

**Statement of H.E. Yevhen BERSHEDA
Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Ukraine in Geneva**

26 April 2006

Mr. Chairman,

At the outset let me join the previous speakers in extending to you my sincere congratulations upon your assumption of Chairmanship of the Preparatory Committee and the Sixth Review Conference of the BTWC. I would like to assure you, Mr. Chairman, that the delegation of Ukraine is ready to provide its full support and co-operation for achieving progress in strengthening the BTWC effectiveness.

Mr. Chairman,

Today, the mankind commemorates the Chornobyl Nuclear Power Plant accident, which happened 20 years ago and went down in history of civilization as a humanitarian catastrophe related to scientific and technological progress. Its grave lessons should make the world community to think about detrimental aftermath of possible use of the biological weapons – the catastrophe of global magnitude which could accede the Chornobyl tragedy consequences.

As a co-author of the BTWC, Ukraine recognizes the important role of the Convention in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

The Sixth Review Conference provides the States Parties with a real and more than acute opportunity to strengthen and increase the effectiveness of the BTWC regime. We will have an important task to sum up the past five-year period of operation of the Convention, with a view to ensure the world community in the steadfast implementation of all BTWC provisions.

The aim of this particular meeting, beyond the procedural matters, is preliminary to consider the issues that will be discussed in the course of the Conference itself.

The Canada's proposals with respect to the Review Conference deserve particular attention. In this regard let me touch upon some matters of substance.

Universality of the Convention has always been one of the key prerequisites for its comprehensive implementation. Adherence to the BTWC makes an important contribution to international peace and security as well as global anti-terrorism efforts. In this regard we welcome the work by the EU on the Joint Action Plan to enhance the universality of the Convention through outreach activities and to help States Parties improve their national implementation by providing necessary assistance.

We consider this document as an important step forward and we believe that it should be approved at the Sixth Review Conference. Holding, within the Action Plan, regional and sub-regional conferences and seminars with participation of

countries of Eastern and Central Africa, Middle East, Pacific region and South America that for the time being are not parties to the Convention should increase its membership.

Against the background of growing terrorist activities in various part of the world, the threat of “biological terrorism” should not be underestimated. Therefore not only broader BTWC membership is essential, but its stricter national implementation is also crucially important in the international endeavours for a safer world.

The intersessional work programme had been very successful, filled with productive discussions aimed at joint search of concrete ways for improvement of the Convention’s regime, taking into account new challenges and threats.

We share the view that further intersessional work programme could comprise new topics, for example:

- strengthening of the effectiveness of the Confidence Building Measures;
- development of adequate measures for control over the BTWC compliance;
- introduction of national implementing legislation;
- new challenges and threats for the BTWC stemming from the latest scientific and technological developments in the spheres of biology and biotechnology;
- countering bio-terrorism.

Mr. Chairman,

Ukraine proceeds from the advisability to establish the international institutional mechanisms for more effective BTWC implementation. At the same time we are fully aware of the difficulties of the achieving the consensus over the ways for this idea practical realization.

Ukraine supports the idea of establishing the Point of Contact within the BTWC. The establishment of the Scientific Advisory Body could be explored also as a useful mechanism for analyzing global developments in connection with the BTWC.

Ukraine remains open for discussion of concrete proposals in the course of the PrepCom and afterwards to ensure productive work of the Conference itself.

Thank you.