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
18 October 2016
Chairperson,

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

The Conventions prohibiting Biological and Chemical Weapons, the BTWC and CWC, are two important pillars of the international security architecture. They make significant contributions to the goal of general and complete disarmament.

Chairperson,

Pakistan remains committed to the full and effective implementation of the BTWC. We value its contribution to global security and its potential for promoting international cooperation in the peaceful uses of life sciences. Our priorities include the universalization of the Convention and the effective and balanced implementation of all its articles, in particular Article-X.

Pakistan has been actively engaged in the preparatory process and the upcoming Eighth Review of the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC). We appreciate the manner in which preparations for the RevCon have been made. We are pleased to assist the President as a Friend of the Chair on the “future inter-sessional programme and the ISU” and also as one of the Vice-Chair of the RevCon.

The RevCon provides an opportunity to review the implementation of all articles of the Convention, and to strengthen them in a balanced and comprehensive manner. Pakistan believes that a credible and sustainable method of strengthening the Convention is through multilateral negotiations aimed at concluding a legally binding Protocol, that also addresses verification and implementation of all Articles of the Convention.

The UN Secretary General’s mechanism is an important operational tool for investigation. However, neither this mechanism, nor voluntary BWC CBMs can substitute the need for a dedicated verification mechanism for the Convention.

In view of the difference of opinion among States Parties over the need for a legally binding Protocol, my delegation will continue to participate constructively in all discussions in search of progress where consensus is possible and by focusing on areas that unite us.
Chairperson,

Pakistan is co-sponsoring three RevCon Working Papers, two submitted by China on (i) code of conduct for biological scientists; (ii) an export control regime under the BWC framework; and (iii) the joint Working Paper presented by France and India on the establishment of an assistance database pursuant to Article-VII.

Pakistan has worked extensively in these areas. We have instituted comprehensive legislative, regulatory and administrative measures including Codes of Conduct to regulate life sciences in Pakistan, to enhance bio-safety and bio-security regulations, and to strengthen our export controls on biological agents and toxins. Pakistan’s robust export control regime imbibes the best international standards.

Chairperson,

Pakistan remains fully committed to the objectives of the Chemical Weapons Convention and continues to actively and constructively participate in the work of the OPCW.

We attach high priority to the Convention’s provisions relating to international cooperation and assistance as well as peaceful uses of chemical technology. We believe that the effective implementation of Article XI will result in stronger support to achieve the overall goals of the Convention.

Pakistan continues to conduct basic and advanced regional and international assistance and protection courses. In this regard, the fifth International Advanced Course on Assistance and Protection was held in Islamabad in November last year and the next Advanced Course will be held in November this year.

Pakistan condemns the use of chemical weapons by anyone, anywhere. We welcome the milestones achieved in the destruction of the Libyan and Syrian chemical weapons. We also appreciate the efforts made by the OPCW and the UN-OPCW Joint Investigation Mission.

Chairperson,

The importance of unhindered legitimate trade in chemical and biological agents, equipment and technology, among States Parties to both these conventions for peaceful purposes cannot be stressed enough.

Pakistan shares the concern that along with the threat of the possible production, acquisition and use of chemical and biological weapons by States, there is also the
danger of their acquisition by non-State actors. We had supported the Russian proposal for a Bio-Chemical Terrorism Convention at the CD.

In order to realize the full potential of the regulatory regimes including export control measures, national physical protection and international assistance as well as capacity building are key tools to prevent non-state actors from acquiring, producing or using these weapons.

As a mainstream partner in the global non-proliferation regime, Pakistan has elaborated and implemented an export control regime that is comprehensive and fully harmonized with international standards including the Australia Group.

Our comprehensive export control regime and its effective implementation has been recognized and appreciated by our partners.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.