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MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Ref. No. MFA.TCA/65/VOL.1 (58)

25th January, 2023

The Principal Secretary
 State Department for Internal Security and National Administration
 Ministry of Interior and National Administration
NAIROBI

The Principal Secretary
 State Department for Higher Education and Research
 Ministry of Education
NAIROBI

The Principal Secretary
 State Department for Culture and Heritage
 Ministry of Tourism, Wildlife and Heritage
NAIROBI

The Principal Secretary
 State Department for Crop Development
 Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development
NAIROBI

The Principal Secretary
 State Department for Industry
 Ministry of Investments, Trade and Industry
NAIROBI



REPORT ON THE NINTH REVIEW CONFERENVE OF THE BIOLOGICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION (BWC), 28TH NOVEMBER TO 16TH DECEMBER 2022, GENEVA, SWITZERLAND

1. The Ministry is in receipt of communication from the Kenya Permanent Mission in Geneva, forwarding the report on the Ninth Review Conference of the Biological Weapons Conventions (BWC) held from the 28th November to 16th December 2022 in Geneva, Switzerland. The session was opened by Ms Izumi Nakamitsu, the UN High Representative for disarmament affairs. The UN Secretary General, H.E. Anthony Guterres, gave an opening address via a video link who noted that the deliberate use of disease as a weapon was an affront to humanity.
2. The agenda of the meeting was to review the operation of the convention considering, among others ;
 - i. New scientific and technological developments relevant to the convention
 - ii. The progress made by states parties on the implementation of the convention and

- iii. Progress of the implementation of decisions and recommendations agreed upon at the eighth review conference, taking into account as appropriate, decisions and recommendations reaches at previous review conferences

3. During the General Debate at the conference, Kenya articulated the following;

- i. The importance of the BWC as the most comprehensive assurance against the dangerous possibility of biological warfare and the country's commitment to fulfil her obligations.
- ii. The imperative of building confidence and trust amongst State Parties to achieve the objectives of the BWC.
- iii. The measures and initiatives that Kenya is taking at national level and beyond towards national and regional implementation of the convention.
- iv. The importance of advocacy and awareness creation among multiple stakeholders, including the youth: to entrench biosecurity and biosafety. Kenya invited states to support her joint proposal with panama for youth inclusion in BWC work.
- v. Support for a scientific review mechanism to help take into account the rapid developments in science and technology, as recently seen with the Covid -19 pandemic and its aftermath.
- vi. The need for international cooperation in implementation of the BWC including initiatives and exchanges that promote the sharing of knowledge, experience, good practices and technology for national and regional implementation of the convention.

4. The report of the session is attached herewith for information.


Daniel Kottut
FOR: PRINCIPAL SECRETARY

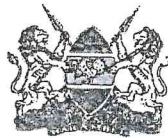
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Copy To: Director General
National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI)
NAIROBI

Director General
National Museums of Kenya
NAIROBI

Director General
Kenya Agricultural and Livestock Research Organization (KALRO)
NAIROBI

Managing Director
Kenya Bureau of Standards
NAIROBI



REPORT OF THE NINTH REVIEW CONFERENCE OF THE BIOLOGICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION (BWC), 28TH NOVEMBER TO 16TH DECEMBER 2022, GENEVA, SWITZERLAND

Introduction

The Ninth BWC Review Conference of the Biological Weapons Convention was held in Geneva from 28th November to 16th December 2022. It was initially scheduled to be held no later than 2021 but the extraordinary events occasioned by the COVID-19 pandemic led to the disruption of the BWC calendar leading to the postponement of the Conference to 2022.

The agenda of the ninth Review Conference was agreed at the eighth Review Conference which decided that ninth Review Conference should review the operation of the Convention, considering, inter alia:

- i. New scientific and technological developments relevant to the Convention;
- ii. The progress made by States Parties on the implementation of the Convention; and
- iii. Progress of the implementation of decisions and recommendations agreed upon at the eighth Review Conference, taking into account, as appropriate, decisions and recommendations reached at previous review conferences."

Kenya's delegation was led by the undersigned. The alternate head of delegation was Prof. Walter Oyawa, Director General, and National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation and National Focal Point for BWC. Other members of the delegation were drawn from relevant Ministries, Department and Agencies as per the attached list.

Opening

The Conference was opened by Ms. Izumi Nakamitsu, the UN High Representative for Disarmament Affairs who presided over the election of Ambassador Leonardo Bencini (Italy) as President of the Conference. The UN Secretary- General (UNSG), H.E. Antonio Guterres, gave an opening address via video link who noted that the deliberate use of disease as a weapon was an affront to humanity. He urged considerations of three specific actions: i) to "give teeth" to the BWC's accountability provisions' to ensure that scientific advances are not exploited for hostile purposes, ii) to "update our thinking' on verification and compliance to fit today's threats' and iii) to provide the increased financial and human resources needed by the BWC to carry out this important work.

General Debate

Besides the official opening segment, the first two days of the Conference were dedicated to a General debate where delegations were given the opportunity to deliver statements, on their behalf or on behalf of regional groupings, addressing the various themes of the Conference. Kenya's Statement (attached) was read on 29th November, 2022. Key issues that Kenya articulated were:

- i. The importance of the BWC as the most comprehensive assurance in against the dangerous possibility of biological warfare, and the Country's commitment to fulfil her obligations under the BWC and other international instruments against weapons of mass destruction.
- ii. The imperative of building confidence and trust amongst States Parties to achieve the objectives of the BWC.
- iii. The need for international cooperation in implementation of the BWC including initiatives and exchanges that promote the sharing of knowledge, experience, good practices and technology for national implementation.
- iv. The measures and initiatives that Kenya is taking at National level and beyond towards national and regional implementation of the Convention.
- v. The importance of advocacy and awareness creation among multiple stakeholders, including the youth; to entrench biosecurity and biosafety. Kenya invited States to support her joint proposal with Panama for youth inclusion in BWC work.
- vi. Kenya's continued advocacy for the Universalisation of the Convention, particularly in Africa.
- vii. Support for a scientific review mechanism to help take into account the rapid developments in science and technology, as recently seen with the COVID-19 pandemic and its aftermath.

Decisions and recommendations:

During a 3 week period, the Conference engaged in comprehensive discussions on matters pertaining to the Convention. While the Plenary took key decisions, Substantive discussions were held in the Committee of the whole chaired by Ambassador Tatiana Molcean (Republic of Moldova), while the drafting Committee, chaired by Ms. Sara Lindegren (Sweden), considered text and language. While a large part of the discussions were dedicated to an article-by-article review of the Convention, this did not achieve consensus and therefore the draft final declaration was dropped. The Conference subsequently adopted the following decisions and recommendations:

- i. **Intersessional Programme Universality (ISP) 2023 - 2026**
In the period leading up to the next review conference, three-day Meetings of States Parties would be held annually, with the first meeting scheduled for 11th to 13th December 2023. Despite efforts by the western group to have some limited decision making power delegated to the MSP's, there was no consensus and thus, the Review Conferences remain affirmed as the decision making forums of the BWC.
- ii. **A working group on the Strengthening of the Convention**
A working group was established to consider ways and means of strengthening the Convention, including on matters around compliance and verification, cooperation and assistance, science and technology review, universalization etc. Working groups were allocated 15 working days annually and for 2023, the working group would meet on 15-16 March, 7th - 18th August, and 4th - 8th December. For

subsequent years, the MSP's would give direction on the dates for the working group to meet.

iii. **Cooperation and Assistance (Article X):**

The Conference decided to 'develop with a view to establishing a mechanism open to all States parties' in support of cooperation and assistance with particular reference to Article X. This was the watered down, negotiated compromise reached from the more detailed Non-aligned movement (NAM) proposal for the establishment of a 'Cooperation Committee' to enhance mutual support and capacity building amongst States Parties as envisaged in Article X (and Article VII) of the Convention. The Conference tasked the Working Group with coming up with recommendations for the establishment of the cooperation mechanism.

iv. **Review of Science and Technological (S&T) Developments** – There was general agreement that the BWC needs to better take into account rapid developments in Science and Technology with divergent views on how to structure such a scientific review and advisory process. In particular, the Western group proposed the establishment of a Science and Technology Review Mechanism.

Ultimately, the Conference decided 'to develop with a view to establishing a mechanism to review and assess scientific and technological developments relevant to the Convention and to provide States Parties with relevant advice'. It was also left to the working group to give recommendations on establishing the said mechanism.

v. **Implementation Support Unit** – the Conference decided to renew the mandate of the Implementation Support Unit mutatis mutandis, from 2023 – 2027, with one additional full time position. The NAM proposal for establishment of a cooperation and assistance officer and the western group's push for establishment of a science and technology officer did not reach consensus. The ISU also continues to be viewed as an interim measure in lieu of a legally established body for the implementation of the BWC

vi. **Universalization** – the Conference agreed on continued efforts to bring States that were not yet party to join the Convention. There was general consensus that the Convention cannot achieve its overall aims if some States remain outside of the Convention. Therefore, States that recently joined the convention, latest being Namibia (2022) were welcomed.

vii. **Sponsorship programme:** the Conference commended and welcomed the continuation of the sponsorship programme, albeit through voluntary contributions. In the past, this useful programme has facilitated the attendance of several Kenyan delegates at BWC meetings.

- viii. **Implementation Support Unit (ISU)** – References to the ISU were made in most statements with many expressions of gratitude for its work. There were suggestions that the ISU be put on a more permanent footing rather than requiring mandate to be renewed at each Review Conference. This would allow for improved strategic planning. There were proposals for additions of posts, such as a Science Officer and a Cooperation Officer, with recognition that these would have resource implications. There were acknowledgements that the tasks allocated to the ISU would be affected by whatever decisions were made for a future inter-sessional process.
- ix. **Financial issues** – The Conference reiterated the need for States Parties to honour their financial obligations in a timely manner, for the effective functioning of the BWC. The improvement of the financial situation for the BWC since the implementation of measures agreed at the Eighth Review Conference (2016) including the establishment of the Working Capital Fund. Despite proposals for the capital fund to be replenished through assessed contributions, it was decided that it would be funded, in the meantime, through voluntary contributions.

It was further agreed that the attendant costs of the ISP meetings, and the ISU expenses, including the additional staff position, would be shared amongst States Parties.

BILATERAL MEETINGS

1. Meeting with the Parliamentarian for Global Action (PGA). 30th November 2022 Geneva, Switzerland

The Kenyan delegation met with the Parliamentarian for Global Action (PGA) led by Mr. Barecroft Peter accompanied by Parliamentarians from Somalia, South Sudan, Chad and Djibouti. The PGA is a non-governmental, multi-party network that informs and mobilizes individual legislators in all regions of the world to advance human rights, democracy, gender equality and inclusion, and international peace and security under the Rule of Law. The main objective was to share information in support of universalization of the BWC in Africa.

Noting that the Parliamentarians were drawn from countries are not party to the BWC (only Somalia is a signatory), the Kenyan delegation encouraged them to support their respective countries in joining the Convention and shared the Kenyan experiences in regard to National Implementation. The Parliamentarians were briefed on

1. Kenya's institutional structure for the BWC including the coordinating role of NACOSTI as the focal point, and how it interfaces with other Government and non-governmental structures to support National implementation.
2. Kenya's efforts, working with the BWC in support of universalization of the Convention in Africa

In the context of south-south cooperation, Kenya offered to share its knowledge and experience to assist countries in the region in National Implementation.

The following was agreed for follow-up:

- i. PGA to invite NACOSTI to upcoming meetings in Nairobi to share experiences

- ii. ii) PGA and NACOSTI to cooperate in providing assistance and technical support to interested African countries

2. Bilateral meeting with the INTERPOL on 30th November 2022 Geneva, Switzerland

The Kenyan delegation met Interpol Officials represented by Mr. Andrien Sivignon, Coordinator, Bioterrorism Prevention Unit and Ms. Morena Priori, Policy Analyst for CBRN. In the discussion, Kenya acknowledged the long-standing relationship with Interpol especially in areas of combating crime.

It was appreciated that warfare has shifted from the conventional means to the use of CBRN and hence the need for Kenya continue enhancing the capabilities security agencies to address such matters.

In this regard, The Kenyan delegation highlighted the following areas of priority:

- i. Mapping out of infrastructure and human capital as relates to CBRN including the establishment of a database of such assets.
- ii. Training and capacity building including accreditation and certification of personnel.
- iii. Identifying gaps and needs and recommending measures for prevention, preparedness, and response, including investigative support and preparedness for law enforcement and prosecution.
- iv.

Interpol welcomed the proposals shared and requested that concrete proposals for cooperation and support be channeled through the focal point i.e. the National Central Bureau domiciled at the Directorate Criminal Investigations (DCI)

It was observed that Interpol was already working with the National Central Bureaus on areas such as

- i. Dual use Tabletop exercises for trainings and Awareness for first responders
- ii. Operational support including supply of equipment, investigative support and preparation of law enforcement to prosecute
- iii. Gaps and needs assessments to address prevention, preparedness, and response
- iv. Information Sharing through the new Data repository (Bio Tracker) that member countries access on bio incidences.

It was therefore agreed that on BWC related engagements with Interpol, NACOSTI would channel requests through the National Central Bureau being the Interpol focal point.

3. Bilateral Meeting With The UNICRI on 30th November 2022 Geneva, Switzerland

The Kenyan delegation met the delegation from UNICRI which was represented by Mr. Francesco Marelli, Head of Unit, Risk Mitigation and Security Governance, and Ms. Mariana Diaz Garcia.

Kenya acknowledged the long-standing and close co-operation with UNICRI and highlighted the following priorities areas that could form the basis for future joint action:

- i. Continuous awareness and sensitizations on matters of BWC among the policy makers

viii. **Implementation Support Unit (ISU)** – References to the ISU were made in most statements with many expressions of gratitude for its work. There were suggestions that the ISU be put on a more permanent footing rather than requiring mandate to be renewed at each Review Conference. This would allow for improved strategic planning. There were proposals for additions of posts, such as a Science Officer and a Cooperation Officer, with recognition that these would have resource implications. There were acknowledgements that the tasks allocated to the ISU would be affected by whatever decisions were made for a future inter-sessional process.

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1. Kenya's institutional structure for the BWC including the coordinating role of NACOSTI as the focal point, and how it interfaces with other Government and non-governmental structures to support National implementation.
2. Kenya's efforts, working with the BWC in support of universalization of the Convention in Africa

In the context of south-south cooperation, Kenya offered to share its knowledge and experience to assist countries in the region in National Implementation. The following was agreed for follow-up:

- i. PGA to invite NACOSTI to upcoming meetings in Nairobi to share experiences

- ii. Establishment of a National Biosecurity strategy
- iii. Enhancing science and technology infrastructure and human capital relevant to BWC i
- iv. Advocacy and sharing of experience and good practices in Biosecurity
- v. Training and capacity building informed by a by an assessment of needs and gaps in biosafety and Biosecurity
- vi. Improving regional coordination and advance the Universalization agenda with countries such as Djibouti, South Sudan and Somalia.
- vii. Capacity Building for champions and desk officers of BWC.

Observing that most UNICRI projects had a regional outlook, the Kenya delegation requested for deployment of more nationally focused activities which could then be replicated within the region.

UNICRI confirmed that most of their projects were regional in nature and focused more on Chemical, Radiological and nuclear materials. The idea of including a biological component was discussed, including the possibility of enhancing capacity and cooperation between security services and law enforcement to conduct intelligence-led operations to detect biological threats. UNICRI suggested that such a program could borrow from a similar project being implemented in Tunisia and Morocco and could be replicated with the bio-component.

Therefore, the two sides agreed to pursue cooperation for the reinforcement of the capabilities of Kenya and neighboring countries to disrupt and respond to chemical or biological weapons attacks by non-state actors, with a specific focus on intelligence-led operations and investigations. The cooperation would entail developing and implementing training curricula for law enforcement and state security, while fostering interagency and regional cooperation.

There was also agreement to cooperate in curtailing CBRN disinformation on mainstream and social media. This was in recognition of how false information and conspiracy theories on CBRN risks, such as exposure to toxic chemicals, infectious disease outbreaks or theft of radioactive material, can cause confusion and mistrust in governments and jeopardize the public health response in case of emergency. UNICRI offered to provide support to strengthen the capacity of governments and civil society to anticipate, detect and respond to disinformation.

4. Meeting with World Organisation of Animal Health, 1st December 2022

The Kenyan delegation met Mr. Daniel Donachie representing the World Organization of Animal Health

The Kenyan side observed that biological threats may not manifest in obvious ways but could be deployed through seemingly harmless means such as pesticides, invasive plants etc. with the ability of destroying the livelihoods of communities through 'agro-terrorism'. Noting that a holistic approach encompassing animal, human and plant health security may minimize the bio-threats, the Kenyan delegation informed of the following priorities as possible areas of cooperation:

- i. Mapping out of BWC infrastructure and human capital and subsequently develop a repository/ database.
- ii. Establishment of a National Biosecurity Strategy
- iii. Enhancing science and technology infrastructure and human capital relevant to BWC: Kenya has initiated plans to establish Regional Research Centres, and Centres of Excellence on Biotechnology and related matters.
- iv. Management of invasive species and diseases that in Kenya, have gravely affected the sources of livelihoods, affected food security, and brought sickness and death. These include aflatoxin in cereals, invasive species introduced accidentally or intentionally eg.g *Prosopis juliflora*, water hyacinth, Dodder etc; Kenya is keen on any efforts that will manage these weeds and pests, including through creation of monitoring, surveillance, early detection, and rapid and emergency response systems to prevent their introduction or spread.

The representative from the World Organization for Animal Health (WOAH), highlighted the mandate of the organization which included ensuring transparency in the global animal disease situation; collection analysis and dissemination of veterinary scientific information; provision of expertise and promotion of international solidarity in the control of animal diseases; to safeguard world trade by publishing health standards for international trade in animals and animal products; to improve the legal framework and resources of national Veterinary Services; and to provide a better guarantee of food of animal origin and to promote animal welfare through a science-based approach

Further WOAHA informed that with funding from Global Affairs Canada's Weapons threat Reduction program, and they would be launching a request for expression of interest for innovative solutions in January in Nairobi. They expressed interest to partner with NACOSTI on areas such as agro-terrorism, animal trafficking, epidemic intelligence and capacity building.

WOAH also informed of an upcoming workshop on Animal health as a security risk to be held in January 2023 in Nairobi. They encouraged Kenya's participation at the workshop which would feature epidemic intelligence, laboratory management, as well as simulation exercises for disaster response.

5. Bilateral meeting with the Ministry of Defense Officials from the United Kingdom, 8th December 2022

The Kenyan delegation met Officials from the UK's Ministry of Defense represented by David Elliot from the UK International Biosecurity Program and Mr. Freck Sam.

The delegates from UK informed that they were working through the Global Partnership Initiative but mostly in West African countries including Niger, Ghana, and Algeria. They expressed interest in expanding into to East Africa hence the request to meet the Kenyan delegation. They highlighted the following areas for possible cooperation:-

- i. Security programs targeting humans, animals and plants : Activities in this program will include development of standards in veterinary surveillance and disease outbreaks
- ii. Training in biosafety and biosecurity and awareness raising- under the signature initiative
- iii. Establishment of fit for purpose laboratory infrastructure that is not complex, easy to run and manage. An example was cited of the solar powered laboratory they helped establish in Lagos Nigeria.

The team emphasized on legislation as means of sustaining good lab practices of biosafety and Biosecurity besides having good laboratory infrastructure/ personnel, e.g. in the UK a biosafety director in the lab is a pivotal office in ensuring legislation

It was agreed that the Kenyan side shares a written brief highlighting the areas of priority for possible collaboration, noting the UK's interest in working with Kenya in the areas of biosafety and biosecurity to enhance national security.

It was also agreed to link parliamentarians from UK and Kenya, with potential support from the Parliamentarians for Global Action, in raising awareness on matters of biosafety and biosecurity and legislative frameworks which could strengthen and secure national and global security.

There was also discussion on possibility of extending the ongoing UK supported chemical forensic programme in Uganda to Kenya, and expand its scope to include emergency preparedness (detection, prevention, response and pursue) and surveillance.

6. Bilateral meeting with the US delegation, 14th December 2022

The delegation of Kenya met with the US delegation to the BWC on 14th December 2022 on the margins of the Review Conference of the Biological Weapons Convention. On the US side were, Ms. Kirsten Weand, Director for Countering Biological Threats, National Security Council; Mr. Kenneth Turner, Senior Analyst, Office of the Biological Policy Staff, US State Department, Ms. Leila Terrell, Principal Director, Threat Reduction and Arms Control, U.S. Department of Defence; Ms. Allyn Milojevich, Technical Advisor, National Nuclear Security Administration, U.S. Department of Energy; and Mr. Dan Callahan, Senior Advisor, U.S. Delegation to the Conference on Disarmament, Geneva.

Discussions were held on the following:

- i. Advancing the legal and policy framework around bio security and biosafety. This includes passing of necessary legislation and strategy. The Kenyan side updated the US delegation on progress made so far in this regard and possible steps that could be taken to fast track the legislation, including parliamentary engagement. Kenya acknowledged the support the US accorded her in the development of the Strategic Goods bill and the subsequent finalisation of the National Control List, and requested for similar support in developing the legal and policy framework on biosecurity and bio safety.

- ii. The possibility of Kenya developing a plan on bio economy, within a wider biosecurity and biosafety strategy, taking lessons from the US's bio economy strategy.
- iii. Both sides noted with appreciation, the extensive and ongoing cooperation between the two countries on advancing biosafety and biosecurity, including capacity building and assistance in various areas. The Kenyan delegation requested for more US support in:
 - a. Bio security and biosafety training and capacity building for laboratory personnel drawn from the various biological labs located in the country.
 - b. Establishment of a level 4 laboratory, with a regional outlook, to facilitate rapid investigations and tests.
 - c. Enhancing the physical security measures around bio labs, including access control
 - d. Information security including for genomic data being generated across various laboratories in Kenya.
- iv. In the context of National implementation of the BWC, the Kenyan side informed of the increased regional interest in benchmarking with the Kenyan experience and established practices, with countries such as Djibouti, South Sudan and Somalia showing interest to learn more from their Kenyan counterparts. In this regard, Kenya proposed establishment of a triangular collaboration with interested countries, with the support of the US.
- v. The Kenyan side also informed on the centrality that has been placed on the youth by the Kenyan administration and the need to involve them in the country's social economic development, including participation in bio economic activities. The Kenyan delegation proposed options on how the two countries could work together in this regard.
- vi. The US side gave a brief on a digital platform/ database that it is developing with UNIDIR, to facilitate exchange of information and good practices amongst partner countries. The programme is set to commence in January 2023. The Kenyan side took note of the programme for future consideration.

OBSERVATIONS

- i. The ninth Review Conference of the Biological Weapons Convention was held in the backdrop of increased polarization amongst Great powers which has negatively impacted multilateralism, international norms and the rule-based system that has over the years been relied upon to advance global disarmament and non-proliferation.
- ii. The traditional divisions between the US and Russia and their respective allies, further exacerbated by the war in Ukraine, have greatly compromised consensus building at multilateral fora. These differences were evidently at play during the Review Conference, and initially there was fear that the meeting would end in failure (as

happened earlier in August, 2022, when the Non Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conference held New York ended without consensus on a final outcome document).

- iii. It was, therefore, to everyone's relief that the 9th Review Conference was able to reach consensus on some key decisions such as the structure of the 2023 – 2026 Intersessional period, the extension of the mandate of the Implementation Support Unit to 2027 and the establishment of a Working Group to carry on negotiations leading up to the 10th Review Conference. However, the dampened ambition resulted in less achievement, including the Conference not agreeing on the final declaration, notwithstanding the considerable efforts put into the article-by-article review of the Convention.
- iv. It is further assessed that save for an unlikely change in the current geopolitical environment, the prevailing circumstances will continue to negatively impact negotiations on disarmament for the foreseeable future.
- v. The Kenyan Delegation made use of the Conference to have bilateral exchanges with a number of delegations, with a view to forging partnerships in support of the national interest as it relates to the BWC.

24 January 2023
Geneva.

Annex I.

LIST OF DELEGATION TO THE NINTH REVIEW CONFERENCE OF THE BIOLOGICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION (BWC), 28TH NOVEMBER TO 16TH DECEMBER 2022, GENEVA, SWITZERLAND

No.	Name, Function, Organisation	Role
1.	H.E. Dr. Cleopa Mailu, EGH Ambassador/Permanent Representative Permanent Mission of Kenya to the United Nations Office, GENEVA	Head of Delegation
2.	Prof. Walter Odhiambo Oyawa Director General/National Focal Point for BWC National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation , NAIROBI	Alternate Head of Delegation
3.	Dr. Mary Onsarigo Senior Analyst, National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation, NAIROBI	Delegate
4.	Mr. Stanvas Ongalo Ag. Director General, National Museums of Kenya NAIROBI	Delegate
5.	Prof. Mary Gikungu Director, National Museums of Kenya , NAIROBI	Delegate
6.	Dr. Jane Nyambura Mugwe Lecturer, Laikipia University, NYAHURURU	Delegate
7.	Dr. Roselida A. Owuor Deputy Director, Directorate of Research, Science and Technology, Department of University Education & Research Ministry of Education, NAIROBI	Delegate
8.	Ms. Faith Wakhungu Department of University Education & Research Ministry of Education , NAIROBI	Delegate
9.	Ms. Damaris Lukwo Ministry of Interior & Coordination of National Government NAIROBI	Delegate
10.	Dr. Catherine Taracha Director, Kenya Agricultural and Livestock Research Organization (KALRO) NAIROBI	Delegate
11.	Dr. John Maingi Muthini Lecturer, Kenyatta University	Delegate
12.	Eng. Wilmoth Mokua Ministry of Interior & Coordination of National Government NAIROBI	Delegate
13.	Dr. Joshua Njiru Kenya Bureau of Standards	Delegate

No.	Name, Function, Organisation	Role
14.	Mr. Anthony Mathenge First Counsellor, Permanent Mission of Kenya to the United Nations, Geneva	Delegate

Annex II.



REPUBLIC OF KENYA

**STATEMENT AT THE GENERAL DEBATE OF THE NINTH REVIEW CONFERENCE OF THE
BIOLOGICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION (BWC)**

28TH NOVEMBER – 16TH DECEMBER 2022

Mr. President,

I join other delegations in congratulating you wholeheartedly on taking up the Presidency of the Ninth Review Conference of the Biological Weapons Convention, and to assure you of our utmost support as you guide the work of the Review Conference. I also thank the BWC Implementation Support Unit for working tirelessly to ensure the success of this Conference. This review conference comes at a time when humanity is faced with a multitude of monumental challenges emanating from the Pandemic, Climate disruption, Nature and biodiversity loss, Pollution and waste, increasing mistrust among nations, as well the potential misuse of science and technology. Indeed, these challenges, if not promptly mitigated, will continue to threaten the well-being and survival of millions of people around the world.

Mr. President,

Kenya, appreciates and acknowledges that this Ninth Review Conference is a window of opportunity to take stock of the far we have come since the last Review Conference. It is time to consider the lessons learnt, opportunities utilized, and challenges encountered; and to agree on the necessary measures that will further cement the Convention's place in securing global security and safety, while at the same time ensuring that science and technology delivers solutions in terms of products and services to current and future global challenges.

Mr. President,

The importance of the convention in precluding the frightful possibility of biological warfare, cannot be gain said. This Convention remains the most comprehensive assurance against such an eventuality. For this reason, Kenya takes her obligations under the BWC and other international instruments against weapons of mass destruction with utmost seriousness. In this regard, Kenya has taken special measures at national level and beyond, towards the intensive implementation of the Convention.

Mr. President,

In highlighting some of the measures taken by Kenya in recent times, allow me to appreciate the cooperation and partnership with the BWC-ISU in organizing a successful regional workshop on **Universalization and Effective Implementation of the Biological Weapons Convention in Africa in Mombasa in October this year**. The Workshop was a great success as evidenced by the depth and breadth of the level of participation. The Workshop was attended by representatives from 12 African countries and over 400 participants in-person and online.

Further, the Workshop attracted the attention of top government officials and the academia. Most notably, the three arms of the Kenya government namely the Executive, the Judiciary and the Legislature were represented by top officials hence escalating matters of the Convention to the highest levels of decision making.

We thus reaffirm that Kenya is committed to spearheading the universalisation agenda in the region and **strengthening national policy and legal** frameworks for effective implementation of BWC.

Mr. President,

Kenya has made deliberate efforts towards **institutional strengthening of BWC** that include improvement of Measures related to Article IV of the Convention and submission of quality Confidence Building Measures. In this regard, Kenya has designed a model of implementing confidence measures within national institutions by establishing a well-coordinated inter-agency mechanism that involves the deployment of BWC desk officers in relevant Institutions to assist with CBMs, further augmented by Science, Technology and Innovation Focal Points and Champions in Ministries, Departments and Agencies.

This multi-agency approach has improved coordination, awareness creation, and collation of BWC related data that results into quality CBMs and public awareness.

Mr. President,

In the area of **assistance and cooperation**, Kenya values the useful partnerships that it has established with a number of States Parties and Organisations to build national capacities in areas such as biological threat reduction, enhancing physical strength of related facilities, surveillance, prevention and detection of pathogens, amongst others. In this regard Kenya looks forward to positive discussions on strengthening Assistance and Cooperation in relations to Articles IV, V and X on “Implementation, Coordination and Universalization of BWC”

Mr. President,

Kenya is keen on **review of developments in the field of science and technology related to the convention as well as Investments and Deployment of Frontier/Emerging Technologies in BWC implementation**. In particular, we note that the type, extent and mitigation measures of biological threats may vary from region to region. In our region, seemingly mundane matters such as Aflatoxin, and use of pesticides that emanate from stored cereals or their products in outlets, as well as invasive plants that threaten food security remain significant biological threats that may harm the population, unintentionally or intentionally.

Therefore, Kenya calls on States Parties to make deliberate investments in Research, and Development, and also **supports proposals leading to the establishment of review mechanism** in the field of science and technology related to the convention.

Mr. President,

The youth are the future and in Kenya they constitute a very significant percent of the population. Young people are creative, innovative, excellent communicators, critical thinkers and changemakers. The important role of youth in the maintenance and promotion of international peace and security has been reaffirmed by UN Security Council resolution 2250 (2015) on Youth, Peace and Security, UN General Assembly resolution 74/64 entitled “Youth, disarmament and non-proliferation”, and their subsequent resolutions.

In particular, UNSCR 2250 (2015) identifies five key pillars for action as pertains to the youth, namely: participation, protection, prevention, partnerships, and disengagement and reintegration. This landmark resolution urges Member States to give youth a greater voice in decision-making at the local, national, regional and international levels and to consider setting up mechanisms that would enable young people to participate meaningfully in peace processes.

It is this context that Kenya, Panama and Pakistan have **submitted a working paper that aims at strengthening youth participation in the Biological Weapons Convention**. We call on States Parties to give due consideration and support to this proposal.

Mr. President,

The COVID-19 pandemic and its aftershocks or variants have driven humanity into unprecedented times of distress while at the same time bringing into sharp focus the existing strengths and weakness which need to be addressed by the BWC. Indeed, if this Review Conference is to be considered a success, it is our considered opinion that it must address itself to the following questions or issues:

- i. how to strengthen international cooperation and assistance amongst the States Parties.
- ii. whether the current institutional structure of the convention is fit for purpose and how it can be augmented.
- iii. what structures and processes can be put in place to strengthen and support the mainstreaming of science and technology in the BWC, including the rapid detection and evaluation of the impacts of emerging technologies
- iv. the need for a credible and mutually agreeable compliance and verification mechanism.
- v. How an optimal future inter-sessional programme would look like.

Mr. President,

I commend the various delegations that have offered their thoughts and possible solutions to above questions through working papers and other Conference documents which are promising and therefore consensus can be built around them. We look forward to objective discussions on the proposals, in the spirit of openness and flexibility, to deliver mutually agreeable outcomes.

Mr. President,

In conclusion, we extend our congratulations and welcome to Namibia as the newest member of the Convention. We also reiterate Kenya's commitment to this Review Conference and looks forward to working with yourself and other delegations to reach consensus that will further entrench the implementation of this Convention, in a manner that better addresses the current and future realities and takes into account various developments that have taken place.

Mr. President, once again I assure you of my delegation's full support.

I thank you.