

First Committee of the 70th Session of the UN General Assembly
Thematic Debate on Nuclear Weapons
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New York <Check against Delivery>

Thank you, Mr. Chairman,

1. My delegation wishes to join the previous speakers in extending our congratulations to you for your assumption of the chairmanship of the Committee. Let me assure you of my delegation's full support and cooperation.

Mr. Chairman,

2. The Republic of Korea strongly committed to maintain and strengthen the NPT regime, as it is the starting point of both nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament. Given the wide gap between nuclear weapon states and non-nuclear weapon states on how to achieve the shared vision of nuclear free world, however, a practical and realistic approach is needed in order to achieve this common goal.
3. As we examine the 2015 NPT Review Conference, this reality becomes all the more clear. The Review Conference could not adopt the final document, showing that there remain significant challenges with regard to realizing a world free of nuclear weapons. However, we appreciate that all States Parties to the NPT could engage in a constructive dialogue, identifying the gap between them as well as the ways to fill this gap.
4. My delegation takes note of the significant progress that has been made in various aspects of the nuclear disarmament process. In bilateral reductions, we would like to note and extend our support for the New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (New START) between the US and Russia which established solid ground for transparency and confidence building measures. In this context, we would also like to highlight and welcome the submission of the reports on the implementation of the 2010 Action Plan by the five nuclear weapon states.

5. The Republic of Korea also reiterates the importance of the early entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT). In this regard, the ROK hosted a CTBTO Group of Eminent Persons (GEM) meeting in Seoul this June, adopting the Seoul Declaration which called for all the Annex II States to sign and ratify the Treaty without delay, and urged the DPRK to refrain from undertaking any further nuclear test.
6. Looking specifically at the multilateral arena, the ROK recognizes and welcomes the report by the Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) regarding Treaty banning the production of Fissile Material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. We remain firmly supportive of the FMCT as a significant step forward in nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament. Therefore, we would like to see the immediate beginning of negotiations on the FMCT in the Conference on Disarmament as we hope to build on the very valuable discussions which were carried out by the GGE.

Mr. Chairman,

7. In nuclear non-proliferation, we note the adoption of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) agreed between the E3+3 and Iran as well as the Road map signed by Iran and the IAEA. We believe that the implementation of the JCPOA can serve to strengthen the confidence among all parties and the nuclear non-proliferation regime. It can stand as a firm example of resolving the issue of nuclear proliferation through dialogue and diplomacy.
8. Korea firmly supports the role of the IAEA Safeguards and its Additional Protocol, which is essential for the international nuclear non-proliferation regime. In this regard, the ROK has become one of the two member states to apply the new version of the State Level Approach from this September. We will accelerate our efforts on strengthening the international regime to safeguard the world against nuclear proliferation as the next Chair of the Nuclear Suppliers Group from 2016 to 2017.

9. The ROK has been keen on enhancing global nuclear security against the possible proliferation of nuclear materials to non-state actors. This is demonstrated particularly by Korea's hosting of the 2012 Nuclear Security Summit as well as its contribution of almost 5 million US dollars to the IAEA's Nuclear Security Fund (NSF). Along these lines, the Foreign Minister of the Republic of Korea will serve as the Chair of the IAEA's 2016 International Conference on Nuclear Security.

Mr. Chairman,

10. Finally, it is necessary to express our continued strong condemnation of the DPRK's pursuit of nuclear weapons. The negative impact of these efforts on both regional and global security is indeed immense. The rejection by the DPRK with regard to proposals for dialogue on denuclearization is of serious concern, so we urge North Korea to immediately return to meaningful denuclearization talks. The gravity of the advancement of nuclear capabilities and the ongoing activities at the Yongbyon site should not be overlooked by the international community and we should be vigilant in recognizing the threats posed by these activities.
11. The DPRK has carried out three nuclear tests over the past decade and claims itself a "nuclear weapon state." Furthermore, North Korea publicly announced its intention to launch a long-range missile under the disguise of a "satellite" launch, which is clear violation of the relevant UN Security Council resolutions. We would, therefore, like to take this opportunity to call on the DPRK to abandon all nuclear weapons and existing nuclear programs, and ballistic missile programs in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner, and fully comply with all the relevant UN Security Council resolutions and fulfill its commitments under the 19 September Joint Statement of the Six Party Talks. Finally, we urge DPRK to both return to full compliance with the NPT and fulfill its international obligations as a responsible member.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. /END/