

***Hon. Mary Mwanjelwa, Deputy Minister of Agriculture***

**Workshop on Biological Weapons Convention and UN Security Council  
Resolution 1540 (2004)**

**17-18 September, 2018**

**Ministers, Senior Government Officials, Members of Parliament, High Commissioners and Diplomatic Representatives of Canada, United Kingdom, United States, Norway, Members of Parliament, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen**

I am very pleased to have the opportunity to be with you all today and offer some brief remarks in support of this important Workshop

The threat of use of Weapons of Mass Destruction has perhaps never become more real than it has in more recent years

In the past few years, the threat of usage of nuclear weapons has never been far from the headlines.

Chemical weapon attacks have taken place – most recently in Syria.

And deep concern about possible efforts by Non State Actors are proving to be more and more well founded

Already evidence is coming to light that different terrorist organizations are now actively considering having recourse to such weapons

Indeed, both in Africa and in Europe – in the past 2 years – there have been a number of instances where terrorists have been apprehended while they have been assembling such weapons with the clear intention of using them.

**Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,**

As Deputy Minister of Agriculture of Tanzania, I wish to draw your collective attention to the fact that Biological Weapon attacks can be planned directly against human beings.

But what must concern us all as well is the well documented fact that biological attacks can also take place against food source, crops, livestock, animals and plants.

A biological disease deliberately and wantonly introduced into the crop and food supply of any country – be it here in Africa or anywhere else in the world – can devastate that crop – and consequently cripple the food supply of a city or nation.

Similarly, a biological agent or disease purposively introduced into the livestock arena, can kill of hundreds, if not thousands of livestock of all description – again depriving whole populations of essential food supplies.

So it is of particular importance that we understand this broader bio-security dimension of Biological Weapons.

An attack on livestock, an attack on crops or an attack on plants is also a devastating attack on our people.

Indeed, this is now known specially as a form of bio-terrorism – it is called agro-terrorism.

Your Excellencies, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I wish to applaud you all for participating in this most important Workshop today and tomorrow.

I am grateful for the opportunity to be here and share some brief remarks from my perspective as Deputy Minister for Agriculture

As is the case in several regions of the world, many of our countries throughout Africa depend upon our agricultural sources and crops as a vital lifeline for survival.

As you deliberate on the importance of joining the Biological Weapons Convention, and taking other important measures to prevent the usage of such weapons, I urge you in the strongest terms possible not to forget – and never to allow to stray too far from your deliberations - these wider essential implications and ramifications of this Treaty and to join and implement the BWC in full without further delay.

Thank you.