

OPENING STATEMENT

By

Angela Kane

High Representative for Disarmament Affairs



**12th UN-ROK Joint Conference
on Disarmament and Non-proliferation Issues**

Jeju Island, Republic of Korea
14 November 2013

Ladies and gentlemen, excellencies, distinguished participants and guests. It gives me great pleasure to welcome you to this 12th United Nations-Republic of Korea Joint Conference on Disarmament and Non-proliferation Issues. Allow me to take this opportunity to thank Deputy Minister for Multilateral and Global Affairs, Ambassador Dong-ik SHIN, and his colleagues at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Korea, for their professional cooperation and continuing generous support in organizing this conference.

I also wish to express my appreciation to the Government and people of the Republic of Korea for their longstanding support for multilateral approaches to achieving disarmament and non-proliferation goals. Finally, I thank Vice Governor Bang Kisung and the Jeju Special Self-Governing Province, and its people, for hosting this conference—your beautiful island and hospitality provides the ideal location for this Conference.

Since 2002, the “Jeju Process” has been providing an annual forum for dynamic and candid discussions on challenging disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation issues at both the regional and global levels. The goal is not just to describe such issues, but also to identify practical steps towards addressing them. These useful discussions also contribute to confidence-building, which is vital in this important region. As in the previous 11 years, we have gathered together this year a broad range of highly qualified and distinguished participants, including relevant practitioners from governments and international organizations, as well as knowledgeable experts from policy institutes and academia.

This year’s Conference is themed “Non-proliferation Regime in the 21st Century: Challenges and the Way Forward”, and will focus on a range of non-proliferation issues, with a special emphasis on UN Security Council Resolution 1540 as it approaches its tenth anniversary next year. As this group knows well, the Resolution obligates all states to refrain from providing any support to non-state actors attempting to develop, acquire, manufacture, possess, transport, transfer or use nuclear, chemical or biological weapons and their means of delivery. The Conference will address key issues associated with the implementation of the Resolution, examine the means for its strengthening and universalization, as well as discuss the vision for the next decade.

The extension of the 1540 Committee's mandate to April 2021 underlines the long-term commitment of the international community to the full implementation of the Resolution. There is little doubt that achieving its aims will continue to depend heavily upon the commitment and national efforts of the Member States themselves with the support of the 1540 Committee. In UNODA, we view our work with the 1540 Committee and the 1540 Group of Experts as an integral part of our activities. We support international and national efforts to implement resolution 1540 in three key areas:

- First – Facilitating national implementation activities;
- Second – Strengthening cooperation between international and regional organizations;
- and,
- Third – Building effective partnerships of key stakeholders -including civil society, private sector and academia.

I find it especially appropriate that this conference is being held in the Republic of Korea—given this country's record as an active supporter of UNSCR1540 and other non-proliferation activities. Your contributions serve as a model to others in this region and beyond for effective and creative domestic action. I have just come from an excellent conference in the capital—the Second Seoul Defense Dialogue—where issues of confidence-building and enhancing bilateral and multilateral relationships were discussed as tools to increase security in the region. Another contribution to the goals of Resolution 1540 was the organization of the 2012 Seoul Nuclear Security Summit, which focused on measures to enhance nuclear security worldwide. That event helped to raise the priority of nuclear security issues, inspired new initiatives, and promoted public awareness and support. And of course Republic of Korea is taking a leading role in the United Nations Security Council Committee established pursuant to Resolution 1540, through its chairmanship by Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Republic of Korea to the United Nations Mr. Oh Joon.

The Conference will also touch upon other global non-proliferation obligations and initiatives, including United Nations Security Council sanctions. We will hear discussions on strengthening IAEA safeguards and increasing adherence to the Additional Protocol, with an aim

of detecting undeclared nuclear activities and providing assurances of their absence. We will hear an update on organized efforts against the financing of proliferation activities particularly regarding national cooperation and targeted financial sanctions. We will discuss the prospects for the Nuclear Security Summit in 2014 and the challenges of reaching agreement on options for strengthening cooperation in this field. And we will also hear about the impact on the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) of a possible Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction.

While there is a heavy theme of non-proliferation in the subjects above, the title of this Conference also includes “disarmament”. And when it comes to nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, the world community has long ago agreed that the goal is the elimination of such weapons, not just their limitation. The obstacles we face in achieving this are surely worthy of further discussion here at Jeju, as are the actions needed to overcome them.

Finally, I would like to say a few words about UNODA’s regional centre in Asia-Pacific, a co-organizer of this conference. Since its relocation to Nepal in 2008, the UN Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament Centre in Asia and the Pacific has strengthened its capacity to undertake regional activities related to disarmament, taking into account the specific circumstances and practical needs of states in the region. It continues to advance its ability to assist with capacity building, engage in peace and disarmament education as well as promote regional dialogue and confidence building on disarmament, non-proliferation and security matters, including through events like this annual Conference.

On behalf of the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs, I would like to thank all countries and organizations, in particular those from Asia and the Pacific, for their financial and in-kind support and assistance to the Regional Centre. I urge them all to continue this support through funding as well as by engaging with the Centre as partners on practical initiatives.

With these words, I open the Conference and look forward to insightful presentations as well as frank and interactive discussions.