



**Permanent Mission of Pakistan to the United Nations
Geneva**

**Statement by Ambassador Khalil Hashmi at 2nd Meeting of the Working
Group on Strengthening of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention**

**“International cooperation and assistance Mechanism”
10 August 2023**

Mr Chair,

I am pleased to introduce a Working Paper that contains a concrete “Proposal for Cooperation and Assistance Mechanism under Article X”.

Our paper takes into account the previous proposals on this subject as well as those made in this working group. It also draws upon successful funding arrangements at the IAEA i.e. the Technical Cooperation Fund.

We would also like to recognize the concrete proposal submitted by the US, along-with Germany, Japan, Australia and the UK.

We have proposed a three tiered but inter-connected organizational and financial arrangement comprising a Program, a Committee and a Fund.

The idea of a three-way structured mechanism is to operationalize Article X in a programmatic and holistic manner - a suggestion that we also heard from the ISU in the first session of this week.

The Programmatic part (International Cooperation and Assistance Programme or ICAP) in our working paper is envisaged as the main vehicle to design, facilitate and deliver projects pursuant to the cooperation and assistance framework envisioned in Article X.

It will be a rolling biennial program consisting of project proposals designed to address specific needs and priorities of States Parties, with a particular focus on the developing countries.

The project proposals in the promotional and regulatory realms shall be prepared by States Parties, in consultation with and assistance from the Implementation Support Unit (ISU).

Each project proposal shall outline the intended objectives, desired outcomes, and the resources required for its successful implementation.

Mr Chair,

This biennial ICAP, as compiled by the ISU, will be presented to the International Cooperation and Assistance Committee (ICAC or ‘the Committee’) for its consideration and approval.

The mandate of the Committee will be subject to periodic examination by the Review Conferences and will include:

- Overseeing implementation of ICAP;
- Fostering complementarity and synergies with cooperation initiatives of other international organizations;
- Identifying challenges and obstacles to developing international cooperation;
- Implementing Article X Action Plans;
- Overseeing the management of Cooperation and Assistance Database;
- Developing and maintaining a structured voluntary reporting mechanism on Article X;
- Coordinating with the Science and Technology Review Mechanism with a view to identifying discoveries in biosciences that can open new avenues of cooperation between States Parties;
- Governing the funding pursuant to its Terms of Reference (TORs) as well as other extra-budgetary contributions to implement ICAP;

- Coordinating with donors to secure extra-budgetary resources for ICAP;
- Advising at the request of States Parties on national regulations and implementation measures on implementation of Article X; and,
- Coordinating the BWC Sponsorship program with the assistance of the ISU.

Mr. Chair,

Our working paper proposes that the Committee may consist of twenty-five representatives of States Parties nominated by regional groups for a period of two-years.

For this purpose, we have proposed distribution of seats according to both existing political groups such as Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) and further distribution across various geographical regions.

The composition of ICAC will reflect the proportion of States Parties in the current or future informal regional groups of the BWC while taking into account the principle of geographical representation.

This will enable the Committee to function as a truly representative body both across the political and geographical regional spheres.

Mr. Chair,

Our working paper proposes the Programme, or what we call ICAP, to be funded through International Cooperation and Assistance Fund (ICAF) and other extra-budgetary voluntary contributions.

The ICAF will be run by assessed voluntary contributions. The States Parties will be encouraged to pay according to the UN scale of assessment. The annual target of the Fund will be recommended by ICAC for every two years of the Programme cycle taking into account the project proposals and will be approved by the Review Conferences.

This non-traditional and hybrid mechanism of assessed voluntary contributions is not an innovation. It is drawn from the well-established and a very successful IAEA Technical Cooperation Fund. Yesterday, we heard from the IAEA representative, how this model is being implemented successfully in form of a Technical Cooperation Fund, and its current rate of attainment was over 90%, despite the voluntary nature of the Fund.

Mr. Chair,

We are under no illusion about the different roles and functions between the IAEA and our work in BWC in terms of its scale and nature. However, even for a small International Cooperation and Assistance Programme under Article X, this mechanism of funding will offer following key advantages:

- The funding will be transparent, non-discriminatory, assured, and predictable,
- It will be unearmarked and therefore enable implementation of the shared priorities collectively agreed in the Committee and endorsed by MSPs,
- It will ensure wider ownership of the Programme and not just an exchange between donor states and requesting state,
- The developing States Parties will also participate in making these contributions as per their scale of assessment knowing that the cooperation and assistance, they would be receiving in return would be far more valuable,
- The developed States Parties will pay knowing that they would be able to implement core programmatic activities including strengthening capacities on biosafety and biosecurity across the globe in a transparent manner.

Mr. Chair,

In the working paper, we have also included organizational, institutional and financial aspects of our proposal, since it is a cross-cutting theme across all topics of the working group. Our proposal will entail meeting servicing costs of two sessions of ICAC and recruitment of addition of five staff members in the ISU to support the States Parties in various regions in preparation of their project proposals as well as the Committee in overseeing the Programme. This cost will be financed through regular assessed contributions.

In addition to the above costs, all other expenditures pertaining to implementation of Programme itself including project proposals, and cost of governance of funds will be met through ICAF as well as extra-budgetary contributions.

Mr. Chair,

Since we have presented our working paper, we have received positive preliminary responses from a number of States Parties. We are also pleased to see a constructive level of engagement around our working paper including with the co-facilitators of the Article X.

We hope this paper will continue to help stimulate engaging discussions on this subject and we remain open to receiving feedback and inputs.

I thank you.
