Statement by the United Arab Emirates

At the 2021 Meetings of Experts of the Convention on the Prohibition of Biological Weapons

5th meeting, September 8, 2021

Strengthening and supporting structures for the implementation of the Convention from an institutional point of view

Mr. President,

On behalf of the delegation of the United Arab Emirates, I would like to thank you for the opportunity to participate. We also congratulate you on presiding over this meeting. On behalf of the United Arab Emirates, we express our appreciation for the efforts of all those in charge of these meetings and the implementation of the provisions of the Convention on the Prohibition of Biological Weapons. The United Arab Emirates is also grateful for the pioneering role played the United Nations in this regard.

I would like to emphasize the UAE’s continued support for international efforts to abide by and implement the provisions of the Biological Weapons Convention. Given the exceptional circumstances the world is going through as a result of the outbreak of the new Coronavirus (Covid-19), the UAE has assigned the very highest priority to the human being, taking various measures to protect the Emirati society and facilitate life for citizens and residents alike.

On the global level, the United Arab Emirates was one of the first countries to cooperate and extend a helping hand to confront the outbreak of the Covid-19 virus at the global level. The UAE began early planning for many humanitarian initiatives that would contain the spread of the virus.

The UAE has been keen to continue to strengthen solidarity and international cooperation and to respond quickly to the various challenges facing the international community as a result of the spread of the new coronavirus. Humanitarian work has been a mainstay and one of the country’s long-established constants in extending a helping hand to the peoples of the world to combat the pandemic. Since the outbreak of the pandemic, the UAE has been quick to declare
its solidarity with the peoples of the world in facing the impacts of the spread of the virus, and has sent more than 2,217 tons of aid to more than 136 countries, including medical aid, which included 425 million examination devices and 2,110 respirators, the number of flights reaching 200 flights aimed at medical assistance.

The UAE has also built 6 field hospitals in Sudan, Guinea (Conakry), Mauritania, Sierra Leone, Lebanon and Jordan, in addition to building a mobile clinic in Turkmenistan. The UAE was also keen to strengthen its partnerships and cooperation at the bilateral and multilateral levels in order to combat the pandemic.

The UAE’s aid was not limited to countries, but extended to international organizations, as $10 million was provided in kind to the World Health Organization. Two field hospitals were transferred from Norway and Belgium to Ghana and Ethiopia at a cost of $4 million, knowing that 3 flights were necessary to transfer each field hospital from Oslo (Norway) to Addis Ababa (Ethiopia) and from Oslo (Norway) to Accra (Ghana), and that additional parts of the field hospital were transferred from Liege (Belgium) to Accra (Ghana). Moreover, The UAE sent aid from the warehouses of international organizations located in the International Humanitarian City in Dubai to 117 countries.

The UAE has made efforts and was keen to strengthen institutional solidarity with the international organizations, including WHO, to which 500,000 Covid-19 testing kits worth USD10 million were provided. Moreover, WHO medical materials were transferred to Iran, Ethiopia and Somalia.

In addition, the International Humanitarian City in Dubai played a leading role in terms of the logistical operations of international organizations whose strategic warehouses are located in it and is the first responder to global crises, especially in aid related to the Covid-19 virus, as the volume of aid sent to the affected countries by the World Health Organization through its warehouses in the International Humanitarian City in Dubai reached more than 80% of the WHO’s international response.

The international organizations present in the International Humanitarian City in Dubai have also contributed by sending so far this year more than 955 shipments of Covid-19 aid, which include personal protective equipment and other materials, to 117 countries around the world.

At Al Maktoum International Airport, there is the Emirates Vaccine Center for air freight, which is the largest cargo and world-connecting facility specialized in
shipping vaccines. This center allows air freight to be shipped by transporting vaccines from different manufacturing sites, storing them and preparing them for regional and global distribution. It has an area of more than 4,000 square meters. The capacity of this facility is estimated at about 10 million vaccine vials at once, in an environment that constantly varies between 2 and 8 degrees Celsius. This modern facility in Dubai World Central is considered as the world’s largest fleet of refrigerated containers to help protect heat-sensitive shipments during transported between the aircraft and the cargo terminal.

Mr. President,

The world today is in dire need of solidarity and concerted international efforts to overcome this pandemic and cross humanity to safety. The United Arab Emirates will continue to support every effort towards achieving international solidarity for this intended goal.

The UAE will continue its efforts to promote and protect human rights at the national level, even in light of the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic, since the UAE development policies are human-centered. The UAE is keen to strengthen its cooperation and partnerships with various countries, with specialized international organizations, and with human rights bodies and mechanisms, in order to achieve a life of dignity for people.

Thank you.