

Co-chairs Summary of the Second Regional Workshop on Implementing the Biological Weapons Convention and Promoting Biosafety and Biosecurity in Southeast Asia

18-20 November 2025, Guangzhou, China.

The Second Regional Workshop on Implementing the Biological Weapons Convention and Promoting Biosafety and Biosecurity in Southeast Asia was held from 18 to 20 November 2025 in Guangzhou, China. The Workshop was co-hosted by the People's Republic of China and Malaysia and supported by the United Nations Office of Disarmament Affairs (UNODA).

Participants from 11 countries including Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Singapore, Thailand, Timor Leste and Viet Nam, as well as from international organizations, inter alia, Implementation Support Unit of the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC ISU), Regional Center for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific (UNRCPD), United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR), World Health Organization (WHO), World Organization for Animal Health (WOAH), Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) participated in the Workshop. Chairperson and Friends of the Chair of the Working Group on strengthening of the BWC also attended the Workshop.

The workshop focused mainly on three topics, i.e. the implementation and strengthening the Biological Weapons Convention, the strengthening of national biosafety and biosecurity, and the promotion of regional and international cooperation in this field. In this regard, the workshop welcomed ASEAN Leaders' Declaration on Strengthening Regional Biosafety and Biosecurity as well as the Global Security Initiative and Global Governance Initiative.

Participants shared progress made in national implementation of BWC, exchanged views on the Working Group on strengthening of the BWC and discussed biological safety and security landscape in the region. The workshop also explored effective measures for bio-risk assessment, strengthening national biosafety/security framework and emergency preparedness and response. They also identified and shared cooperation, assistance and capacity building opportunities at bilateral, regional and international levels.

Participants noted that the development of biological technology and industry have brought about unprecedented opportunities but also substantial risks and challenges. They reaffirmed the importance of strengthening cooperation in promoting biosafety and biosecurity so as to better benefit the humanity, i.e.:

— —supporting coordination and cooperation for a collective effort to enhance national capacity and strengthen biosafety and biosecurity in the region and

encourage the international and regional organizations, in accordance with their respective mandates, to provide more support for cooperation as needed.

— —making efforts to improving global biosafety and biosecurity governance, reaffirming the political commitment of upholding the purposes of the Biological Weapons Convention and strengthening the Convention in all its aspects and promoting multilateralism to better integrate the views of developing countries in global platforms.

— —reaffirming to safeguard the right to peaceful uses of biotechnologies while effectively countering biosafety/security risks, thereby contributing to the realization of Sustainable Development Goals. Upholding the commitment of responsible and ethical bio-research, and endorsing the Tianjin Biosecurity Guidelines for Codes of Conduct for Scientists as a practical model.

Participants welcomed China's proposal for practical cooperation as an effort to enhance coordination and cooperation in the field of biosafety and biosecurity which were identified as a priority area for cooperation of the Plan of Action to Implement the ASEAN-China Comprehensive Strategic Partnership (2026-2030).

Participating countries agreed to actively collaborate in implementing the Plan of Action, through various relevant ASEAN-China activities, including regular joint workshops and cooperation in areas such as establishing frameworks and regulations, risk assessment, emergency response and preparedness, information sharing and capacity building, while promoting regional biosafety and biosecurity to improve regional governance.

China will maintain contact with the next chair of ASEAN/Country Coordinator for China-ASEAN Dialogue Relations on this matter.