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Statement by Ambassador Farukh Amil, Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the United Nations and Other International Organizations in Geneva

At the Thematic Debate on Other Weapons of Mass Destruction

(16 October 2017)
Mr. Chairman,

The Conventions prohibiting Biological and Chemical Weapons, the BWC and the CWC, are two important pillars of the international security architecture. They have made significant contributions to the goal of general and complete disarmament by comprehensively outlawing two entire categories of WMDs.

Mr. Chairman,

Pakistan remains committed to the full and effective implementation of BWC. We have instituted comprehensive legislative, regulatory and administrative measures including Codes of Conduct to regulate life sciences in Pakistan, to enhance bio-safety and bio-security regulations, and to strengthen our export controls on biological agents and toxins, bringing them at par with the best international standards.

We value the BWC's contribution to global security and its potential for promoting international cooperation in the peaceful uses of life sciences. Our priorities include the universalization of the Convention and the full, effective and balanced implementation of all its articles, in particular Article-X.

Pakistan participated actively in the Eighth Review of the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) last year. We were pleased to have assisted the President as a “Friend of the Chair” on the “future Inter-Sessional Programme and the ISU” and also as one of the Vice-Presidents of the RevCon.

The RevCon comprehensively reviewed all articles of the Convention. We were disappointed that consensus could not be reached on a robust programme for substantive discussions during the inter-sessional period. We will continue to remain engaged with the BWC process and support the strengthening of the Convention in a balanced and comprehensive manner.

Pakistan believes that the most credible and sustainable method of strengthening the Convention is through multilateral negotiations aimed at concluding a legally binding Protocol, that also addresses verification and implementation of all Articles of the Convention.

The UN Secretary General’s mechanism is an important operational tool for investigation. However, neither this mechanism, nor the voluntary CBMs can substitute the need for a dedicated verification mechanism for the Convention.

In view of the difference of opinion among States Parties over the need for a legally binding Protocol, my delegation will continue to participate constructively in all discussions in search of progress where consensus is possible and by focusing on areas that unite us.
Mr. Chairman,

Pakistan remains fully committed to the CWC and continues to actively and constructively participate in the work of the OPCW which is celebrating its twentieth anniversary this year.

Pakistan condemns the use of chemical weapons by anyone, anywhere, under any circumstances. Those responsible for such deplorable acts must be identified and held accountable.

It is important to strengthen the OPCW to deal with the ongoing and future challenges together with the priority of the complete destruction of declared as well as abandoned chemical weapons. Decision making by consensus on CWC related issues including at the UN and OPCW must be restored.

We attach high priority to CWC’s provisions relating to international cooperation and assistance as well as peaceful uses of chemical technology. We believe that the effective implementation of Article-XI will result in stronger support to achieve the overall goals of the Convention.

Pakistan continues to conduct basic and advanced regional and international assistance and protection courses in Islamabad on a regular basis. This year, we also organized a series of events including an ‘Advanced Chemical Safety Management Symposium’, and Workshops on ‘Comprehensive Chemical Safety and Security Best Practices for Industry’ and ‘Chemical Supply Chain Safety and Security’.

Pakistan shares the concern that along with the threat of possible production and use of chemical and biological weapons by States, there is also the danger of their acquisition by non-State actors. We have taken a series of measures to counter this risk. Pakistan’s comprehensive reports to UNSCR-1540 Committee provide a detailed matrix on all these procedures, mechanisms and legislations as well as on their enforcement. We also supported the Russian proposal for the elaboration of an international convention for the suppression of acts of chemical and biological terrorism in the CD.

As a mainstream partner in global non-proliferation efforts, Pakistan has instituted a strong export control regime that is harmonized with international regimes including Australia Group. Our comprehensive export control regime and its effective implementation have been appreciated by many of our partners.

I thank you.