



REMARKS BY THE ACTING INSPECTOR-GENERAL, NATIONAL POLICE SERVICE, MR. NOOR GABOW, CBS, OGW, AS DELIVERED BY POLICE SPOKESPERSON MR. BRUNO ISOHI SHIOSO, OGW, DURING THE REGIONAL WORKSHOP ON UNIVERSALIZATION AND EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE BIOLOGICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION (BWC) IN EASTERN AFRICA ON 18 - 19 OCTOBER 2022, IN MOMBASA.

- ❖ Mr. Daniel Feakes – Chief, BWC Implementation Support Unit/UNODA,
- ❖ Prof. Walter Oyawa - Director General, NACOSTI,
- ❖ Distinguished Participants,
- ❖ Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good morning/afternoon,

It is such an honor to join you in this distinguished Regional Workshop on Universalization and Effective Implementation of the BWC in Eastern Africa.

Allow me to confess that though I am in attendance in my capacity as a police officer, this workshop is a technical area for us in law enforcement. Generally,

law enforcement is used to conventional and symmetrical criminogenic challenges that we have attended to for far too long, perfecting our tactics and building great arsenal of comparative advantages in the process.

As such, a discourse on biosecurity and safety may appear alien to our work environment. Yet over time, and with advancement in technology in all spheres of life, new threats abound, not only targeting life but also animals and plants. This newfound onslaught then has to not only concern but equally worry us charged with protecting our communities hence design fitting and appropriate countermeasures.

Therefore, ladies and gentlemen, this reality of our evolving world, more so the current 21<sup>st</sup> century brings forth unrivalled challenges and threats, and more so, security and crime related. This therefore forces us to move out of our policing

policy and operational comfort zone, scan the horizon and try to understand emerging new threats that pose existential bio-risk ramification to society and humanity.

This is the reason which necessitates the world to routinely converge multilaterally through the auspices of the United Nations to jointly try and understand current organized bio-threat dimensions, compare notes including best practices, and offer timely and guiding policy framework solutions. It was through such an endeavor that the international community, once faced with a reality of a new threat of biological weapons of mass destruction, formulated the Biological Weapons Convention five decades ago, taking effect in 1975.

This policy framework, as an international tool is and remains the only best solution and best practice to be benchmarked by State Parties in coming up with

localized legal regimes. And it is only through national statutes that crime of whichever nature can be tackled either proactively at source or reactively at other levels effectively.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Kenya, as a State Party to this Convention has and continues to comply with all its provisions. We have in place a robust National Focal Point (BWC) through the establishment of the National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI) through statute. NACOSTI thus coordinates all our national efforts towards full compliance of the Convention. The National Police Service (NPS), which I currently head as the Ag Inspector General, is the national law enforcement agency charged with the mandate of security provision and

managing all crimes and incidentals. This therefore makes us a critical player in this enforcement space of all existing laws and policies that are aimed at tackling the prevailing threat posed by biological weapons and other hazardous materials.

Unfortunately, though we tackle threats posed by biological agents in a disparate and not unified manner, there is an exigent need for us in Kenya and the East African region generally to enact singular national statutes to be the gravitas of our respective law enforcement efforts. A unified codified legal regime has the capacity to direct efforts in a purposeful way, is more efficient in law enforcement resource allocation and utility, and also coordinates policing partnerships in a more synergized way.



This approach is more feasible since enforcement of our existing legal regime is not our exclusive mandate as police. We coordinate, collaborate and partner with numerous other local agencies on how best to achieve our singular national objective of interdicting, dismantling and eradicating posed bio-threats. We work with academia such as universities and research agencies laboratories amongst others to sharpen and deepen our law enforcement capacities and understanding through relevant knowledge acquisition. We therefore leverage our respective comparative advantages and operational synergies accruing from these relationships to level with or be ahead of this insidious threat situation.

### **Esteemed Participants,**

As a country, Kenya is therefore more concerned with the reality, including potential of terrorists and organized criminals in deploying biological weapons

on its territory and region by extension. We are situated not only in a conflict prone and fragile region but also one that is a terror hotspot, with a proliferation of conventional weapons in the wrong hands. This is therefore reason enough for us to worry given the nexus between proliferation of conventional and biological weapons in a conflict context - hence the reason to keep our vigilance in order to secure our communities and people.

This thus justifies why we as law enforcement have to invest heavily in intelligence capabilities, which are useful tools as a pointer to areas of threat interest. We have also over time build awesome bilateral partnerships with foreign law enforcement agencies in the areas of training, intelligence sharing and law enforcement fellowship. Through these targeted efforts, we have trained our law enforcement detectives in new methodologies and technologies of investigating newer transnational organized crimes typologies, including



biological threats. It was for this very reason owing to our enhanced proprietary investigative capacities that enabled our local law enforcement officials to be handy and resourceful in the containment measures of a deadly and threatening virus during the unprecedented covid era. As such, our police officers worked very closely and competently with health practitioners in managing the scourge.

Esteemed colleagues, as a Service, and in addition to routine investigations that we conduct, we have also upgraded our forensic investigative capacities and capabilities to target crime novelty. Early in the year, the National Police Service unveiled a state-of-the-art National Forensic Laboratory domiciled at the Directorate of Criminal Investigation headquarters to support this end. This game changer facility is one of its kind in sub-Saharan Africa, with the capacity to handle all forensic related inquires, including investigations involving hazardous material.

We therefore hope that this premier facility shall be utilized as a regional hub of excellence and convergence for all law enforcement agencies' quest towards tackling biological and related crimes. Through sharing of knowledge across regional borders, we shall design a common integrated approach against this complex problem area; and be more prepared to defend our common regional security and individual States from harm or fear of pervasive crime, including bioterrorism.

And all cannot be said and done without forming and fortifying our respective national borders. Although the region experiences conflicts, internal strives or general fragility, it has some of the most porous borders. This reality is exacerbated by the fact that local communicates are not reigned in by 'imaginary' borders since we are one homogenous people straddling different nationalities. This fact makes policing of our borders problematic. But

nonetheless, we continue to monitor all border access points and endeavor to detect any inflows of goods or harmful substances that may have criminal motivation to cause harm to our nations. To this end, Kenya works through an internal multiagency teams' framework whose assets are stationed at all border control points. As a country, we also collaborate with international law enforcement community through Interpol's detection and communication outreach capabilities. These measures have enabled us to make our country safer from transnational transgression of suspicious and criminally inclined substances.

Although we have registered such notable milestones as aforementioned, we are not yet out of the woods. As a law enforcement agency, we call for more partnerships from stakeholders, valued partners and interested groups to help build our enhanced technical capacities towards a fuller understanding of this pervading threat environment. Such programmatic and project-based

partnerships shall enable us to trickle-down acquired capacities to the policing frontline, especially in the context of crime scene management.

### **Esteemed Participants,**

Allow me also to appreciate the leadership of the United Nations through UNODA, including NACOSTI as the national focal point for agreeing to host this very valuable regional workshop in Mombasa City, Kenya. This is proof enough of the concern the UN attaches to our regional peace, security and safety. The act also underscores the inescapable reality that Kenya is indeed a safe country.

And this workshop's agenda being a new knowledge area, I hope abundant attention and adequate resources shall in future be dedicated to the worrisome crime agenda we all face. Law enforcement on its part needs to learn more and

mainstream science into its daily law enforcement practice for any impactful headway to be realized.

Finally, dear participants, allow me to reassure you all of your personal security and that of your property while in this beloved country. Kenya is a peace haven with peace loving citizens. During your stay at our coastal resort city of Mombasa, please find some time from your busy but rich programme to sample our beautiful beaches and all that our coastline and her beautiful people have to offer.

With these few remarks, I thank you all for your attention and wish you the most fruitful of deliberations, findings and conclusions that shall bind us going forward.



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