

## **Statement by Senegal**

**Monday 24 August 2009, Morning Session**

Mr. Chairman, it is with real pleasure that I can start my statement by congratulating you on your election to the post of Chairman of this important Meeting of Experts of the States Parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on their Destruction, the BWC.

It is with equal pleasure that I would like to thank you for the open consultations you held in preparation for this meeting and all the very useful documents that you have drawn up for delegations. I would also like to express my strongest appreciation to the team of the Implementation Support Unit of the Convention for its contribution, working together with you to ensure that our meeting is properly organized.

My delegation endorses the statement made by the delegation of Cuba on behalf of the Group of Member States of the Non-Aligned Movement parties to the BWC.

Our delegation stresses the importance of the BWC regime as well as the need to comply strictly with that regime and to work to constantly strengthen it in respect of the right that States Parties have to benefit for peaceful purposes from the progress which has been made in the area of life sciences.

Thus, in terms of applying the obligations it has entered into by acceding to this regime, Senegal has no centres, no manufacturing laboratories nor storage facilities for biological weapons. What is more, the competent Senegalese authorities have carried out an inventory of all of the scientific research units and laboratories in our country and placed them under stringent monitoring to avoid any risk of an accident or inappropriate use of biological substances or materials that are available to them. Moreover, it has done this work in pursuance of the relevant provisions of the BWC and Resolution 1540 of 28 April 2004 of the United Nations Security Council.

In addition, so as to strengthen surveillance of laboratories and research units, the Senegalese authorities have established by ministerial decree a National Laboratory Network. This network brings together national laboratories, which number 17, with the Laboratory of the Pasteur Institute of Dakar which is part of the WHO network.

In accordance with the Intersessional Programme for 2007-2010, adopted during the last Review Conference of the BWC held in November 2006, we are looking at this subject, which is particularly important this year, that is, measures to strengthen cooperation, assistance and international exchanges to apply the biological techniques and science advances for peaceful purposes as well as the promotion of capacity-building in the area of detection, diagnosis and containment of infectious diseases.

Senegal attaches particular importance to this issue.

Indeed, communicable diseases are the most frequent cause of death, morbidity and disability in Senegal. They are a major threat to the well-being of our people.

Pursuant to the adoption on 3 May 2005 by the 58<sup>th</sup> World Health Assembly of the International Health Regulations, which entered into force on 5 June 2007, Senegal has reviewed its Integrated Disease, Surveillance and Response Guide. The new provisions concerning epidemiological

surveillance and response have been set out by the Ministry of Health and Prevention and they are being carried out under its authority.

During the working meetings that take place this week, our delegation would like to make a presentation of the surveillance facilities for infectious diseases which are in force in Senegal. Moreover, it will present the challenges facing us in the area of prevention and control of infectious diseases.

The States Parties to BWC have different levels of scientific and technological capacity. Given the situation, it is important to work to strengthen the capacities of developing countries in the area of epidemiological surveillance through promoting international cooperation, including South-South cooperation.

In this respect, the Group of Member Countries of the Non-Aligned Movement, through Cuba, has expressed the outlines of a proposal which Senegal fully endorses. By ratifying the BWC, the States Parties to this instrument, including Senegal, have undertaken the commitment under Article X of promoting exchanges for peaceful purposes. This aspect of the Convention, that is, scientific cooperation and transfer of technology, is a clear way of stimulating universalization of the Convention and its effective implementation.

The delegation of Senegal very much hopes that, as an outcome of the present session of the Group of Experts, tangible proposals will be formulated with a view to strengthening international cooperation for peaceful purposes for review and adoption by the next Meeting of High Contracting Parties planned in December 2009.

Mr. Chairman, for the many reasons that you are well acquainted with, you can count on the full support of my delegation in terms of working with you so as to arrive at a positive outcome of our work.

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