

		THE PERMANENT MISSION OF UKRAINE TO THE UNITED NATIONS OFFICE AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AT GENEVA
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STATEMENT

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DEPUTY SECRETARY OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY
OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF UKRAINE

TO THE FIFTH REVIEW CONFERENCE 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

Geneva
November 20, 2001

Mr. President

Let me join the previous speakers in extending this Delegation's warmest congratulation upon your assumption of the Chairmanship of the Conference. I would like to assure you that the Delegation of Ukraine will render its full support and cooperation for your endeavours.

Mr. President

The Fifth Review Conference gives the States Parties a real and more than acute opportunity to strengthen and increase the effectiveness of the BWC regime aimed at complete prohibition and elimination of biological and toxin weapons.

We have an important task to sum up the past five-year period of operation of the Convention, with a view to provide confidence for the world community in the steadfast implementation of all BWC provisions.

It is also important to evaluate the latest scientific and technical developments in the spheres related to the Convention and to find common understanding regarding those provisions of the Final Conference Declaration which would meet the interests of strengthening the comprehensive prohibition of biological weapons as it is stipulated by Article I.

Mr. President

Ukraine was one of the co-authors of the Biological Weapons Convention and realizes the important role this international agreement has played during the recent decades in the system of international legal documents on disarmament and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

Ukraine fully complies with its obligations under the Convention and has never had the intention to develop, produce, stockpile or acquire in any way the biological weapons, equipment-or means of its delivery. Our country annually submits to the United Nations Secretariat necessary information on BWC implementation within the framework of confidence-building measures adopted by the Second and Third Review Conferences of the States Parties to BWC.

The fact that States Parties to BWC have stated the absence of biological agents, toxins, weapons, equipment and means of delivery in their annual declarations is the evidence of the availability of prospects for the efficient prohibition of biological weapons.

At the same time, quite a number of countries remain beyond the frames of this process. The -existing confidence-building measures are useful but not sufficient for ensuring the efficient implementation of the Convention. They cannot substitute control mechanism. For this reason Ukraine considers the absence of the BWC verification regime as a serious obstacle for its full observance.

Besides, the necessity to establish unified mechanism for ensuring the effective control over the implementation of the Convention, in our opinion, is caused by the increase of threat of use of biological and toxin weapons, especially with the terrorist purposes, the absence of the international BWC verification regime, puts the countries that do not have their own protection programs against biological weapons before the need of their development.

Thus we have alternative ways. The first one is to form mechanisms of international control over the BWC compliance, to develop cooperation on multilateral basis, including assistance in case of a possible use or threat of use of biological weapons, investigation of accusations of alleged non-compliance with the Convention. The other is to make countries face the necessity to take steps in order to solve biological weapons-related problems. Such an alternative, in our opinion, would result in lowering the level of confidence between countries and, as a consequence, in growing tension.

Mr. President

Ukraine is deeply concerned by the recent events in the USA and other countries of the world connected with the intensification of the terrorist groups' activities and use of biological agents with the aim of intimidation of population and its physical destruction. All this, in my opinion, requires fundamental reconsideration of efficiency of protection against these new threats.

The science achievements and new technologies in the hands of irresponsible politicians and terrorists have added new threats to traditional ones, which can be united under the general term "the threats from the radiation, chemical and biological factors".

In this connection I'd like to note that the mass psychosis which can arise as a consequence of use of biological weapons is a particular danger. It is known, that erroneous alarms in connection with possible use of biological weapons represent a special kind of threats which are used by the terrorists. The fear of possible terrorist attacks with the use of biological agents can reach such scale that it can turn into the same effective instrument of terrorists as a real use of these agents. The recent developments in the United States of America, connected with the cases of anthrax contamination, confirm that.

Ukraine is not an exception for we have got more than two hundred registered cases of mailing white powder to various addresses.

we cannot also ignore the threats resulting from the real use of biological weapons by the terrorists as well as in the military conflicts of different nature and intensity.

Taking into account possible consequences of bioterrorism, the governments should stand ready to prevent such developments. The systemic approach to the problem of protection against biological weapons at the global level should envisage international interaction in all spheres as well as the effective utilization of professional personnel. The specific spheres of interaction should cover all aspects of protection against biological weapons beginning with the determination of future threats, problems of indication, timely notification, decontamination, development of efficient vaccines and some other areas of work. The main task is to develop and to implement the balanced and at the same time effective policy in this sphere.

From our part Ukraine will be ready to comprehensively promote this process.

Mr. President

Last October at the session of the UN General Assembly Ukraine put forward a number of initiatives aimed at intensifying international cooperation in combating international terrorism. In particular, Ukraine proposed to consider the possibility of establishing a proper institutional arrangement to co-ordinate the individual efforts of Member States in combating international terrorism and to ensure that the appropriate legal instruments are implemented in the most efficient manner. Taking into account the specific character of the biological weapons, its technological accessibility and negative consequences of their use, we believe that it would be expedient to create the relevant structure designed for fighting against bioterrorism and operative responding to the threats in this sphere within the framework of this arrangement.

Concentrating necessary financial, administrative, material, human, research and other kinds of resources within the framework of such a structure under the auspices of the United Nations, the Member States would have an opportunity to implement the concept of system security in the sphere of protection against biological weapons at the national and international level.

Thus one of the BWC aims directed at more complete protection from biological weapons would be implemented in a more thorough way and the number of states would avoid the necessity to create their own defense programs against biological weapons.

Ukraine would be ready to take an active part in preparing relevant proposals.

Mr. President

I'd like to stress particularly one of the important aspects connected with Article IX of the Convention. As it is known, the First Conference to Review the operation of the Chemical Weapons Convention is planned for the next year. Taking into account that both Conventions have as their subject of regulation the toxins and other substances "on the junction" of chemical and biological agents, it is very important that review processes of both of these agreements would not leave "white spots" in the field of respective prohibitions under the corresponding general criteria.

Mr. President

Ukraine stands for the successive development and establishment of the most reliable regime for verification the BWC implementation. I would like to point out the significant scope of work carried out for this purpose within the Ad Hoc Group. Ukraine repeatedly declared its support to basic elements of the draft Protocol that were identified during the recent six years of negotiations and stood for the soonest possible completion of the negotiation process and entry into force of the Protocol.

Unfortunately we have to regret that those negotiations were not fruitful. However, we believe that the situation at the negotiations on the elaboration of the BWC Protocol should not result in the suspension of the BWC verification mechanism development.

We are open to discussing new concrete proposals. In this context the proposals with respect to strengthening national legislation which we support to the fullest extent deserve particular attention. This is the way that Ukraine follows in its national legislation. In particular, the new Criminal Code of Ukraine envisages criminal responsibility for any activity that contradicts the international obligations of our state.

At the same time we do not see principal contradictions which would not allow to take into account the proposals put forward by the US representative in the further work over the draft Protocol. Neither do we see principal contradictions which would not allow to accommodate both the results of the draft Protocol development and the proposals of the US delegation, as well as other delegations' proposals in a single BWC compliance control instrument.

We hope that all the proposals will be structured and compiled into one unified document for further consideration.

Providing the development of international cooperation in the sphere of peaceful biological activities on the basis of measures set out in the IV Review Conference Final Declaration as well as extension of technical cooperation in biotechnological field through the specialized UN institutions is another important task.

We believe that V Review Conference can and must be the forum where the next steps towards the improvement of the effectiveness of the Convention will be taken.

In this connection special attention could be paid to the proposals concerning the possibility of granting to the Conference the role in managing the process of improvement of the regime established by the Convention as well as the most complete discovering of the Convention potential with the use of experience and procedures, which were elaborated since the beginning of the Convention review processes, for this Conference is the only existing mechanism providing the representation of the States Parties interests.

As a conclusion I would like to express hope that we will be able to ensure the comprehensive strengthening of the regime of prohibition of using the pathogenic agents as the means of warfare in the XXI century. Our country declares its readiness to join efforts aimed at resolving this problem and securing the successful implementation of the Biological Weapons Convention on the whole.

Thanks for your attention.