PHILIPPINES

International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons
11:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. and 3:00 p.m.-6:00 p.m., Thursday, 26 September 2019
Conference Room 4, UNHQ

PHILIPPINE STATEMENT
By Hon. Noralyn Jubaira-Baja
Assistant Secretary
Office of the United Nations and International Organizations
Department of Foreign Affairs

Mr. President,

The Philippines joins the international community in commemorating and promoting the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons. At a time when the United Nations has already invested so much in development, the environment and peace, this global institution has the responsibility to protect our gains from a devastation resulting from a nuclear disaster.

Member States have painstakingly developed national agendas aligned with the goals of the United Nations, as exemplified by our efforts to attain the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In 2015, we adopted the Paris Agreement on climate change, the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development containing the SDGs, and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda on Financing for Development. In this year's UNGA, our main aim is to inspire ambitious action to end poverty, respond to the climate threat and secure healthy, peaceful and prosperous lives for all.

These goals for prosperity, the environment, and peace can be rendered useless by even a single nuclear incident. It is therefore necessary that we work towards the elimination of any possibility of this nature. The Philippines shares the concern of many Member States that the nuclear weapons capabilities of the Nuclear weapon states

continue to be modernized and developed. These powerful tools of destruction, if used, would have consequences too catastrophic to comprehend.

The Philippines firmly believes that the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty is the cornerstone of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime and an essential foundation for the pursuit of nuclear disarmament. The Philippines continues to support the 13 Practical Steps and the 64-Point Action Plan that was agreed upon in the 2010 NPT Review Conference. The following action points are worth emphasizing:

- Nuclear weapon states must make meaningful progress in their commitment under the NPT to reduce and eliminate all types of nuclear weapons in a transparent manner, and further diminish the role of such weapons in their military and security concepts, doctrines and policies;

- Nuclear weapon states must extend to the non-nuclear weapon states effective, universal, unconditional, non-discriminatory and irrevocable legally binding assurances against the threat of use of nuclear weapons.

- Nuclear weapon states must support the ongoing work towards the negotiation of a legally binding instrument banning the production of fissile material for use in nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosive devices.

- The eight remaining Annex II States must sign and ratify the CTBT without further delay and usher in its entry into force.

- Nuclear weapons states must work towards accession to the nuclear weapon-free zones, including the Southeast Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone and its relevant protocols. The establishment of further nuclear-weapon-free zones is encouraged, and NPT States Parties should pay particular attention to the Middle East.

While we see the importance of building trust and confidence, particularly among nuclear weapon states, we believe that we should proceed with the pursuit of disarmament without delay to honor our commitments under the NPT.

I wish to emphasize that the Philippines is a signatory to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, a landmark agreement that fortifies the nuclear disarmament architecture. The treaty represents the universalization of the Philippines' hope for the elimination of nuclear weapons, in line with the specific provision of our Constitution and the Treaty on the South-East Asian Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone. The Treaty also fulfills the goal set out in the NPT. It delegitimizes, once and for all, the use of nuclear weapons. **END**