



**REPUBLIC OF KENYA**

**STATEMENT AT THE GENERAL DEBATE OF THE NINTH  
REVIEW CONFERENCE OF THE BIOLOGICAL WEAPONS  
CONVENTION (BWC)**

**28<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER – 16<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2022**

**Mr. President,**

I join other delegations in congratulating you wholeheartedly on taking up the Presidency of the Ninth Review Conference of the Biological Weapons Convention, and to assure you of our utmost support as you guide the work of the Review Conference. I also thank the BWC Implementation Support Unit for working tirelessly to ensure the success of this Conference. This review conference comes at a time when humanity is faced with a multitude of monumental challenges emanating from the Pandemic, Climate disruption, Nature and biodiversity loss, Pollution and waste, increasing mistrust among nations, as well the potential misuse of science and technology. Indeed, these challenges, if not promptly mitigated, will continue to threaten the well-being and survival of millions of people around the world.

**Mr. President,**

Kenya, appreciates and acknowledges that this Ninth Review Conference is a window of opportunity to take stock of the far we have come since the last Review Conference. It is time to consider the lessons learnt, opportunities utilized, and challenges encountered; and to agree on the necessary measures that will further cement the Convention's place in securing global security and safety, while at the same time ensuring that science and technology delivers solutions in terms of products and services to current and future global challenges.

**Mr. President,**

The importance of the convention in precluding the frightful possibility of biological warfare, cannot be gain said. This Convention remains the most comprehensive assurance against such an eventuality. For this reason, Kenya takes her obligations under the BWC and other international instruments against weapons of mass destruction with utmost seriousness. In this regard, Kenya has taken special measures at national level and beyond, towards the intensive implementation of the Convention.

**Mr. President,**

In highlighting some of the measures taken by Kenya in recent times, allow me to appreciate the cooperation and partnership with the BWC-ISU in organizing a successful regional workshop on **Universalization and Effective Implementation of the Biological Weapons Convention in Africa in Mombasa in October this year**. The Workshop was a great success as evidenced by the depth and breadth of the level of participation. The Workshop was attended by representatives from 12 African countries and over 400 participants in-person and online. Further, the Workshop attracted the attention of top government officials and the academia. Most notably, the three arms of the Kenya government namely the Executive, the Judiciary and the Legislature were represented by top officials hence escalating matters of the Convention to the highest levels of decision making.

We thus reaffirm that Kenya is committed to spearheading the universalisation agenda in the region and **strengthening national policy and legal** frameworks for effective implementation of BWC.

**Mr. President,**

Kenya has made deliberate efforts towards **institutional strengthening of BWC** that include improvement of Measures related to Article IV of the Convention and submission of quality Confidence Building Measures. In this regard, Kenya has designed a model of implementing confidence measures within national institutions by establishing a well-coordinated inter-agency mechanism that involves the deployment of BWC desk officers in relevant Institutions to assist with CBMs, further augmented by Science, Technology and Innovation Focal Points and Champions in Ministries, Departments and Agencies.

This multi-agency approach has improved coordination, awareness creation, and collation of BWC related data that results into quality CBMs and public awareness.

**Mr. President,**

In the area of **assistance and cooperation**, Kenya values the useful partnerships that it has established with a number of States Parties and Organisations to build national capacities in areas such as biological threat reduction, enhancing physical strength of related facilities, surveillance, prevention and detection of pathogens, amongst others. In this regard Kenya looks forward to positive

discussions on strengthening Assistance and Cooperation in relations to Articles **IV, V and X** on “Implementation, Coordination and Universalization of BWC”

**Mr. President,**

Kenya is keen on **review of developments in the field of science and technology related to the convention as well as Investments and Deployment of Frontier/Emerging Technologies in BWC implementation.** In particular, we note that the type, extent and mitigation measures of biological threats may vary from region to region. In our region, seemingly mundane matters such as Aflatoxin, and use of pesticides that emanate from stored cereals or their products in outlets, as well as invasive plants that threaten food security remain significant biological threats that may harm the population, unintentionally or intentionally.

**Therefore, Kenya** calls on States Parties to make deliberate investments in Research, and Development, and also **supports proposals leading to the establishment of review mechanism** in the field of science and technology related to the convention.

**Mr. President,**

The youth are the future and in Kenya they constitute a very significant percent of the population. Young people are creative, innovative, excellent communicators, critical thinkers and changemakers. The important role of youth in the maintenance and promotion of international peace and security has been reaffirmed by UN Security Council resolution 2250 (2015) on Youth, Peace and Security, UN General Assembly resolution 74/64 entitled “Youth, disarmament and non-proliferation”, and their subsequent resolutions.

In particular, UNSCR 2250 (2015) identifies five key pillars for action as pertains to the youth, namely: participation, protection, prevention, partnerships, and disengagement and reintegration. This landmark resolution urges Member States to give youth a greater voice in decision-making at the local, national, regional and international levels and to consider setting up mechanisms that would enable young people to participate meaningfully in peace processes.

It is this context that Kenya, Panama and Pakistan have **submitted a working paper that aims at strengthening youth participation in the Biological**

**Weapons Convention.** We call on States Parties to give due consideration and support to this proposal.

**Mr. President,**

The COVID-19 pandemic and its aftershocks or variants have driven humanity into unprecedented times of distress while at the same time bringing into sharp focus the existing strengths and weakness which need to be addressed by the BWC. Indeed, if this Review Conference is to be considered a success, it is our considered opinion that it must address itself to the following questions or issues:

- i. how to strengthen international cooperation and assistance amongst the States Parties.
- ii. whether the current institutional structure of the convention is fit for purpose and how it can be augmented.
- iii. what structures and processes can be put in place to strengthen and support the mainstreaming of science and technology in the BWC, including the rapid detection and evaluation of the impacts of emerging technologies
- iv. the need for a credible and mutually agreeable compliance and verification mechanism.
- v. How an optimal future inter-sessional programme would look like.

**Mr. President,**

I commend the various delegations that have offered their thoughts and possible solutions to above questions through working papers and other Conference documents which are promising and therefore consensus can be built around them. We look forward to objective discussions on the proposals, in the spirit of openness and flexibility, to deliver mutually agreeable outcomes.

**Mr. President,**

In conclusion, we extend our congratulations and welcome to Namibia as the newest member of the Convention. We also reiterate Kenya's commitment to this Review Conference and looks forward to working with yourself and other delegations to reach consensus that will further entrench the implementation of

this Convention, in a manner that better addresses the current and future realities and takes into account various developments that have taken place.

Mr. President, once again I assure you of my delegation's full support.

**I thank you.**