

Transcript of English Interpretation of a Statement Made by Algeria at the
Biological Weapons Convention Meeting of States Parties

Monday, 7 December 2009. Morning Session

Thank you, Chair. The delegation of Algeria would like to congratulate you on the excellent way in which you have chaired our 2009 Meetings on the Convention on the Prohibition of Biological Weapons and assure you of our full support.

We greatly appreciate the preparatory work that you have undertaken and the synthesis work that you have carried out and we would like to assure you of our every effort to support the promotion of the objectives of the Convention.

My delegation would like to endorse what has been said by Cuba on behalf of the Non-Aligned countries.

As agreed at the Sixth Review Conference, our meeting today meets to focus on strengthening cooperation, assistance and international exchanges under Article X of the Convention.

We have to identify ways and means to promote the peaceful uses of biological sciences and to help those countries who need to, to strengthen their capacities in the vital fields of surveillance, detection, diagnosis and containment of infectious diseases.

Our States today are called more than ever to join their efforts in order to meet the new challenges of pandemics and diseases, both old and new.

Our discussions undertaken in the Meeting of Experts which was held in Geneva in August enabled us to define certain ways of ensuring the strengthening of cooperation in this field.

These ways have stressed in particular the global universal dimension of this topic and the great importance for public health throughout the world. Infectious diseases know no geographic boundaries, as has been shown by H1N1. The efforts in controlling the propagation of these diseases have to be carried out by all actors, States, international organizations, bilaterally and multilaterally.

We stress the importance of strengthening cooperation between Member States and here we support any initiative which focuses on strengthening capacities in the fields dealing with disease surveillance, training, infrastructure necessary to those activities, and in the development of standards for managing disease control.

My delegation in this field has managed to develop a few Algerian systems for epidemiological surveillance and has managed to achieve such achievements in infectious disease control. We have taken into account national needs and the needs of P3 and P4 biosecurity type of laboratories.

The implementation of our projects for the detection and prevention of extremely contagious diseases includes setting up a biosecurity laboratory of the P3 type which will make our work much easier.

The Convention on the Prohibition of Biological Weapons is a key element in the international structure. This Convention requires States to take the necessary measures in order to prevent the use of biology for harmful purposes and to keep at bay the spectre of biological warfare.

At the same time, it protects and encourages the sharing of the latest achievements in biological science for the benefit of mankind as a whole and, from our point of view, our meeting will contribute to the success of our efforts in ensuring that all parts of the Convention are applied in a balanced manner.

It is very important that the relevant provisions of the Convention relating to promoting cooperation should be fully implemented on the same footing as the other commitments undertaken within the framework of the Convention.

In no way should the exercise of the legitimate right to acquiring equipment, biological technology and material for development aims be hampered, hindered or in any way conditional.

We see no valid reason for the scope and modalities of the application of Article X to be in any way controversial. In fact, we are all benefiting from strengthened international cooperation in the field of disease control and lessening biological risk. Expanded and transparent international cooperation is absolutely vital in order to achieve our non-proliferation ends.

We need to take into account the differences in development between States Parties. This requires sustained assistance effort from developed countries in order to help to develop this surveillance and detection activities of infectious disease.

We need to make the most of Article X and have to base ourselves on global, sustainable, integrated, coordinated and institutionalized approaches for it to be effective.

The working document presented by the Non-Aligned Group of countries suggests practical measures and realistic objectives along these lines. It deserves the attention of our meeting.

Mr. Chairman, our meeting is the second-to-last one in the intersessional process framework decided on by the Sixth Review Conference. We congratulate Ambassador Portales on his election as Chairman of the 2010 meetings and we assure him of our full cooperation.

The meetings undertaken under this heading have enabled us to have useful exchanges of information and to prepare for the next Review Conference and we hope that this will give us the opportunity to reach mutual understanding on the strengthening of one of the main pillars of the Convention, in this case, Article X.

The scope of the Convention remains limited by the fact that it does not have a verification mechanism. We therefore need a binding, legal instrument in this field.

Algeria very much supports implementation of all the objectives of the Convention and particularly urges universalization and wishes every success to your work