

# Meeting 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

13 December 2023

English only

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## Finland Statement

### Submitted by Finland

Thank you Mr. Chair,

Finland Fully aligns itself with the statement to be delivered by the European Union. In addition, I have a few additional remarks from national perspective.

Let me start by expressing our full support and appreciation to you Ambassador Cristian Espinoza Canizares, for your role as the chair of this Meeting of States Parties. I would also like to thank the Implementation Support Unit for the continued support to the States Parties in implementing the BWC.

Finland is a strong supporter of the BWC. The Convention is the first multilateral disarmament treaty to ban an entire category of weapons of mass destruction. It embodies the important and legally binding norm that the development, production, stockpiling and use of biological agents and toxins as weapons is unacceptable and prohibited.

Today, international arms control, disarmament, and non-proliferation architecture is at a crossroads. Breaches of norms of disarmament and non-proliferation during the past few years have put the system under considerable pressure. Each violation of existing normative regime is dangerous, as it decreases predictability of behaviour and trust, building blocks of functioning rules-based international order and multilateralism.

Continuing geopolitical tensions underline the importance of arms control for international stability and security. Finland is strongly committed to defend, promote and further strengthen the global arms control, disarmament, and non-proliferation architecture. We need to spare no effort in investing in arms control system to maintain processes and achieve progress in areas where it is still possible.

Finland appreciates the outcome of the 9th Review Conference of the BWC. The establishment of the Working Group with a mandate to discuss salient aspects to strengthen the Convention represents an opportunity to enhance the implementation of the Convention and to update it to meet the rapid advancements in life sciences and biotechnology. Finland is committed to strengthen different aspects of the Convention and stand ready to contribute constructively to the working group's deliberations.

Mr. Chair,

Finland underlines the importance of whole of society and One Health approaches in preventing, preparing and responding to biological threats.

Universal adherence, national implementation and compliance lay the basis for any disarmament treaty. We believe that Confidence Building Measures increase trust amongst States Parties by fostering an environment of openness, transparency, and collaboration. Confidence Building Measures reinforce the global norm against biological weapons and can contribute to an eventual establishment of verification regime.



We fully support the establishment of a science and technology review mechanism and believe that hybrid model is the most appropriate approach to set up the mechanism. International cooperation and assistance under article X are essential to ensure that States Parties can receive support in their capacity building efforts, particularly in fields of biosecurity and biosafety. Therefore, we are in favor of the development of a mechanism open to all States Parties to support the implementation of the Article X of the Convention.

In order to implement the Article X Finland has implemented in collaboration with Tanzania since 2014 a project that aims to raise knowledge and awareness of biosafety and biosecurity and strengthen infectious disease diagnostic capacity in Tanzania. The project has developed expertise and capabilities in rapid diagnosis as well as strengthened the capacities for the Tanzanian human and animal health and other sectors dealing with biothreat reduction.

Mr. Chair,

I wish to conclude by saying that Finland stands ready to support efforts and ideas aiming at establishing structures, procedures and mechanisms that strengthen the Convention as well as advance the implementation and compliance of the Convention.

Last, but not least, Finland remains a strong supporter of promoting gender equality, also in the context of the BWC.

Thank you Mr. Chair.

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