere with its mandate.

2. As per agenda item 10 of the IX Review Conference entitled "Review of the operation of the Convention as provided for in its Article XII", the NAM countries propose the following language to be inserted in the final document of the Conference.

Final Declaration

3. 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, which met in Geneva from 28 November to 16 December 2022 to review the operation of the Convention, solemnly declare:

(a) Their reaffirmation that the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction is essential for the maintenance of international and regional peace and security;

(b) Their recognition that the COVID-19 Pandemic has greatly disrupted lives and livelihoods of millions of people and continues to pose unprecedented impacts and challenges to societies and economies. In this regard, they underscore the critical importance of proper preparedness, prevention, resilience-building, and greater national, regional and international collaboration, worldwide solidarity and actions in addressing these challenges in an effective and timely manner;

(c) Their recognition that the recent developments once again highlight the need to conclude a legally binding agreement on appropriate multilateral verification arrangements. 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;

(d) Their reiteration that the effective contribution of the Convention to international and regional peace and security would be enhanced through universal adherence to the Convention. Their reiteration of the call on signatories to ratify the Convention at the earliest;

(e) Their recognition of the fundamental importance of enhancing international cooperation and assistance and their will to implement an action plan for the fullest, effective and non-discriminatory implementation of Article X, without conditions or subjections to the implementation of another article, which guarantees the end of unilateral restrictions imposed by other State Party and establishes a mechanism for resolving disputes. All States parties, without exception, have the right to participate in the wider exchange of substances, equipment, materials and scientific and technological information in the field of biology and life sciences, as well as other fields of science relevant to the Convention for peaceful purposes, and, at the same time, they are obliged to facilitate this exchange;

(f) Stress the importance of the universality of the Convention and, in this regard, urge all Non-States Parties to accede without further delay;

(g) Their commitment to spare no effort, whether through bilateral or multilateral means, to call on Non-States Parties to ratify or accede to the Convention without further delay in order to realize its universality.
