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Statement by the delegation of Nepal at the General Debate of the second session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

Geneva, 23 April 2018

Mr. Chairman,

At the outset, let me congratulate you on your election to the chair of the second session of the Preparatory Committee (PrepCom) for the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

We trust this Session will lead to an action-oriented review process under your constructive leadership.

Mr. Chairman,

The NPT constitutes the cornerstone of global nuclear non-proliferation regime as well as the essential foundation for the pursuit of nuclear disarmament. However, five decades down the road after the adoption of NPT, our dream to live in nuclear free world still remains unfulfilled.

As we move towards the 10th comprehensive review, we underscore that the process should take a holistic look into its three interlinked

and mutually reinforcing pillars: disarmament, non-proliferation and development of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, and develop a robust regime that ensures full safety and security in the uses of nuclear technology to benefit mankind.

The consensus document containing an action plan that resulted from the 2010 NPT Review Conference regenerated hope and positive spirit for global disarmament and non-proliferation. We must build further on these positive developments.

We would like to underscore the importance and urgency of renewed political will and flexibility to be displayed by all States Parties to achieve a successful conclusion of the 2020 review process. We should look at the level of progress achieved at the first PrepCom in 2017 and redouble our efforts towards this end.

It is heartening that a legally binding instrument in the form of a Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons could be adopted in July last year. It reaffirmed that any use of nuclear weapons would also be abhorrent to the principles of humanity and the dictates of public conscience.

Nepal believes that timely ratification of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons and its early coming into force would generate a momentum conducive towards total elimination of nuclear weapons. We also stand for an early conclusion of the Fissile Materials Cut-Off Treaty (FMCT).

Taking good instance of the signing of the landmark Treaty, there is a need to move forward with the same spirit and commitment during the upcoming review conference. We should be careful not to allow the failure of last review conference to cast a shadow upon our work.

We also believe that significant step towards fulfilling the long-standing commitment of the international community to eliminate the weapons of mass destruction begins with entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT).

Mr. Chairman,

As the host to the Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament for the Asia-Pacific, Nepal believes that the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free-zones could serve as building blocks towards complete disarmament at the global level.

Effective implementation of the 1995 Resolution on the Middle East would be a significant step towards promotion of peace and stability in the region and universal adherence to the NPT.

Nepal believes in and consistently advocates for general and complete disarmament of all weapons of mass destruction including chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear weapons in a time-bound manner.

Pending the total elimination of nuclear weapons, the provisions of the effective, universal, unconditional, non-discriminatory and irrevocable negative security assurances should be guaranteed by nuclear-weapon States to the non-nuclear-weapon States. Nepal strongly opposes the weaponization of outer space and reaffirms that

outer space should be used for the betterment of the global community.

Article IV of the NPT provides all States with the inalienable right to develop research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination.

Nepal believes that peaceful use of nuclear technology with strict adherence to the IAEA safeguards and verification regimes benefits the entire humanity. In this respect, sharing of knowledge and cooperation with the developing countries on nuclear technology for scientific, humanitarian and development purposes must be enhanced to ensure equitable benefit for all.

We note with grave concern the increasingly extensive investment by countries on modernization of nuclear forces and development of more dangerous and devastating nuclear warheads.

We are concerned that the risk of a nuclear weapon explosion is significantly increasing with increased proliferation, the lowering of the technical threshold for nuclear weapons capability, and the danger of terrorist groups gaining access to nuclear weapons and related materials. We strongly call for putting an immediate stop to this trend.

Mr. Chairman,

Maintenance of international peace and security cannot be assured through thoughtless allocation of resources to armaments or modernization of nuclear weapons. Rather, we can assure security and prosperity for all by diverting the human and economic resources,

including technological solution towards the fulfilment of sustainable development goals that our leaders agreed in 2015.

Nepal firmly upholds the conviction that in the interest of the very survival of humanity, nuclear weapons must never be used again, under any circumstances. As the preamble of the NPT clearly outlines, the proliferation of nuclear weapons seriously enhances the danger of a nuclear war. In such situation, both the nuclear ‘haves’ or ‘have-nots’ would be meted out the same fate. Nuclear weapons cannot serve any genuine security interests as these are mutually destructive. It goes without saying that stockpiles of nuclear weapons do not provide any sense of security, but create situations of fear, mistrust and hostility. Total compliance with NPT is critical to assuring collective security of humankind.

In this spirit of our principled stand, Nepal is pleased to jointly submit, at the current session, a working paper highlighting the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons.

I would like to reiterate our willingness to actively pursue the goals of peace and security, prosperity and common good with the realization of a world free of nuclear weapons.

I thank you.

