Mr. Chair,

The delegation of Kazakhstan joins the congratulations addressed to you on the assumption of the chairmanship at the Ninth Review Conference of the Biological Weapons Convention.

My country considers the BWC as one of the cornerstones of international security. We are committed to working intensively and constrictively for the substantive outcomes of the Review Conference.

We support the BWC through regular budget contributions. This year we did it again.

Biological security has become a crucial issue of a global scale. The majority of countries are taking practical steps to strengthen their own systems and scientific programs. Kazakhstan is not an exception. In May 2022 we adopted the Law “On Biological Safety in the Republic of Kazakhstan”.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The elaboration of effective and mutually agreed verification mechanisms would be a guarantee that the regime of prohibition of biological and toxin weapons is enforced. Both transparency and confidence-building measures are important and useful, and they should be complemented by verification system. We look forward to a constructive dialogue aimed at enforcing BWC norms, including verification.

The development of biological science and technology must be the focus of our attention. It is indeed a good practice that during inter-sessional period we continue to study and analyze specific areas
that require our special attention. Therefore, in order to review scientific achievements, we need to establish a Scientific Advisory Board or Committee within the framework of the Convention.

Otherwise, we might have to pay a high price if biological researches cross the fine line that leads to the production of biological weapons. For these purposes, a Code of Conduct for Biological Scientists should be developed and adopted.

Universalization of the Convention is also a vital topic. We strongly believe that universal accession and commitment to the BWC principles is a way forward to a complete ban of military use of the biological technologies, agents and toxins.

We appreciate the work of the Implementation Support Unit – a small but highly efficient team - and strongly endorse its funding.

Distinguished Colleagues,

We believe that proliferation risks of biological weapons comes mainly from the lack of efficient tools to control the transfer of dual-use equipment and components, including strains of infectious diseases.

We have to faithfully observe all provisions of the UN Security Council Resolution 1540 that aim at creation of an effective system of export control. In my country we set up standards that meet the most stringent requirements of the export control regime. The system is subject to constant monitoring and improvement. A new draft law on national export control is due to be approved soon.

Kazakhstan has unilaterally introduced the Australian Group's control lists into its legislation. The Group will greatly benefit from Kazakhstan joining it as a member.

Excellences,

The growing risks associated with the spread of new pathogens, infectious diseases, as exemplified by the COVID-19 pandemic, necessitate urgent action to strengthen the BWC.
In this regard, Kazakhstan proposes to establish the **International Agency for Biological Safety** (IABS). The creation of such an Agency would consolidate collective efforts to respond to biological incidents, streamline safety standards in biological research, and put in place an effective anti-pandemic framework.

The proposal to create IABS responds to all the questions and plea that High Representative Ms Izumi Nakamitsu raised in her statement earlier today: enhancement of BWC operationalization and institutionalization.

Kazakhstan has already circulated a concept note on IABS. The feedback is impressively positive as many countries see the need for such a mechanism to implement the BWC norms.

In April this year we held an international scientific conference in Geneva together with the Geneva Center for Security Policy. All permanent members of the UN Security Council, all BWC regional groups as well as the well-known experts actively participated in deliberations. The summary has been circulated among all States Parties and is available for those who are interested.

To start a substantive work on creation of such an Agency, we propose **to establish a special Working group** of experts. The relevant draft decision has been submitted for your consideration. Kazakhstan is open-minded and consensus-oriented, ready to work towards mutually acceptable outcome.

I would like to extend an invitation to a **side-event dedicated to this initiative**, which will take place **tomorrow, 29 November**, from 9:00 to 10:00 am in Room XXIII. I look forward to seeing you all there.

**Mr.Chair,**

In conclusion, let me reiterate that Kazakhstan stands ready to work together to achieve objectives of the Convention for the benefit of us all.

Thank you!