



**PERMANENT MISSION OF SINGAPORE
TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

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**STATEMENT BY MISS LAI ZHENLING,
DELEGATE TO THE 68TH SESSION
OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY
THEMATIC DISCUSSION ON OTHER DISARMAMENT MEASURES AND
INTERNATIONAL SECURITY,
FIRST COMMITTEE,
30 OCTOBER 2013**

Mr Chairman,

As this is the first time Singapore is taking the floor, allow me to congratulate you and the members of your bureau on your appointments. My delegation looks forward to working constructively with you.

2. We are heartened by recent positive developments in the disarmament agenda. Singapore welcomes the establishment of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW)-United Nations (UN) Joint Mission in Syria. We encourage Syria to continue complying with its obligations under UN Security Council (UNSC) Resolution 2118 and cooperating fully with the UN and OPCW to ensure the complete, verifiable and irreversible destruction of chemical weapons in Syria as soon as possible.

3. However, progress in achieving international disarmament and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) remains highly uneven. We were reminded at the 8th Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) in September 2013 that the Treaty has yet to enter into force, 17 years after it was first opened for signature. This underscores that much more needs to be done, particularly in the area of nuclear disarmament.

Effective Multilateral Cooperation

Mr Chairman,

4. As a small, highly globalised state, Singapore is keenly aware that today's security challenges cannot be resolved by any one state alone. Multilateral cooperation is fundamental to addressing disarmament and international security issues in an effective and sustainable manner.

5. As a State Party to the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention and Chemical Weapons Convention, Singapore hopes to see the universalisation of these two conventions. We are also committed to the ultimate goal of complete nuclear disarmament, particularly as the General Assembly has long recognised that “nuclear weapons pose the greatest danger to mankind and to the survival of civilisation”¹. We echo the comments of Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon at the inaugural High-Level Meeting of the General Assembly on Nuclear Disarmament on 26 September 2013 that it is time for new binding legal commitments. This must begin with the revitalisation of the disarmament machinery, particularly the Conference on Disarmament (CD). Singapore thus urges states to demonstrate the political resolve needed for the CD to overcome its current impasse.

Mr Chairman,

6. We believe it is critical for the international community to reinforce and uphold the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), which is the only near universal regime on the three pillars of disarmament, non-proliferation and peaceful uses of nuclear energy. In this regard, Singapore calls on all parties to ensure the full and effective implementation of the 2010 NPT Review Conference Action Plan, and urges all states outside the NPT regime to accede to it without delay. We would like to emphasise that disarmament and non-proliferation are two sides of the same coin. As Secretary-General Ban has said, there are no “right hands” that can handle these “wrong weapons”. There is hence a need to work towards full realisation of Article VI of the NPT, with the Nuclear-Weapon States taking the lead in addressing critical issues such as reducing the role of nuclear weapons in strategic defence doctrines, adopting a no-first use policy and providing negative security assurances to non-Nuclear Weapon States. All Nuclear Weapon States should also commit to reducing their nuclear arsenals in a transparent and verifiable manner, and end qualitative improvement of nuclear weapons and testing. Similarly, we also urge all remaining states to accede to the CTBT, particularly the Annex II states whose ratifications are needed for the Treaty to enter into force.

7. As we work towards complete nuclear disarmament, Singapore strongly supports the establishment and development of nuclear-weapon-free zones as a practical and concrete confidence-building measure. We are disappointed that the Conference on the Establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and all other WMD has yet to be held. We hope it can be convened without further delay. Within our region, we seek to preserve Southeast Asia as a zone free of nuclear weapons and all other WMD, as enshrined in the ASEAN Charter. Singapore is thus committed to continue working with the other ASEAN Member States and the Nuclear Weapon States to comprehensively resolve any outstanding issues and facilitate the Nuclear Weapon States’ accession to the

¹ First Special Session of the General Assembly devoted to Disarmament, 1978.

Protocol of the Southeast Asia Nuclear-Weapons-Free Zone (SEANWFZ) Treaty without reservations.

National Efforts

Mr Chairman,

8. While multilateral cooperation on disarmament and non-proliferation is important, its success also depends on effective implementation at the national level. States need to maintain high standards of security to ensure that materials do not fall into the wrong hands, in violation of UNSC sanctions.

9. Singapore remains fully committed to the goals of disarmament and non-proliferation. We were the first country in Southeast Asia to implement an exports control regime. We continually review and update our legislative and administrative processes to ensure our system is robust and aligned to international best practices. Singapore also plays an active role in counter-proliferation initiatives including the Nuclear Security Summit process and the Proliferation Security Initiative. However, the fight against the proliferation of WMD in today's inter-connected world requires collective vigilance and all states, especially those along the supply chain, must do their part.

Conclusion

Mr Chairman,

10. The international community needs to demonstrate renewed commitment to and collective political will for disarmament. Singapore believes that continued progress in strengthening the international disarmament and non-proliferation framework will require multilateral cooperation, underpinned by the actions of individual states to uphold their obligations and responsibilities.

11. Thank you.

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