

**Statement by the German Presidency of the Global Partnership Against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction at the conclusion of the 9<sup>th</sup> Review Conference of the States Parties to the Biological Weapons Convention**

**Geneva, 16 December 2022**

Mr President,

I am speaking not in a national capacity, but as Presidency of the Global Partnership Against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction.

We believe this Conference took place at a crucial moment. It took place after the experience of a pandemic which demonstrated the potentially devastating effects of newly emerging pathogens on our societies and the need to intensify our efforts to enhance global preparedness against biological threats. It took place in the awareness of rapid developments in the life sciences and in biotechnology which create new opportunities, but also new challenges for the Convention. It took place after a worrisome rise of disinformation activities with regard to the threat reduction activities conducted by members of the Global Partnership as part of their international cooperation in line with Art X of this Convention.

In the light of all this, today's outcome cannot be called a breakthrough. We have managed, however, to achieve the minimum necessary to allow a focused continuation of our efforts in the next intersessional period. We welcome the fact that we managed to give structure and direction to this process, with the declared intentions to develop mechanisms on international cooperation and on scientific and technological developments of relevance to this Convention, and also to address measures on compliance and verification. We are grateful to you as President of this Conference, to your team, to the facilitators and to the Implementation Support Unit for the determined and untiring efforts. It is not for you and your team that we did not manage to go further today.

The challenges remain before us: We need to overcome the longstanding stalemate of the Convention. We need to make the BWC fit for today's and future challenges. We sincerely hope we made the first step today towards this objective.

In the light of this outcome, we will work even harder as Global Partnership. We are determined to continue our global threat reduction work, in particular through the Signature Initiative to Mitigate Biological Threats in Africa, which the Global Partnership developed and delivers in close co-operation with the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention and African partners. We will continue our outreach to partners beyond the membership of the Global Partnership, and intensify our work as set out in the declaration adopted by the Global Partnership at its meeting in Berlin on 7 October, the so-called "Berlin Lines of Action". Of course we will not tire in our efforts to revitalize and strengthen the Biological Weapons Convention, and we will work with all States Parties that manifested their readiness to engage constructively to that end.