



# PAKISTAN

PERMANENT MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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**Statement by the  
Delegation of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan  
at the Second Meeting of Experts  
on  
Biological Weapons Convention  
from 19 to 30 July 2004**

**Geneva  
19 July 2004**

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Mr. Chairman, I wish to congratulate you on the assumption of chairmanship of the second meeting of the group of experts to BWC-related matters. I am confident that under your dynamic, experienced and capable guidance this meeting would benefit the most. As agreed earlier, during these two weeks these experts will be discussing matters important to the humanity. More specifically,

- (1) Consideration of strengthening and broadening national and international institutional efforts and existing mechanism for the surveillance, detection, diagnosis and combating of infectious diseases affecting humans, animals and plants
- (2) Consideration of enhancing international capabilities for responding to, investigating and mitigating the effects of cases of alleged use of biological or toxic weapons or suspicious outbreak of diseases

2. Mr. Chairman, Pakistan places utmost importance to the protection of humans, animals and plants from all kinds of diseases including infectious diseases. In this regard the Government of Pakistan has taken several steps. Our technical experts will be covering the details of the surveillance and detection systems being applied in Pakistan. However, I will very briefly describe some of the steps, which Pakistan has taken in this regard.

3. Mr. Chairman, Pakistan strongly believes that concrete and effective measures should be taken to strengthen biosafety and biosecurity, but at the same time these measures should not hamper the scientific development in biotechnology and genetic engineering. Developments in these areas are crucial for increase in the agricultural productivity and for better health care in future.

4. Pakistan is already a Party to the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) since 1975 and has also ratified the Convention on Biological Diversity in 1994 and has signed the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety in 2001. Pakistan is strengthening its legal, administrative and regulatory infrastructure in the field of biosafety and biosecurity. National legislations on the export control of biological agents have been prepared and have been approved by the

Cabinet and are under consideration by the Parliament for approval. National laws to control transportation of biological material within the country are under consideration in the relevant ministries. Furthermore, relevant regulations with respect to genetically controlled and modified food are undergoing the process of approval.

5. In Pakistan, the existing surveillance system known, as "Health Management Information System (HMIS)" is being further strengthened by countrywide gradual implementation of Disease Early Warning System (DEWS) for detection and control of infectious diseases. Initially 15 infectious diseases including polio, cholera, plague, malaria, etc. have been selected for this system.

6. The Draft new International Health Regulations formulated by WHO for prevention and control of infectious diseases are under consideration by Pakistan and we support the finalization and subsequent implementation of these Regulations.

7. In the perspective of international cooperation we believe that effective and enhanced cooperation at bilateral and multilateral level is most important for sustained maintenance of development in different scientific fields including biotechnology, biosafety and biosecurity. In this regard we feel that relevant training and technical expertise should be provided to the developing countries to upgrade their systems.

8. Finally, Mr. Chairman we envisage a very fruitful two-weeks of deliberations by the experts and look forward to their recommendations which will hopefully form the "best practices" to be followed by States Parties on voluntary basis, taking into consideration their particular state of development, technical and financial resources available to them.

I thank you Mr. Chairman.