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## STATEMENT OF THE TURKISH DELEGATION

### **SEVENTH REVIEW CONFERENCE OF THE CONVENTION ON THE PROHIBITION OF THE DEVELOPMENT, PRODUCTION AND STOCKPILING OF BIOLOGICAL AND TOXIN WEAPONS AND ON THEIR DESTRUCTION.**

**5 DECEMBER 2011**

**PLEASE CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY**

Mr. President,

I wish to congratulate you on your appointment as the President and express our support during the proceedings.

Mr. President,

The spread and transfer of dual-use goods and technology that can be used to produce biological weapons and possibility of them falling into the hands of terrorists is a major concern for the humanity. Coupled with other weapons of mass destruction, the fact that those agents are so easy to attain has made the concerns all the more significant, in the last decades.

With this understanding, Turkey has been aiming to increase activities in this domain, namely legislative work, academic curriculum, awareness raising, improvement of analysis-laboratory capacities, scientific research, acquisition of new equipment, and such.

National measures for biosafety were given impetus in 2000, when Turkey signed the "Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety". Accordingly, the inter-agency process for awareness was initiated. These have been suggested by academia, civil society as well as the private sector.

The law on National Biosafety was approved by the Turkish Parliament in March 2010. The aim of this legislation is to protect the environment and biological diversity to achieve sustainability and conservation of human health as well as the flora and fauna, in the context of national requirements and in light of technological and scientific developments. The law identifies the principles and procedures for managing, auditing and monitoring activities related to genetically modified organisms and by-products obtained through modern biotechnology.

Mr. President,

Turning to our deliberation for the next two weeks, allow me to state that we are looking forward to positive outcomes in the seventh Review Conference, notably, in the areas of universalization, Intersessional Process, the advances in Science and Technology, Compliance and Verification, the continuation and strengthening ISU and cooperation and assistance.

To this end, let me briefly summarize the views of Turkey on various agenda items;

Geographical position of Turkey makes the issue of universality an important consideration. It is worth noting that Turkey had already ratified the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention in 1974 to encourage adherence to this fundamental international regime.

As for the Intersessional Process, which is very important for the future functioning of the BWC, we hope that this Conference addresses the selected topics to be discussed in the next period of 2012-2015.

Equally we believe that, This Conference should also take into account any new scientific and technological development relevant to the Convention. Awareness of the innovations in the life sciences as well as their implications for the BWC are necessary to address the complex challenges in this area. However, I cannot help but stress that science and technology is also pertinent to Article X of the Convention.

The language and spirit of Article X provides a solid basis for international cooperation. Enhanced implementation of this Article will not only contribute to the development of capacities to prevent and contain epidemics, but also help build confidence. Turkey attaches importance to the issue of international cooperation in the cases of outbreaks of diseases emanating from natural causes, as well as accidental or deliberate release.

International cooperation has also a role in our universalization efforts. Exchange of scientific and technological information among States Parties will promote transparency and thereby contribute to reducing the risks of the use of biological agents and technical equipment for purposes prohibited by the Convention.

Confidence Building Measures mandated by the Second Review Conference of 1986 aim at preventing or reducing uncertainties and concerns regarding compliance. Although considerably improved by the Review Conferences of 1991 and 2006, the submission of reports has not increased to a desirable level. I am sure that we can accomplish more. CBM reports are valuable tools for mutual understandings and transparency. In this regard, Turkey has been submitting its reports regularly and this year made its CBM data publicly available on the website of the BWC Implementation Support Unit. We encourage all the States Parties to do so.

However, the Convention lacks a verification regime, which for Turkey, is a useful mechanism like the Chemical Weapons Convention. We believe a similar mechanism in the BWC will enable to strengthen the Convention's effectiveness.

Mr. President,

The world is increasingly becoming interdependent. We have to act in a spirit of cooperation and solidarity to ensure a better world, to save human lives and to protect our environment. Bilateral, multilateral and international cooperation will significantly enhance our ability to minimize the effects of disasters. This will further help ensure preparedness to respond effectively and recover easily. Turkey believes that a comprehensive development can only be achieved through a sustainable and collective strategy.

I thank you Mr. President.