
2021/10/7

Mr. Chairman,

I would like to make a joint statement on behalf of China and the Russian Federation.

Since its entry-into-force in 1975, the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on their Destruction (BWC) has played an important role in eliminating the threat and preventing the proliferation by biological weapons and promoting the peaceful uses of biotechnology. The BWC Ninth Review Conference will be held next year, it’s necessary for the international community to take this opportunity to strengthen the authority and effectiveness of the Convention and promote the early realization of the goal of complete elimination of biological
To this end, the Foreign Ministers of the People's Republic of China and the Russia Federation issued a Joint Statement on strengthening the BWC today. Now, I will read out the Joint Statement as follows:

China and the Russian Federation reaffirm their conviction that the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on their Destruction (BWC) is essential as a pillar of the international peace and security, and their determination to safeguard the authority and effectiveness of the Convention. Today, as in 1975, the objective of the BWC remains relevant: to rule completely out the possibility of biological agents being used as weapons.

China and the Russian Federation reiterate the need that the BWC should be fully complied with and further strengthened, including through its institutionalization and the adoption of a legally binding protocol to the Convention with effective verification mechanism, as well as through regular consultations and cooperation in resolving any issues related to the implementation of the Convention.
China and the Russian Federation emphasize that the BWC functions, including in what concerns the United Nations Security Council, should not be duplicated by other mechanisms. With a view to shaping a BWC mechanism of investigation of the alleged biological weapons incidents, they call on the BWC States Parties to develop operating standards for the mechanism, together with technical guidelines and procedures.

China and the Russian Federation note with concern that over the past two decades the BWC States Parties, despite the wishes of the overwhelming majority, have failed to reach an agreement on resuming the multilateral negotiations on the Protocol to the Convention, suspended in 2001 when the United States unilaterally withdrew from this process despite the fact that the consensus was almost reached. Consequently, and also in the light of rapid advances in the field of science and technology with dual-use capabilities, the risk of biological agents being used as weapons has increased.

In this context they emphasize that the United States’ and its allies’ overseas military biological activities (over 200 US biological laboratories are deployed outside its national territory, which
function in an opaque and non-transparent manner) cause serious concerns and questions among the international community over its compliance with the BWC. The two sides share the view that such activities pose serious risks for the national security of China and the Russian Federation, and are detrimental to the security of relevant regions.

China and the Russian Federation further note that the United States’ and its allies’ military biological activities on their national territory also cause serious compliance concerns.

Given the fact that the United States and its allies do not provide any meaningful information on those military biological activities that could allay concerns of the international community, China and the Russian Federation urge the United States and its allies to act in an open, transparent and responsible manner, by informing properly on its military biological activities carried out overseas and on their national territory, and supporting the resumption of negotiations on a legally binding protocol to the BWC with effective verification mechanism, so as to ensure their compliance with the BWC.

In this context China and the Russian Federation note the
importance of improved confidence-building measures under the Convention, inter alia, by including information on the overseas military biological activities by the BWC States Parties in the reporting form. The two sides believe that such declaration will be conducive to filling in the blank spots and fostering confidence among States Parties.

China and the Russian Federation also call upon the BWC States Parties to continue joint efforts towards strengthening the Convention on a secure, legally binding basis. They welcome relevant initiatives. At the same time, they support ancillary measures to improve the current implementation of the Convention.

The BWC institutional framework would be strengthened with the proposed mobile biomedical teams to render assistance in cases of biological weapons use, investigate such cases and help combat epidemics of various origins. This proposal represents a new approach to the improved BWC implementation at the international level, combining the principles of collective security and cooperation for peaceful purposes.

China and the Russian Federation stress that the rapid development of science and technology in BWC-related areas call
for greater attention of the BWC States Parties. There is a need to raise awareness of the risks associated with dual-use research and, simultaneously, promote the full use of the latest advances in biotechnology for peaceful purposes. In this context, China and the Russian Federation support the idea to establish a BWC scientific advisory committee to analyse scientific and technological advances relevant to the Convention and advise its States Parties accordingly.

At the BWC Ninth Review Conference, China and the Russian Federation are prepared to consider any proposals capable of strengthening the Convention and improving its implementation in a non-discriminatory manner. They call upon all BWC States Parties to adopt a constructive approach to ensure that the decisions taken serve strengthening the BWC regime.

Mr. Chairman,

Above is the full text of the Joint Statement. China and the Russia Federation request this Joint Statement be circulated as the document of the General Assembly. The two countries stand ready to work with the international community to promote the true multilateralism, and strengthen the authority and effectiveness of the Convention, and safeguard the multilateral arms control and
disarmament regime and maintain international peace and security.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.