Mr. Chair,

The COVID-19 pandemic has challenged our countries in the ways that were not expected. Considering circumstances my delegation values this forum even more. In this context, our gratitude goes to the Chair, Ambassador Mailu, as well as ISU team, for organizing and steering this MSP.

Georgia provides the support to the current global security architecture by being committed to the implementation of provisions of the relevant legal international instruments. Georgia is a party to the all major arms control and disarmament treaties and regimes, which play important role in improving biosafety and biosecurity in the region. To this end, the National CBRN Coordinating Council under the State Security Service of Georgia is currently working on finalizing the CBRN Threat Reduction Strategy and the relevant CBRN National Action Plan.

The BTWC is a fundamental tool as regards the prohibition of the biological weapons and every possible effort should be made to strengthen it and ensure its full and effective implementation.
We are delighted that the number of State parties to the Convention was increased in the last few years. However, the only international legal instrument dealing with biological disarmament and non-proliferation is not yet universal.

Dear Participants,

We welcome the efforts of States Parties to strengthen further the Convention through cooperation to reach consensus on a number of initiatives and proposals, discussed at the latest expert meetings held in September 2021. Among such initiatives, we share an idea and support the Science and Technology Review Process, which will ensure a more regular exchange of information at the level of scientists and experts, on relevant scientific and technological developments, which may have some implications for the BTWC. In this context, we would like to support the idea to establish a board of experts and scientists according to the working papers, initiated by Germany.

Taking into account the heightened attention on the BTWC due to the pandemic, and given the fact that much of the technology related to the BTWC is inherently of dual-use nature, we must ensure the strengthening of the Convention in such a way that it remains relevant in the face of the rapidly evolving life sciences and bio-technology and so that its provisions are appropriate also in the future for dealing with both existing and emerging biological threats, whether they emanate from State or non-State actors. We encourage all States Parties to make and support proposals that have a wide-based support and on which the State Parties are likely to reach consensus in the Ninth Review Conference.

Georgia shares the view that the engagement between all involved in BTWC activities, including scientists, relevant experts and other personnel should be given on a voluntary basis through bottom up approach.

We view the voluntary demonstration of national implementation of the Convention as an important instrument to boost confidence in States Parties’ compliance with the commitment to the BTWC. In this context, Georgia continues to attach great importance and implements promptly the exchange of Confidence-building Measures (CBMs).
We agree that international cooperation and assistance are essential to support States Parties in their capacity building efforts, particularly in the domains of biosecurity and biosafety.

It is obvious that peer review mechanism serves as a transparency and confidence-building measure, as well as effective tool for quality control, a forum for sharing best practices and capacity building. It is vitally important to enhance support for the concept of a peer review mechanism and further explore its possibilities. In this context, I would like to express our appreciation to the Government of France for the dedication to develop the concept of a peer-review mechanism. It is vitally important to enhance support for the concept and further explore its possibilities.

Moreover, let me also highlight that Georgia, as one of sponsor, supports and shares the proposal of the group of State Parties, on the establishment of an exchange platform for voluntary transparency exercises.

In closing, I would like to reiterate our readiness for an open and constructive cooperation and thank the participants of the meeting for their most valuable contributions.

I thank you.