



10

PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA
PERMANENT MISSION AT GENEVA

(Please check against delivery)

Statement by H.E. Ambassador HE Yafei,
Permanent Representative of China to the United Nations Office
at Geneva and Other International Organizations in
Switzerland,
Head of the Chinese Delegation

At the Seventh Review Conference of the States Parties to
the Biological Weapons Convention

Geneva, 5 December 2011

Mr. President,

At the outset, please allow me, on behalf of the Chinese delegation, to congratulate you on your assumption of the presidency of the 7th Review Conference of the Biological Weapons Convention. I believe that, with your rich diplomatic experience and outstanding skills, you will surely guide this Conference to a success. The Chinese delegation pledges you its full support in the discharge of your duty.

Mr. President,

The complexity of the current international security situation is unprecedented. The science and technology are progressing rapidly. The far-reaching implications of international financial crisis have further emerged. Traditional and non-traditional security threats are intertwined. The interdependency and clashes among countries in the field of security are increasing at the same time.

Over the past five years, the Convention has been well implemented on the whole and its universality further enhanced. The number of its States Parties has increased to 165. On average, over 60 States Parties submitted their Confidence-Building Measures (CBMs) each year. The scope of implementation of the Convention has been further deepened and broadened. The Implementation Support Unit (ISU) has fulfilled its mandate smoothly and the intersessional process has been well conducted.

At the same time, the Convention has encountered many challenges. The effectiveness of the Convention needs to be improved and the non-traditional security threats such as bio-terrorism, biosafety and security are increasingly prominent. The threat of illegally acquiring and using biological agents by terrorists is on the rise. The frequent spread of pandemics threatens global health and security. The breakthroughs in life sciences have posed new challenges to the implementation of the Convention.

Under the new circumstances, adhering to multilateralism, enhancing international cooperation and promoting the role of the Convention in eliminating the threat and preventing the proliferation of biological weapons, as well as facilitating the peaceful uses of biotechnology have become a broad consensus of States Parties.

The 7th RevCon provides an opportunity to build on such consensus and turn it into actions. China hopes that States Parties will, in a pragmatic and cooperative spirit, promote the Conference to adopt practical and feasible measures to strengthen the effectiveness of the Convention and achieve a work programme fully reflecting the views of all parties.

Mr. President,

Taking into account the implementation of the Convention and the work carried out in the intersessional process since the last RevCon, I would like to make a few points on

how to promote the purposes and objectives of the Convention in a comprehensive manner.

First, adopting national implementation measures constitutes basic obligations for States Parties and also an important means to strengthen the effectiveness of the Convention comprehensively. In recent years, States Parties have made progress in this regard and about 70 States Parties established national points of contact. China believes that States Parties should continue to improve national implementation measures, taking into account their domestic situations.

Second, Confidence-Building Measures (CBMs) are an important means to enhance trust among States Parties. The low rate of submission is the most pressing challenge to CBM mechanism. China encourages States Parties to submit their CBMs actively. China will engage in discussions on how to improve CBMs in an open and constructive manner.

Third, closely monitoring the development of bioscience and technology is essential for ensuring the vitality and effectiveness of the Convention. The advancement of modern biotechnology plays an important role in the development of human society. However, it also brings new challenges to biosafety and security. China supports efforts to enhance the monitoring and assessment of the impacts of the advancement of biotechnology under the framework of the Convention, with a view to preventing the hostile use of biotechnology and making it better serve the mankind.

Fourth, promoting international exchanges and cooperation in the peaceful uses of biotechnology remains an important pillar of the Convention. Effective international cooperation helps improve the implementation capability of States Parties, attract more states to join the Convention, and promote healthy and sustainable development of the Convention. China supports efforts to adopt practical measures and increase input so as to enable States Parties, especially developing countries, to truly benefit from international cooperation.

Fifth, advancing the intersessional process is a realistic approach to promote and strengthen the multilateral biological arms control efforts under the new circumstances. China supports strengthening the intersessional process to continue in-depth discussions on issues such as national implementation, CBMs, the development of biotechnology, international cooperation, and submit reports to the 8th RevCon through meetings of States Parties. Meanwhile, China supports the ISU to continue to play an active role in promoting universality of the Convention and international cooperation, as well as enhancing communications and trust among States Parties.

Mr. President,

China supports the purposes and objectives of the Convention. China has always advocated thorough prohibition and complete destruction of biological weapons and is firmly opposed to the proliferation of biological weapons and related technologies. China has fully and strictly honored its obligations under the Convention.

In order to effectively implement the Convention, China established an inter-agency coordinating mechanism with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as the national focal point. China has promulgated and strictly implemented a series of laws and regulations, covering the prohibition provisions of the Convention, biosafety and security, disease surveillance and etc. China has established and is constantly improving the legal system for export control, further enhancing the export control of dual-use biological items and technologies. Since 1988, China has submitted its annual CBMs data in a timely manner in accordance with requirements of the RevCons.

China attaches great importance to and actively participates in the international exchanges and cooperation in the biological field. China has maintained extensive cooperative relations with many countries, regions and international organizations in the fields of infectious disease response, biosafety and security, medical care and public health, through research cooperation, technological exchanges and providing assistance. Great success has been achieved in this regard.

China has fully elaborated its practices and views in this regard in its national implementation reports and working paper submitted to this conference.

Mr. President,

China wishes this Review Conference a great success. The Chinese delegation is ready to work closely with other parties, in an open and pragmatic spirit, to promote the multilateral process aimed at strengthening the effectiveness of the Convention.

Thank you, Mr. President.