

**Keynote Speech by Ambassador Dong-ik SHIN
Deputy Minister for Multilateral and Global Affairs
Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Korea**

The 12th ROK-UN Joint Conference on
Disarmament and Non-proliferation Issues
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Excellencies,
Distinguished Participants and Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great pleasure for me to welcome you all to the “12th ROK-UN Joint Conference on Disarmament and Non-proliferation Issues.”

I would like to express my gratitude to Ms. Angela Kane, the High Representative of the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs, as well as Ms. Sharon Riggle, the Director of the United Nations Regional Center for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific, for their cooperation in organizing this Conference.

Also, I wish to thank all distinguished participants, who have travelled a long way to share their valuable insights on disarmament and non-proliferation issues at this Conference.

(ROK-UN Joint Conference: history and significance)

Over the past twelve years, the annual ROK-UN Joint Conference on Disarmament and Non-proliferation Issues has successfully established itself as a prominent regional forum on disarmament and non-proliferation. Since its inception in 2002, the Conference has addressed some of the key disarmament and non-proliferation challenges of our time, including the NPT and the nuclear non-proliferation regime, North Korea’s nuclear weapons program, the nuclear security summits, and conventional arms among many other issues. Through constructive exchange of views among participants from various sectors of the international community, including governments, policy institutes and the academia, the Conference has contributed not only to deepening our understanding of key global security issues, but also sharing insights and ideas on how to further strengthen the global disarmament and non-proliferation regime in the future.

(The theme of the Conference: ‘Non-proliferation regime in the 21st Century’)

This year’s Conference addresses the topic of “Non-proliferation regime in the 21st Century: Challenges and the Way Forward.” In the new global strategic environment of the 21st century, the international community faces new proliferation challenges that are of a different nature from those of the last century.

Over the last two decades, more States have pursued nuclear weapons as well as other weapons of mass destruction. We have seen Iran continue to enrich uranium, and Syria come close to developing a nuclear reactor that could have produced plutonium. Last February, North Korea conducted its third nuclear test, posing a serious threat to peace and security in the region and beyond. Most recently, Syria used chemical weapons to carry out indiscriminate attack against its own people, to the shock and indignation of the international community.

At the same time, proliferation threats also emanate from non-state actors, who are active on both ends of the supply chain of weapons of mass destruction. The world has witnessed how the A.Q. Khan network supplied nuclear weapons programs in countries like Libya, Iran and North Korea for many years. Equally alarming is the dangerous nexus between weapons of mass destruction and global terrorism, which has emerged as one of the gravest dangers to the global community in the 21st century.

The international community has taken significant steps to address these new challenges. UN Security Council resolution 1540, the main focus of this year’s Conference, was adopted unanimously in 2004 under Chapter VII of the UN Charter to prevent and counter proliferation threats from non-state actors. The UN Security Council also adopted a series of robust sanctions resolutions to confront North Korea’s and Iran’s nuclear program, including resolution 2094 adopted last March in response to North Korea’s third nuclear test. New partnerships like the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) were forged to interdict dangerous weapons and materials. To counter the increasing threat of nuclear terrorism, the United States and the Republic of Korea hosted the first and the second Nuclear Security Summits in 2010 and 2012, placing the issue of nuclear and radiological security high on the global security agenda.

The main objective of this year’s Jeju Conference is to assess how these efforts over the last decade have contributed to confronting the new proliferation challenges in the 21st century. Based on such assessment, we will be able to identify some of the key tasks that lie ahead of us, and to propose a robust and effective way forward in further strengthening the global non-proliferation regime.

(Introduction of each session's topic)

Approaching its 10th anniversary, a special focus will be given to the UN Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) at this year's conference. In sessions 1 and 2, we will look at how the resolution has contributed to the non-proliferation efforts of the 21st century, and discuss effective ways to universalize and further strengthen the resolution's implementation in the years ahead of us.

In 2011, the Security Council extended the mandate of the 1540 Committee for ten years. One of crucial questions for discussions in sessions 1 and 2 would be to identify areas where more work remains to be done, and to find ways to further strengthen universal implementation of the resolution.

After the two sessions on resolution 1540, we will move on to discuss other non-proliferation regimes. The UN Security Council sanctions resolutions on North Korea and Iran have played an important role in efforts to curb their nuclear programs, while efforts have also been ongoing to strengthen compliance with IAEA safeguards obligations. Further bolstering these efforts will be important in ensuring compliance with non-proliferation obligations in the years ahead.

Important collaborative efforts have also been made through voluntary association of states to address specific areas of proliferation. For example, the PSI has grown over the last ten years into an extensive network of more than a hundred states today. Partnerships such as the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism (GICNT) and the Global Partnership against Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction (GP) have also played an important role. In session 3, we will look back on these successful joint efforts, and discuss how to further develop these initiatives in the future.

One of the recent yet most remarkable developments in the global non-proliferation efforts is the Nuclear Security Summit (NSS) process. In March 2014, the Netherlands will be hosting the third Nuclear Security Summit in The Hague, where world leaders will gather to assess the progress made since the Washington Summit in 2010 and to discuss the future of the Summit process. I am happy to see in this room Mr. Piet de Klerk, the Sherpa for the host country of the Hague Nuclear Security Summit next year. In addition, the third and the last session of the Preparatory Committee for 2015 NPT Review Conference will be held in April 2014, where the issue of the Conference on the Middle East Zone Free of Weapons of Mass Destruction is expected to again emerge as a crucial factor in preparations for the 2015 Review Conference. In session 4, we will have the opportunity to share our views on the prospects of these two important non-proliferation events of 2014.

(Concluding remarks)

In concluding, I wish to once again express my thanks to all of you for taking part in this meaningful conference. I am convinced that the discussions that will take place today and tomorrow will provide all of us with a valuable opportunity to broaden and enrich our perspectives on the key non-proliferation issues covered by this year's theme.

This year, I am especially glad to find distinguished participants with diverse areas of expertise, fields of work and backgrounds, including the 1540 Committee, Counter-Terrorism Committee and the DPRK and Iran Sanctions Committees of the Security Council; the Nuclear Security Summits; the MTCR and other export control regimes; the NPT review process; and the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), among many others. I have no doubt that such diversity will contribute to making our discussions today and tomorrow constructive and useful. I look forward to your active participation and a lively debate in each of the ensuing sessions.

Thank you.

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