As prepared for delivery

Statement by
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Deputy Permanent Representative of
the United States of America
to the Conference on Disarmament
at the Thematic Debate on
“Other Weapons of Mass Destruction”
in the First Committee of the General Assembly
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Mr. Chairman, our delegation wishes to highlight the important work being done
to combat other non-nuclear weapons of mass destruction, namely chemical and
biological weapons. We are pleased to note that 2007 is the 10th anniversary of the
Chemical Weapons Convention, an important landmark in the field of disarmament. The
United States believes that we must build on the success of that Convention by promoting
and strengthening compliance with it and the Biological Weapons Convention, and in
seeking their universal application.

Multilateral Conventions are fundamental to global efforts

Mr. Chairman, chemical and biological weapons represent a continuing threat to the
international community. The United States has a clear history of seeking strong
multilateral action to prevent the proliferation of these weapons and commits itself to
working with the United Nations and the international community in this goal.

The Biological Weapons Convention and the Chemical Weapons Convention are the
foundation for global efforts to rid the world of these horrific weapons. Fundamental to
their success is the full and effective compliance with them by all States Parties.

It is terrifying to consider the possibility of biological or chemical weapons getting
into the hands of terrorists. The international community must continue to take a strong
and active stand against this risk. The United States is a strong supporter of UN Security
Council Resolution 1540, which puts binding obligations on all UN member states under
Chapter VII of the UN Charter to take and enforce effective measures against the
proliferation of WMD, their means of delivery and related materials. UNSCR 1540, if
fully implemented, can help ensure that no State or non-State actor is a source of WMD
proliferation.

The US Commitment to Eliminate its Chemical Weapons
The United States is eliminating its entire stock of chemical weapons safely and securely. The United States began destroying chemical weapons in 1990, and to date has successfully destroyed over 47 percent of our stockpile.

This effort, however, has proven more complex than originally anticipated, which is why the United States requested and obtained an extension of the deadline for destruction of our stockpile until 2012. The United States is working assiduously to destroy these weapons as rapidly as it possibly can without jeopardizing safety.

Mr. Chairman, the 10th anniversary of the Chemical Weapons Convention offers an opportunity to reflect on what we have done, but also to see what still needs to be accomplished. The Convention now has 182 members, which accounts for about 98 percent of the world’s landmass and 98 percent of the world’s population.

But the Middle East, a region of significant political tension, is a notable gap in its coverage. The United States continues to urge non-members in this region to join the Convention.

As with all treaties, the most important factor is how well it is enforced and how countries are complying with their obligations. Unfortunately, not all parties are yet implementing the Convention as thoroughly as required, and we urge all to do their best in this regard.

Effective implementation requires a number of things, including strong legislation and regulations, well-written and conscientiously executed, consistent enforcement, and, above all else, political will.

Implementation and compliance at national levels are crucial because that is where steps are taken to prevent proliferation and deny terrorists access to these horrible weapons. Effective implementation can also help ensure that materials, technologies and expertise that could help terrorists to create and use chemical weapons do not fall into the wrong hands.

**Biological Weapons**

Mr. Chairman, the United States considers the 2006 Review Conference of the Biological Weapons Convention an unqualified success. It reaffirmed the critical international norm condemning the use of biology as a weapon and underscored the need for all states to remain vigilant in combating all biological weapons threats. The accomplishments have been significant, and they bode well for the future.

States Parties established a clear Work Program with practical topics for discussion from 2007 to 2010. For the first time in ten years, the States Parties completed a full, comprehensive article-by-article review of the Convention and its operations. An Implementation Support Unit was established to provide administrative support to States Parties in carrying out their work. The implementation of the Confidence Building Measures (CBMs) process was reviewed, and States Parties agreed to steps that will facilitate CBMs being submitted by more States Parties. And States Parties also called on all States not party to the Convention to accede to it with an eye toward universality of the Convention by the next Review Conference in 2011.

**Compliance**
Mr. Chairman, there is still work to be done, especially in fighting noncompliance. In this regard, the United States:

- calls upon all CWC and BWC Parties and Signatories that have not done so to terminate their offensive chemical and biological weapons programs immediately and comply fully with their treaty obligations;
- requests States Parties to submit BWC Confidence Building Measures declarations to increase transparency and to demonstrate their commitment to the Convention;
- and calls upon States Parties to develop, on a national basis, more rigorous methodologies for assessing and detecting noncompliance, as there is simply no catch-all method for verification that is appropriate for every treaty regime.

**Conclusion**

Mr. Chairman, the United States is encouraged by the progress that has been made in the context of the Chemical Weapons and Biological Weapons Conventions. But there is more work to be done. The United States will remain vigilant against the threat of chemical and biological weapons use and will continue to work to see that these Conventions are effective in helping rid the world of these weapons.

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