



**STATEMENT BY  
H.E. MR. AHMAD FAISAL MUHAMAD  
HEAD OF MALAYSIAN DELEGATION  
AT THE GENERAL DEBATE OF THE  
NINTH REVIEW CONFERENCE OF THE STATES PARTIES TO THE  
BIOLOGICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION  
29 NOVEMBER 2022**

Mr. President,

On behalf of the Malaysian delegation, allow me to congratulate you on your election as the President of the 9<sup>th</sup> Review Conference of the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC). I assure you of my delegation's full support and cooperation as you guide us in our important work over the coming weeks.

2. Malaysia associates itself with the statements delivered by the Republic of Azerbaijan on behalf the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), and the Kingdom of Cambodia on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

3. Malaysia welcomes the recent ratification by the Republic of Namibia to the BWC and calls on all states that are not parties to the Convention to immediately ratify the Convention.

Mr President,

4. The COVID-19 pandemic has revealed the global lack of preparedness, as well as the possible severe consequences that biological weapons could have, if it were to be used as an instrument of terror and warfare. Malaysia shares these concerns, and continues to believe that the BWC constitutes an integral part of the disarmament and non-proliferation regime, to prevent and address such risks.

5. Malaysia attaches great importance to strengthening the implementation of the BWC, which will commemorate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its entry into force in 2025. This Review Conference presents an excellent opportunity for all States Parties to work together towards this end. It is also an ideal platform for states to send an important signal to the international community that the Convention remains relevant, and is capable to address future threats of biological weapons.

6. As a responsible State Party, Malaysia is committed to continue adhering to, and implement all obligations under the BWC. We reiterate our belief that effective implementation of the Convention requires a non-discriminatory and balanced approach to all its provisions, as reflected in the NAM's principled position.

Mr President,

7. Allow me to share some efforts undertaken by Malaysia in strengthening the implementation of BWC at the national level:

- 7.1 A National Workshop on Risk Assessment and Investigation of Deliberate Biological Events co-organised by the Malaysian Science and Technology Research Institute for Defence (STRIDE), the Royal Malaysia Police (RMP) and the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre (UNCCT) at STRIDE Office at Kajang, Selangor on 8-10 June 2022;
- 7.2 A virtual workshop on CBRN Emergency Preparedness and Response on 15-18 August 2022 co-organised by STRIDE and the US Defence Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA). Other than this virtual workshop, Malaysia has also benefitted from our bilateral cooperation with the US Department of States, through programmes such as the Regional Biosecurity Experts Group Meeting, which is currently ongoing from 28 until 29 November in Putrajaya.

On this note, my delegation wishes to express our sincere gratitude to the Government of the United States for the cooperation and technical assistance provided, as part of our collective effort in promoting peaceful uses of biological sciences and technology.

8. In addition, Malaysia has also participated in several bilateral, international and regional initiatives in the field of peaceful biological activities. Among the initiatives include:

- 8.1 Sharing of Malaysia's experience on the BWC Capacity Building-Measures (CBMs) to the Sri Lankan, Fijian and Palestinian authorities in separate programmes throughout the year 2021. These programmes were held under the auspices of the European Union (EU) Council Decision 2019/97 and aim to assist countries in the preparation and submission of CBMs and to increase the overall number of submissions;
- 8.2 Participation in two (2) ASEAN Chemical, Biological and Radiological (CBR) Defence Experts programmes in January and February 2022, and presented the Development of a National Laboratory Biosecurity Assessment and Monitoring Checklist at the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting Plus (ADMM Plus) CBR Conference in Singapore in October 2022; and
- 8.3 Cooperation with other organisations and international entities, such as the EU Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) Centre of Excellence (CoE), the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA) and UNSGM.

Mr. President,

9. Much work has already been done in the past. Moving forward, we need to learn from previous mistakes, emulate best practices and explore new approaches to strengthen this Convention. All States Parties have a collective responsibility to contribute to these efforts, create the momentum and solid foundations for a successful upcoming intersessional process (ISP). On this note, Malaysia wishes to contribute our views on the following matters:

- Firstly – The annual Meeting of States Parties (MSP) is a crucial platform for States Parties to share views and consider concrete actions. This platform needs to be maintained. It is also critical for the MSP to have a mandate to make recommendations to the RevCon in order to take decisions on issues of pressing concern.
- Secondly – Malaysia takes note and appreciates the proposals made by various States to strengthen the ISP of the Convention. We believe that the ISP should be held in an open and inclusive manner, with two (2) separate discussions at expert and policy-maker levels to discuss issues of priority to the Convention. Among the issues of priority to Malaysia include strengthening international cooperation and assistance under Article X; review of developments in the field of science and technology related to the Convention; strengthening national implementation, assistance, response and preparedness; addressing concern on compliance issues; and strengthening the BWC institutional matters.
- Thirdly – The absence of any formal verification and compliance mechanism poses a challenge to the effectiveness of the Convention. While being cognisant of the difficulties to achieve forward movement on this crucial issue, Malaysia is still convinced of the necessity for resumption of negotiations on a legally-binding verification and compliance mechanism.
- Fourthly – Pending a legally-binding mechanism to assess BWC compliance, Malaysia continues to believe that the Confidence-Building Measures (CBMs) is a useful tool in enhancing transparency and building confidence among States Parties. This Review Conference should review and explore ways to further analyse and improve the existing format of the CBMs based on the inputs shared by States Parties during this review cycle. It is important to ensure that the CBM remains practical, contains format for easy reporting, and encourages more States to participate in the report submission.
- Finally – In relation to the Implementation Support Unit (ISU), Malaysia believes that the ISU needs to be provided with adequate resources to conduct its work effectively, based on the mandate that will be decided upon at this Conference. The Review Conference needs to address the financial situation of the Convention to ensure its sustainability.

Mr. President,

10. Before I conclude, I wish to reiterate Malaysia's resolute commitment to the work of this Convention, and our willingness to work closely and constructively with all States Parties in achieving the objectives of this Review Conference. I assure you of my delegation's full support and cooperation, and wish you a successful Review Conference.

Thank you.