Statement at the 9th Review Conference of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention

First of all let me congratulate you, Ambassador Bencini, for your chairmanship of the 9th Review Conference and commend you for your continuous efforts aiming at preparations of this important meeting.

Let me underline that Poland is firmly committed to success of the Review Conference and you can count on our support for the full implementation and strengthening of the BTWC. I would like to assure you that Poland will support Review Conferences decisions and recommendations aiming at enhancing compliance, increasing transparency, promoting confidence building, and strengthening the operational effectiveness of the BTWC.

At the same time we would like to call all State-Parties to constructively engage in the works of this Conference.

Mr Chairman,

Against this background we would like to underline importance of a systemic and structured mechanism for reviewing technical and scientific developments relevant to the BTWC. Poland would like to stress that the UN Secretary-General’s Mechanism is the only established international mechanism mandated to investigate alleged uses of biological weapons. It is important to ensure that it is properly resourced, equipped, and operationalized to conduct effective investigations. We deplore Russia’s continuous attempts to undermine and politicize the UNSGM by means of “updating them”. We note with satisfaction that these attempts were overwhelmingly rejected by UN Member States for a third consecutive year.

Exploring the ways of strengthening the Convention, including its verification system, is highly recommended. Poland welcomes therefore an initiative by Canada and Netherlands to establish a Temporary Experts Working Group to elaborate shared perspectives on specific measures to strengthen the Convention. We hope the Working Group we will be able to discuss and accommodate diverse ideas and propose constructive measures to strengthen the BTWC.

Mr Chairman,

Poland would like to reaffirm its unequivocal support for the BTWC as the legally binding global norm against biological weapons. The Convention is one of the most important disarmament agreements. As such it should never be undermined by irresponsible actions tormenting international security and stability.

Unfortunately we have been witnessing continuous attempts by certain states to destabilize the non-proliferation regime established by the Convention.
In the framework of the BTCW Russia has cynically invoked art. V and VI procedures. These processes were concluded – Poland would like to stress that any further discussion in this regard should not take place. Poland considers Russia’s behavior in this regard as an attempt to distract attention from Russia’s war of aggression against another sovereign state – Ukraine; war which is unprovoked, unjustified and grossly violates international law, including the UN Charter, and continuation of its well established policy of disinformation and false allegations in multiple fora, aiming at weakening of international organizations and global peace and security. This clearly contradicts the principle of acting jointly, constructively and in good faith which form the bases of our common endeavors.

Mr Chairman,

This Review Conference provides a unique opportunity to maintain and strengthen the Convention. Today this necessity becomes more and more obvious as we are witnessing not only growing threat of biological agent or toxic usage but also risk of natural or accidental spread of dangerous pathogens. COVID-19 was a shocking example of devastating effects of a Pandemic in the XXI century.

Let me once again reiterate our full support for your chairmanship and assure you that Poland will make its utmost to ensure successful outcome of the 9th Review Conference.

Thank you