



PHILIPPINES

STATEMENT

by

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to the United Nations

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Mr. Chairman,

Allow me to extend the Philippines' warm congratulations to you for chairing this 70th session of the First Committee. This is such an auspicious time as the United Nations marks seven decades of serving the world through the maintenance of peace and security.

The Philippines' long history in support of global zero is almost as old as the United Nations.

Four years after the UN was born, then UN General Assembly President Carlos P. Romulo worked for a nuclear "truce" between the United States and the former Soviet Union to temporarily suspend the production of the atomic bomb and prohibit the use of nuclear weapons, albeit unsuccessfully.

He insisted that a complete agreement on nuclear disarmament could, and should be reached, through the United Nations.

Throughout the years, the Philippines has upheld this firm belief and confidence in this world body to rid the world of nuclear arms.

It is highly regrettable that after all our efforts throughout the decades to get closer to zero, the international nuclear disarmament agenda is at a standstill.

Mr. Chairman,

It is vital now, more than ever, that relations among the owners of the world's nuclear arsenals stay strong, and that they stand firm in the area of arms control and disarmament.

For it is when their relations are weak, when they dither and waver, that they cling to their obsolete deterrence policies and hold on to their nuclear arsenals.

It is precisely during these challenging times that we need to bolster our efforts to ensure that nuclear weapons will not be used for any reason and take concrete steps to eventually rid the world of nuclear weapons.

Mr. Chairman,

The Philippines fully supports and aligns with the statements of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, and of Myanmar on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

These statements are consistent with our long-standing and principled positions on disarmament in general – be it on conventional weapons, nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction.

The Philippines will continue to support measures to disarmament, including new principles and approaches that would lead to the enhancement of international peace and security.

The Philippines will work with like-minded countries to pursue these priorities.

On nuclear disarmament, the Philippines will support efforts to:

1. Strengthen the ongoing discourse on the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons and ensure that this will eventually lead to concrete actions, with specific timelines, for the total and complete elimination of nuclear weapons;
2. Call for the start of negotiations for a nuclear weapons convention that will ban nuclear weapons;
3. Re-start talks on the convening of a Conference on the Middle East towards the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction; and
4. Achieve a balanced and immediate implementation of the 64-Point Action Plan of the 2010 NPT Review Conference, across all of the Treaty's pillars.

The Philippines believes that all four issues are central to maintaining the credibility of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT).

On conventional weapons, the Philippines will help sustain the positive momentum created by the successful negotiations on the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) and continue to engage in discussions on small arms and light weapons.

The Philippines will strive to ratify the ATT before the Second Conference of States Parties of the Treaty in the second half of 2016.

On nuclear non-proliferation, the Philippines welcomes the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action or the Iran Nuclear Deal.

The agreement is an important measure in promoting security and stability, both regional and global. We call on the countries involved and the international community to help maintain the positive momentum for long-term peace that this agreement aims to create.

In the Southeast Asian region, the Philippines together with our nine ASEAN neighbors, are resolute in our commitment to preserve our region as a Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone and free of all other weapons of mass destruction.

We are determined in stepping up efforts with the Nuclear Weapon States to resolve all outstanding issues with respect to their signing and ratifying of the Protocol to the SEANWFZ Treaty.

We also encourage the full support of all Member States, particularly the NWS, for the ASEAN-sponsored UN General Assembly Resolution on the SEANWFZ Treaty in this

session. We look forward to the adoption by consensus of the draft resolution on the SEANWFZ Treaty.

On nuclear security, we believe that the twin issues of nuclear safety and security will inevitably be brought to the UN with the conclusion of the US-led Nuclear Security Summit in 2016. The Philippines intends to actively engage in discussions in the UN on these issues consistent with its positions on non-proliferation.

Together with Georgia and Morocco, the Philippines have formed a Group of Friends of CBRN Risk Mitigation and Security Governance which will take the lead in promoting States' compliance with obligations under UN Security Council Resolution 1540.

Mr. Chairman,

The 2030 Sustainable Development Goals adopted very recently by our leaders aim to ensure that no one is left behind. Analogously, a nuclear weapon detonation during our time, or at any other time, will guarantee the same, that no one will be left behind.

There is no sustainable development to strive for if the peoples of the world will continue to live in fear over the presence and potential use of nuclear weapons. And more importantly, if the world's resources continue to be expended for the modernization of these deadly weapons instead of lifting the lives of millions of poor people in the world.

Thank you.