STATEMENT OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

AT THE

NINTH REVIEW CONFERENCE OF THE STATES PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION ON THE PROHIBITION OF THE DEVELOPMENT, PRODUCTION, AND STOCKPILING OF THE BACTERIOLOGICAL (BIOLOGICAL) AND TOXIN WEAPONS AND ON THEIR DESTRUCTION, GENEVA, SWITZERLAND 28TH NOVEMBER – 16TH DECEMBER, 2022

DELIVERED BY

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NIGERIAN PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE TO THE UNITED NATIONS AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS IN GENEVA, SWITZERLAND

NOVEMBER, 2022
Mr. President, Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates,

On behalf of my delegation, I congratulate the people of Italy and by extension, you, Mr. president on your election as President of the Ninth Review Conference of the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC). I assure you of the support and commitment of my delegation as we work to achieve concrete outcomes under your able guidance. My delegation associates itself with the statement made by Azerbaijan on behalf of the Non-aligned movement and would now make few remarks in national capacity.

Mr President,

2. At the very outset, let me seize this opportunity to extend warm gratitude to the BWC-Implementation Support Unit (ISU) for all the work invested to actualize this very critical, pertinent and timely Review Conference (RevCon), particularly their commitment to ensure its success.

3. Cognizant of growing global tensions with respect to biosafety and biosecurity, we urge delegations to remain engaged on the actualization of practicable measures to implement, universalize and most importantly, strengthen the Convention. Accordingly, we encourage States Parties to embrace a harmonious-driven mode of work free of politicization in the course of the Conference.

Mr. President,

4. In consonance with the goal of enhancing national implementation of the BWC, Nigeria, through the National Authority on Chemical and Biological Weapons Conventions (NAC&BWC) has begun the process of domesticating the BWC, through appropriate legislation on Chemical and Biological Weapons Prohibition. The bill is currently before the National Assembly and has undergone the Second and final Reading. Consequently, the NAC&BWC continues to follow-up on the process.

5. On this note, I should also like to inform that the NAC&BWC has held many discussions with the BWC-ISU, with a view to organising an appropriate training workshop for the Nigeria Customs Services (NCS) on Licensing and Permitting Systems for the Peaceful Use of
Biotechnology. Notably, this is the last initiative to be implemented in the ongoing Nigeria National Preparedness Programme (NPP) being sponsored by the European Union under its EU-Council Decision 2019/97.

Mr. President,

6. The dual-use potential of bio-technology will always remain a minefield that requires cautious monitoring to ensure that, despite the inherent dangers, States are not deprived of its benefits. In this regard, my delegation reaffirms its support for honest and transparent measures to improve bio-safety and bio-security, including laboratory safety and pathogens and toxin security. On this note, I take this opportunity to inform that my country places high priority on this Convention and attaches great importance to the efforts towards its effective and full global implementation. States Parties and stakeholders are urged not to relent on efforts to cooperate bilaterally and multilaterally to promote the effective implementation of this convention. The soul searching reality of the impact of the COVID19 pandemic has led us to the realization that Biosafety and Biosecurity should be prioritized in our respective national frameworks. In this regard, my delegation expresses its support for the proposal presented by Canada and the Netherlands on the establishment of a Temporary Experts Working Group to build confidence and enhance transparency as well as other confidence building measures, to address lingering concerns in the context of the BWC.

7. In concluding, Mr. president, while we extend brotherly congratulations to Namibia as the newest member to the Convention, permit me to reaffirm Nigeria’s full commitment and support to the BWC. Rest assured that we are fully invested in its ideals and would continue to work stridently to fulfill our obligations to the Convention.

I thank you.