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STATEMENT

By

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Mr. Chair,

A world without weapons of mass destruction cannot be achieved unless we further strengthen relevant global treaties such as Biological Weapons Convention (BTWC) and the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC).

Likewise we must ensure full implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1540. Norway appreciates its close cooperation with the UNODA in promoting SC national implementation of non-proliferation obligations at the regional level.

We must reach full global adherence and compliance with these vital legally binding instruments. Norway calls upon all countries which have not acceded these two instruments to do so without delay. Let me also add that Norway has provided financial support to promote the BTWC in Africa.

Norway attaches great importance in the implementation the BTWC inter-sessional programme of work adopted at the Convention’s Sixth Review Conference nearly two years ago. We would in particular express appreciation with the Implementation Support Unit (ISU) within the UNODA. The ISU has already proven its added value.

It is important that States Parties identify practical measures, further enhance deliberations and developing a common understanding and approaches to move forward the BTWC process. Making full use of the confidence building measure will also contribute in strengthening the BTWC regime.

The focus of the BTWC efforts has this year been in the field of biological safety and security. This area is of crucial importance in preventing bio terrorism. Bio safety and bio security are key areas for further strengthening of the BTWC norm. We should take into account that bio security and bio safety relate to the whole Convention, especially article IV addressing national implementation and article X on assistance and cooperation of the BTWC.

Enhanced partnership among States Parties and with civil society is a pre-condition for success. Norway and Indonesia have over the two last years developed a close cooperation in bio safety and bio security. We organised a regional seminar in Jakarta on 4 and 5 June this year in close co-operation with the ISU, the Eijkman Institute and the Norwegian Veritas (DNV). The Jakarta seminar recognised the importance of national regulations to be based on international and regional standards. It was furthermore noted that external certification and audit would improve safety and security standards to ensure good practices as well as promoting awareness raising, confidence building, and technical cooperation.

We expect that that the meeting of States Parties will be able to agree on practical steps in the field of bio safety and bio security.

Let me now turn to chemical weapons,

There can be no doubt that the CWC is a key instrument in combating the spread of weapons of mass destruction. The CWC is a disarmament treaty, and the Convention is also an essential tool in fostering international cooperation in the field of peaceful chemical activities. The Convention contains provisions on assistance and protection against chemical weapons. Norway considers the CWC a unique, successful multilateral agreement.
Norway welcomes that the CWC Second Review Conference managed to agree on an outcome document. We would also express appreciation with the work carried out by the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW).

We have now an opportunity to ensure a full implementation of the CWC obligations. It is vital that destruction of existing stockpiles is met within the deadlines set by the Convention. Likewise, production facilities must be destroyed or converted according to the provisions of the Convention. While the prime responsibility for destruction lies on the possessor states themselves, non-possessors can also contribute towards this end. As a contribution to the G8 Global Partnership, Norway is engaged in a destruction cooperation programme with the Russian Federation.

While moving forward to full elimination of existing stockpiles of chemical weapons, our attention should be directed towards non-proliferation. It is also vital that all States Parties fully implement their non-proliferation obligation and report to the OPCW on all steps taken towards this end. It goes without saying that adequate national legislation and enforcement measures will greatly facilitate international cooperation in accordance with article XI of the CWC. We recognise that developing countries might need assistance and Norway welcomes the OPCW program for Africa.

Verification is one of the comparative advantages of the CWC. Yet, we must recognise that there is still room for improvements. All States Parties must submit complete and accurate declarations to the Technical Secretariat. Inspections should focus on other chemical production facilities which are of high relevance to the Convention. It is necessary to continue efforts to ensure that the mechanism of challenge inspections is fully operational and ready to be used when needed.

Let me also reiterate that the use of chemical agents not prohibited by the CWC must not undermine the norm set by the Convention.

Finally, let me turn to the questions on missiles and outer space.

Norway has co-sponsored the resolution on the promotion of the Hague Code of Conduct. We urge all UN member states to adhere to HCOC and thus contribute to enhanced confidence and stability.

An arms race must be avoided. We have supported resolutions in the UN General Assembly and supported work programmes in the Conference on Disarmament to start consultations on measures to prevent arms race in outer space.