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**Statement by  
H. E. Mr. Md. Abdul Hannan, Bangladesh Ambassador & PR  
to the 7<sup>th</sup> Review Conference of the State Parties  
to  
the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC)  
(Geneva, 6 December 2011)**

Mr. President,

At the outset, allow me to congratulate you on your election as the President of Seventh Review Conference of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC). I appreciate your tireless efforts in preparation for this Conference. I am confident that your experience, wisdom and diplomatic skills will guide this Conference to a fruitful conclusion. You can count on my delegation's fullest support and cooperation in discharging your responsibilities.

Bangladesh associates itself with the statement made by the distinguished Ambassador of Cuba in his capacity as the coordinator of Non Aligned Movement (NAM).

Mr. President,

BTWC is regarded as a significant convention to the disarmament community as it is the first multilateral instrument to ban development, production, use and stockpiling of an entire category of weapons of mass destruction. Since its entry into force in 1975, the Convention remains the central pillar of the international regime in eliminating the threat of biological and toxin weapons. The additional understandings reached in several review conferences have further strengthened the effectiveness of the Convention. Rapid advancement in the field of life sciences to use microbes and toxins have made it imperative to remain alert against the threat of biological weapons even today.

Bangladesh has never been involved in production, acquisition or use of biological and toxin weapons. As a state party, Bangladesh remains fully committed to the BTWC regime and attaches high importance to the full implementation of the provisions of the Convention.

Mr. President,

We welcome Burundi and Mozambique as the newest state parties to the Convention. Bangladesh supports a concerted campaign, over the next couple of years, towards making the Convention universal. The Implementation Support Unit (ISU) can play a coordinating role in this regard. We call upon all the states that are yet to sign or ratify the Convention to consider being a party to it. I believe your hard work in this regard will enable the Convention to secure additional accessions and ratifications in the coming years.

In this regard, Bangladesh underscores the need for enhanced international cooperation and support to the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) that are yet to join the Convention. This will facilitate their accession to the Convention at an early date.

Mr. President,

Since the last Review conference, the Implementation Support Unit (ISU) has been doing a commendable job by providing administrative support to the state parties for implementation of the provisions of the Convention. The ISU is facilitating exchanges of information among the state parties. I also appreciate the efforts made by the ISU in preparation for this meeting. I believe that the state parties will continue their funding for the ISU during the next intersessional period. The ISU should also be responsive to meeting the demands of state parties.

The success of the Convention depends on compliance by all state parties to it with their obligations. In order to ensure this, we must develop an effective verification mechanism capable of responding to the challenges posed by new scientific and technological developments in production, use and stockpiling of biological and toxin weapons.

Mr. President,

Our ultimate goal is to ensure full and effective implementation of the Convention. Pending this goal, Bangladesh considers the Confidence Building Measures (CBMs) as important tools for ensuring transparency, and building trust and confidence among the state parties. We are encouraged by the enhanced number of CBMs submission in the recent years. In order to cope with the rapid advancement in bio science and technology, it is required to improve the qualitative and quantitative aspects of CBMs. In order to fulfill this criterion, CBMs reporting format should be updated during the intersessional period. Bangladesh is committed to submission of its annual CBMs on a regular basis.

While recognizing the importance of all the provisions of the Convention, Bangladesh particularly underscores the importance of effective implementation of Article X of the BWTC. Article X calls for taking all actions under the convention "in a way that encourages the peaceful uses of biological science and technology." For countries like Bangladesh, innovations in biotechnology and life sciences are very important for addressing pressing development issues. Such innovations could offer our people relief from hunger and malnutrition, from pain and disease, and open the doors of prosperity. Bangladesh needs to apply them in agriculture, health sciences and related fields. We call for enhanced international cooperation in this area, particularly in technology transfer. In this context, we underscore the need for implementation of Article X in its letter and spirit.

Mr. President,

Bangladesh stresses on the need for capacity building in the fields of disease surveillance, detection and diagnosis, and containment of infectious diseases. To this end, we have been making sustained efforts for introduction of more sophisticated structure and mechanism in our public health system. Developing countries, particularly the LDCs, need special technical and financial support from the developed world in this regard.

I would like to conclude by reaffirming our commitment to work constructively with all relevant stakeholders for ensuring full and effective implementation of the Convention. Our collective efforts in this regard will enable us attaining a world free of biological and toxin weapons.

I thank you Mr. President.