



BANGLADESH

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Statement by H.E. Dr. A.K. Abdul Momen, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the People's Republic of Bangladesh to the UN at the Preparatory Committee of the 2015 Review Conference of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).

Mr. President,

Let me begin by congratulating you on your election as the President of the Third Session of the Preparatory Committee of 2015 NPT Review Conference. We are confident that your dynamic leadership would guide this Session towards productive outcome. Allow me to extend to you the assurance of my delegation's fullest cooperation in discharging your responsibilities.

Bangladesh aligns itself with the statement made by Indonesia on behalf of the non-aligned movement. In addition, I would like to highlight certain core elements from our national perspective.

Mr. President,

In early 70's when the NPT was adopted, everyone cherished the hope of a world devoid of the scourge of nuclear weapons. Nearly four and half decades down the line, that goal- the cherished hope of mankind to see and live in a world free of nuclear weapons – has unfortunately not materialized. We must pause and reflect for a moment why our common aspiration and collective endeavor for so many years has not resulted in achieving a nuclear weapons-free world, the overriding goal of the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

Mr. President,

As we refresh our memory, we understand that the NPT bargain is embedded on three clearly-defined pillars of (a) nuclear disarmament; (b) nuclear non-proliferation and (c) peaceful uses of nuclear energy. Bangladesh takes pride in its unequivocal commitment to the full implementation of the NPT in all its aspects-a commitment that emanates from its constitutional obligation to a general and complete disarmament. We also remain fully committed to implementing the 64-Point 2010 NPT Review Conference Action Plan, in particular those actions relevant for non-nuclear weapon state parties, to attain the goal enshrined in the NPT.

Mr. President,

On nuclear disarmament, the first pillar of NPT, our position remains unambiguously clear. We believe that the existence of nuclear weapons, no matter who possess them, poses the greatest threat to humanity. Nuclear weapons are wrong weapons and for us, they don't secure us but only endanger our lives. We, therefore, consistently reaffirm the need for the total elimination of these weapons to provide the absolute guarantee against the use, either by design or by accident, or threat of use of such weapons; also against the danger of these weapons falling into the hands of terrorists.

It is indeed an irony that although the nuclear weapon state parties to the NPT claim to be in compliance with their disarmament obligations under Article VI of the Treaty, under current official plans, they all intend to rely on large, modernized nuclear forces for decades to come as a central component of their security postures. This is a fundamental obstacle to nuclear disarmament. We, therefore, call upon the Nuclear-Weapon States to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals in fulfillment of their relevant multilateral legal obligations and to immediately exclude nuclear weapons from their security postures and cease all plans to further modernize, upgrade, refurbish, or extend the lives of their nuclear weapons and related arsenals.

Unfortunately, bold, concrete steps are conspicuously missing for achieving a nuclear weapons free-world, the overriding goal of NPT. There has hardly been any discernible forward movement in the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva, which remained deadlocked for decades now. The Conference's record of achievement is overshadowed by inertia that has now lasted for more than a decade. That must change. We urge upon all members of the CD to start the long-overdue negotiations on a fissile material treaty as a priority. It should also start deliberations on a nuclear weapons convention, as provided for in the General Assembly Resolution 68/32 on the "follow-up to the 2013 high-level meeting of the General Assembly on nuclear disarmament" as well as negotiations for legally binding security assurances for non-nuclear-weapon States against nuclear threats, and the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

Mr. President,

We recognize that the NPT remains a cornerstone of global nuclear non-proliferation regime. Although a few states have gone nuclear despite the existence of NPT, generally, it has helped curb nuclear proliferation and avoid a world with many dozens of nuclear States as had been feared. While it is true that significant progress has been achieved regarding nuclear non-proliferation to limit the horizontal proliferation of nuclear weapons, no real nuclear disarmament has taken place as tens of thousands of nuclear weapons continue to threaten humanity. Billions of dollars are being spent to modernize them, despite pressing social needs and growing global expectations for progress in disarmament. Bangladesh, therefore, favors a balanced approach; nuclear nonproliferation pursued in tandem with nuclear disarmament. We remain committed to 2010 NPT Review Conference Action Plan, and continue to call for implementation of those consensus-based decisions, particularly the 24 practical non-proliferation actions contained therein, to achieve non-proliferation goals under the NPT.

Mr. President,

Negative security assurances- assurances that Nuclear Weapon States will not use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against Non-Nuclear Weapon States- are vital to strengthening the NPT. It discourages non-nuclear States to opt for nuclear weapons. It is a matter of concern that the nuclear weapon States are not only adding more precision capability to the existing stockpiles of nuclear weapons, but are also developing new types of weaponry. These are in contravention of the assurances provided by the nuclear weapon States at the time of concluding the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. We urge this Committee to undertake renewed and vigorous efforts to develop a legally binding framework for providing such assurances to Non-Nuclear Weapon States.

Mr. President,

Establishment of Nuclear Weapon Free Zones and accession to their protocols may be useful interim steps towards securing Negative Security Assurances as well as achieving global nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation objectives. We support establishment of Nuclear-Weapon

Free Zones (NWFZs) in all parts of the world. This would include the Middle-East, Southeast Asia and South Asia and parts where currently no such arrangements exist. We also consider the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, which Bangladesh has signed in 1996 and ratified in 2000 as the first country from South Asia, a critical instrument and an essential step to ensure nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament. We call all States that are yet to ratify the CTBT, especially the eight specific nuclear technology holder countries whose signature and ratification is holding back CTBT's entry into force to sign and ratify the CTBT urgently and unconditionally.

Mr. President,

Bangladesh is convinced that peaceful uses of nuclear technology with IAEA safeguards and verification regime in place would effectively contribute to our common endeavor to achieve sustainable development. In addition to electricity generation, nuclear technology may help tackle some old as well as contemporary development challenges that we confront, including hunger, disease, natural resource management, environmental pollution and climate change. Article IV of the NPT obliges States Parties to cooperate among themselves in the matter of exchange of equipment, materials and scientific and technological knowledge as well as information on peaceful uses of nuclear technology. It is disconcerting to note that undue restrictions on exports of material, equipment and technology for peaceful purposes to developing non-nuclear-weapon countries continue to persist through measures incompatible with the provisions of the Treaty. These barriers must be removed.

We wish to underscore the need for the IAEA, under its statutory obligations, to continue to pursue the goals of technical cooperation in peaceful applications of nuclear energy as one of the three pillars of its activities. We are disappointed that extraneous reasons are being employed to deny the rights of non-nuclear-weapon States to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and technology. There must be no attempt to use the IAEA technical cooperation program as a tool for political purposes. Bangladesh calls upon all concerned to engage in constructive dialogue in order to implement the provisions of Articles I, II and IV in an environment of trust and confidence.

Mr. President,

We believe that nuclear weapons only offer a false security. We also believe that the sustenance and proliferation of nuclear arsenals impedes the realization of the purposes, and is incompatible with the principles, of the Charter of the United Nations. We are convinced that peace, security and economic and social development are indivisible and thus the pursuit of armament, in particular nuclear arsenals, far from helping to strengthen international security, actually weakens it. The essence of NPT was that each contracting party would have a role and responsibility in ensuring the goal of global peace through abolition of nuclear weapons and promotion of peaceful uses of nuclear energy. In this Preparatory Committee, each Member State needs to uphold its responsibility to achieve this goal for the sake of securing the humanity from the perils of nuclear destruction.

I thank you Mr. President.