

**First Committee of the 77<sup>th</sup> Session of the UN General Assembly**

**Cluster 2 (Other WMD)**

---

Mr. Chair,

This year marks the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the entry into force of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the adoption of the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC). The norms against any use of chemical and biological weapons should remain the core pillars of the global disarmament and nonproliferation regime. The Republic of Korea is unwavering in its support for the Conventions and reiterates that using chemical or biological weapons anywhere by anyone under any circumstances is unacceptable.

Mr. Chair,

The international community's achievement since the entry into force of the CWC in 1997 is remarkable. More than 98 percent of all declared chemical weapons have been destroyed. The remaining will be destroyed by September 2023, verified by the OPCW. However, concerns remain over the threat posed by the repeated use of chemical weapons.

My delegation is deeply concerned that the cooperation to address all outstanding issues between Syria and the OPCW Technical Secretariat has been seriously hampered. My delegation urges Syria to immediately take necessary actions to redress the situation and comply with the Convention, as requested by relevant Decisions at the Conference of the States Parties (CSP) of the CWC. We appreciate the hard work of the OPCW Syria-related missions to investigate alleged incidents in a transparent, impartial, and professional manner.

The 5th Review Conference of the CWC to be held next May will provide a valuable chance to take stock of key achievements and challenges in the past five years and chart the way ahead. In this regard, my delegation would like to highlight the importance of enhancing the capacity of the OPCW and States Parties to tackle fast-evolving chemical threats. We look forward to candid and constructive discussions among States Parties to yield fruitful outcomes.

Mr. Chair,

Since adoption of the BWC 50 years ago, we have witnessed rapid advancement and development of science and technology as well as relevant industries. Moreover, as the global impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has alerted the international community to heighten its readiness and preparedness against any potential bio risks.

The 9th BWC Review Conference this November comes at a critical juncture. This review conferences should focus on strengthening the BWC regime to make it more resilient, practical, and up-to-date. The Republic of Korea will work hand in hand with all States Parties to achieve concrete outcomes of this Review Conference.

The Republic of Korea attaches great importance to establishing an independent, transparent, and inclusive science and technology review mechanism. Also, we are in support of establishing guidelines to assist State Parties that may request assistance in the framework of Article VII of the Convention. We also see it necessary to set voluntary guiding principles for scientists and strengthen bio-risk management standards.

For enhanced biosafety and biosecurity, each state party must implement the Convention to the full extent. In this regard, the Republic of Korea is actively implementing obligations under the BWC by submitting Confidence-Building Measures (CBMs) reports, enacting domestic

legislation, managing a reliable export control regime, and building operational capabilities. Moreover, the Republic of Korea highly values the role of international cooperation and assistance efforts for capacity building. Accordingly, we offer assistance and capacity building programs including through Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA), the Global Health Security Agenda (GHSA) and the Global Partnership (GP). In particular, as President Yoon Suk Yeol addressed at the General Assembly last month, Korea will host a ministerial GHSA meeting next month in Seoul.

Mr. Chair,

The Republic of Korea expresses its deep concern about Russia's unfounded allegations regarding the development and possible use of chemical or biological weapons, which may impede the full implementation of the Convention. The Republic of Korea is also concerned that these may be precursors to the use of biological or chemical weapons. Therefore, we join the international community's call on Russia to immediately cease all military actions, withdraw all its forces from the territory of Ukraine, and comply with its obligations under all relevant international law.

On another note, my delegation expresses its strong support for the UN Secretary-General's Mechanism for the investigation of the alleged use of chemical and biological weapons (UNSGM) and its operationalization in line with the 2018 UN Secretary-General's Agenda for Disarmament. We support the related capacity-building activities for the experts and laboratories in the UNSGM.

Thank you, Mr. Chair. /END/