In the Name of God, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful

Mr. Chairman,

My delegation associates itself with the statement made by Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

International community has made a historic progress towards the elimination of the chemical weapons threat. It is 18 years that the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) has been in force, providing a framework for the verifiable destruction of the declared chemical weapons stockpiles as well as the establishment and reinforcement of the international norm against the development and use of such weapons.

But much remains to be fulfilled. The full implementation of the obligation to destroy the declared chemical weapons stockpiles of the Possessor States Parties to the CWC has yet to be done. To ensure universal participation in the Convention, sustained effort and commitment are required, particularly in the region of the Middle East.

The full implementation and universality of the CWC are of utmost importance to the Islamic Republic of Iran. This is not only because we desire to fully enjoy the security and economic benefits of the membership in the Convention, but also because of our experience as a victim of the use of chemical weapons. As a result of more than 400 attacks with chemical weapons by Saddam’s regime more than 100,000 Iranian citizens were either killed or injured. Just in the case of Sardasht, a small city in northwestern Iran - as a result of the deployment of heavy chemical weapons, large numbers of civilians, including women and children, were chemically killed or wounded. The deployment of chemical weapons against Sardasht was the first documented large-scale chemical attack against a residential area in the world.
Saddam’s chemical weapons were manufactured with the material and technical assistance of certain western countries. For instance, France proliferation activities in the Middle East region was not limited to its assistance to Israeli regime to acquire nuclear weapons. France was one of the key providers of chemical warfare agents and their means of delivery to the Saddam’s regime.

Mr. Chairman,

Remembering those who were killed in chemical weapons attacks and those who are still suffering as a result of those attacks is the least thing that the international community can. We must do everything to ensure full implementation and universality of the Convention in order to prevent any use of chemical weapons in the future.

We welcome the progress achieved on the elimination of the Syrian chemical weapons programme a year after its accession to the Convention. This achievement could not have been realized without the full commitment and sustained cooperation of the Syrian Arab Republic, joint endeavours of the international community, professional efforts of the Director-General and the staff of the OPCW Technical Secretariat.

This significant progress has brought us to a stage in which moving towards a normal mode on this issue is now warranted. The declared chemical weapons stockpiles of the Possessor States Parties continue to exist. Total destruction of all declared chemical weapons stockpiles is a fundamental pillar of the CWC and continues to remain the key objective of the Convention and the top priority of the OPCW. The major Possessor States Parties shall comply with their obligations and redouble their efforts, within the framework of the Convention and its verification regimes, to destroy all chemical weapons stockpiles in the shortest time possible.

Mr. Chairman,

Concerning the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC), we emphasize on the full, comprehensive and effective implementation of the Convention as well as its universalization, which regrettfully has not been realized after forty years since its entry into force.

To ensure the universality of the Convention, as the Seventh Review Conference decided States Parties should "take action to persuade non-parties to accede to the Convention without delay". In this context, we call upon all States Parties to remain fully committed to their obligations not to transfer equipment, materials (including biological agents and toxins), as well as scientific and technological information to non-Parties. In this regard, the biological cooperation between some States Parties with a non-Party to the Convention, particularly Canada and Israeli regime is regrettable.

Needless to say that, introduction of disincentives for the non-parties to the Convention and ceasing cooperation with them would encourage and facilitate the realization of the universality of this instrument. Additionally, effective and non-discriminatory implementation of the Convention, including adoption of concrete measures to prohibit the transfer to non-parties of any material and technology which could be used in development of biological
weapons, would further strengthen the role and enhance the relevance and credibility of the Convention.

We strongly support NAM position “on the importance of strengthening the Convention through multilateral negotiations for a legally binding Protocol”. We continue to believe that this very important issue should be addressed in order to explore ways and means to respond to the wish of international community on early conclusion of such an instrument.

Furthermore, we underline that the promotion of international cooperation as provided for in Article X and removing the arbitrary and politically motivated denials should be adequately dealt in the meetings of States Parties and an action plan consisting of practical and concrete measures to strengthen the implementation of the said Article, as the best way to reinforce the Convention, should be worked up.

_I thank you Mr. Chairman._