

Statement by H.E. Ambassador Ahmed Fathalla
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on behalf of the Group of Member States of the Non-Aligned Movement
Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
at the First Session of the Preparatory Committee
for the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the
Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
General Debate, Vienna, 30 April 2012

Mr. Chairman,

- 1.** On behalf of the Group of Member States of the Non-Aligned Movement Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, I would like to first congratulate you on your assumption as the Chairperson of this very important first session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty. I also congratulate other Bureau Members on their election.
- 2.** The Group repose its full confidence in your leadership, Mr. Chairman, to ably steward the work in this session in a meaningful and results-oriented manner and assures you, the Bureau, as well as all States Parties of its constructive and active engagement and co-operation.
- 3.** I have also the honour to thank H.E. Ambassador Libran Cabactulan, of the Philippines, the President of the 2010 Review Conference, for his opening remarks and express our heart-felt appreciation for his tireless efforts and leadership which enabled the successful conclusion of the 8th Review Conference of the Treaty.
- 4.** By working together diligently and displaying the necessary political will, there is no reason that the Preparatory Committee cannot lay down a clear path that ensures both organisational and substantive progress towards a successful Review Conference in 2015.
- 5.** We must all intensify our efforts to that end, and do our utmost to strengthen all three pillars of the Treaty in a balanced and non-discriminatory fashion which would not only safeguard the world from a potential devastation by nuclear weapons, but also would contribute to economic development and prosperity for our nations. Our collective efforts should also be directed at enhanced commitment towards achieving the universalisation of the Treaty without any further delay.
- 6.** The beginning of this review process of the Treaty comes with high expectations from peoples all over the world for us to move forward with strong determination to achieve tangible outcomes, in particular on the goal of the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

Mr. Chairman,

7. While the consensus outcome of the 2010 NPT Review Conference could not fully capture the Group of NAM States Parties contributions, it was nevertheless, a vital achievement to be built upon. The outcome testified that determined political will with co-operation can produce important results.

8. The realisation of a world free from nuclear weapons is the Group of NAM States Parties' highest priority. In this regard, the Group stresses that all disarmament undertakings made in the previous Review Conferences, including the unequivocal commitment made at 2000 NPT Review Conference, must be fulfilled in particular by the nuclear-weapon States. The Group underlines the particular importance of the implementation of the 13 practical steps to advance systematically and progressively towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

9. The Group recalls the commitment made by the NWS to accelerate concrete progress on the steps leading to nuclear disarmament, and urges them to respond to the urgent call contained in Action 5 of the "action plan on disarmament of nuclear weapons", and to report to the review process of the Treaty on the progress made in this regard.

10. The Group believes that the total elimination of nuclear weapons is the only absolute guarantee against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons and remains concerned at the threat to humanity posed by the continued existence of nuclear weapons and of their possible use or threat of use.

11. In this context, the Group also strongly calls for the prompt and full implementation of the 2010 Review Conference "action plan on nuclear disarmament".

12. The Group also emphasises that the indefinite extension of the Treaty does not imply the indefinite possession of nuclear arsenals, and that any such assumption is incompatible with the object and purpose of the Treaty, its integrity and sustainability, as well as with the broader objective of maintaining international peace and security.

13. In this connection, the Group, while noting the entry into force of the New START Treaty, expresses concern that measures such as nuclear weapon modernization undermines the minimal reductions agreed therein.

14. The Group also stresses that reductions in deployments and in operational status cannot substitute for irreversible cuts in, and the total elimination of, nuclear weapons and accordingly calls on the United States and the Russian Federation to apply the principles of transparency, irreversibility and verifiability to such cuts, and to further reduce their nuclear arsenals, both warheads and delivery systems.

15. The Group remains deeply concerned by the strategic defence doctrines of the nuclear-weapon States and NATO which justify the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons, and strongly calls for the complete exclusion of the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons from their military doctrines.

16. The Group firmly believes that, pending the total elimination of nuclear weapons, the nuclear-weapon States shall refrain, at any circumstances, from the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons against any non-nuclear-weapon State Party to the Treaty, as such acts would be in violation of the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the International Law, in particular, International Humanitarian Law.

17. The Group also expresses concern over the deployment of national and strategic missile defence systems which could trigger an arms race, the further development of advanced missile systems and an increase in the number of nuclear weapons.

Mr. Chairman,

18. The Group of Non-Aligned States Parties to the Treaty reaffirms the inalienable right of States Parties to develop research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination. It notes with concern that, in contradiction with the letter and spirit of the Treaty, undue restrictions on exports to developing States Parties of nuclear material, equipment and technology, for peaceful purposes persist.

19. In the view of the Group, proliferation concerns are best addressed through multilaterally negotiated, universal, comprehensive. Non-discriminatory agreements and non-proliferation control arrangements should be transparent and open to all States, and should not impose restrictions on developing countries' access to material, equipment and technology for peaceful purposes.

20. The Group expresses its full confidence in the impartiality and professionalism of the IAEA and strongly rejects any attempts to politicize the work of the IAEA, including its technical cooperation programme, in violation of its Statute, as well as any undue pressure or interference in the Agency's activities which could jeopardize its efficiency and credibility.

21. The Group stresses that the choices and decisions of each State Party in the field of peaceful uses of nuclear energy should be respected and that its policies or international co-operation agreements and arrangements for peaceful uses of nuclear energy and its fuel-cycle policies should not be jeopardized.

22. The Group stresses that multilateral approaches to the nuclear fuel cycle shall fully take into account all technical, legal, political and economic complexities surrounding these issues, and be conducted through wide, integral, comprehensive and transparent multilateral consultations and negotiations and any decision on proposals regarding multilateral approaches to the nuclear fuel cycle shall be made by consensus taking into account the interests of all States Parties, without prejudice to the inalienable right of each State Party, if it so decide, to develop a full national fuel cycle, according to its Article IV of the Treaty.

23. The Group once again reaffirms the inviolability of peaceful nuclear activities and that any attack or threat of attack against peaceful nuclear facilities - operational or under construction - poses a great danger to human beings and the environment, and constitutes a grave violation of international law, the United Nations Charter and regulations of the IAEA. The Group strongly calls upon all States to refrain from attack, or threat to attack nuclear facilities devoted to peaceful purposes.

24. The Group reaffirms that accepting safeguards by each State Party is for the exclusive purpose of verification of the fulfillment of its obligations assumed under the Treaty with a view to preventing diversion of nuclear energy from peaceful uses to nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices.

25. The Group also reaffirms that the required safeguards shall be implemented in a manner designed to comply with Article IV of the Treaty, and to avoid hampering the economic or technological development of the Parties or international cooperation in the field of peaceful nuclear activities, including the international exchange of nuclear material and equipment for the processing, use or production of nuclear material for peaceful purposes.

26. In this connection, and while stressing the significance of maintaining the principles of confidentiality regarding safeguards, and given the undesirable incidents of leakage of such information, the Group emphasizes that the confidentiality of such information shall be fully respected and that the regime for their protection needs to be highly strengthened.

27. The Group recognizes that the primary responsibility for nuclear safety and security rests with the individual States and reaffirms the central role of the IAEA in these areas. The Group attaches high importance to nuclear safety and stresses the need for continued reinforcement of nuclear safety standards at the international level to ensure that the highest and most robust levels of nuclear safety are in place, based on IAEA safety standards. The Group highlights the unique and technical nature of nuclear safety and nuclear security and their distinct implementation within the IAEA. Furthermore, the Group emphasizes that measures and initiatives aimed at strengthening nuclear safety and nuclear security must not be used as a pretext or leverage to violate, deny or restrict the inalienable right of States Parties to develop research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination.

Mr. Chairman,

28. The Group is of the firm belief that the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones which is an important contribution towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons, does not substitute legal obligation of the nuclear-weapon States for the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

29. In this regard, the Group strongly supports the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, as a priority, and calls for the full implementation of the 1995 Resolution on the Middle East, which is an integral and essential part of the package of decisions reached without a vote that enabled the indefinite extension of the Treaty in 1995. In the view of the Group, this resolution remains valid until its objectives are achieved.

30. The fact that all States of the Middle East region with the exception of Israel are States Parties to the Treaty has resulted in the continued exposure of Non-Nuclear Weapon States of the region to nuclear threats, to risks associated with the operation of unsafeguarded nuclear facilities and activities of unknown safety standards and, most importantly, the threat of a nuclear arms race of a catastrophic regional and international potential, including for the NPT regime in its entirety. This situation is unsustainable and places the issue of the implementation of the 1995 resolution as a prominent priority for this Review Conference which has to renew its unequivocal commitment to the full implementation of the 1995 resolution, to adopt effective practical measures to pursue its earliest implementation and to create follow-up mechanisms to strictly monitor progress on this extremely important priority.

31. The NAM States Parties recall that the 2000 NPT Review Conference reaffirmed the necessity of Israel's accession to the NPT, and the placement of all its nuclear facilities under the comprehensive IAEA safeguards. In this respect, the NAM States Parties requests the establishment of a subsidiary body to Main Committee II of the 2015 Review Conference to consider and recommend proposals on the implementation of the Resolution on the Middle East adopted by the 1995 Review and Extension Conference and the Final Document of the 2000 Review Conference, as well as the "Conclusions and recommendations for follow-on actions" of the 2010 Review Conference of the Treaty.

32. Welcoming the adoption by consensus of the detailed plan of action on the Middle East, particularly implementation of the 1995 resolution on the Middle East in the "Conclusions and Recommendations for Follow-on actions" of the 2010 NPT Review Conference, NAM States Parties to the Treaty strongly urge the UN Secretary-General and co-sponsors of the 1995 Resolution, in close consultation and coordination with all States of the region, to exert all efforts towards the successful convening of the Conference in 2012, to be attended by all States of the Middle East, on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction.

Mr. Chairman,

33. Building on the "Conclusions and recommendations for follow-on actions" of the 2010 Review Conference, the Group reaffirms the importance of achieving the universality of the Treaty and realizing concrete progress towards the conclusion of a universal and legally binding instrument on unconditional, non-discriminatory, and irrevocable negative security assurances to all non-nuclear-weapon States Parties to the Treaty, as well as a Nuclear Weapons Convention.

34. In this context, the Group is determined to continue its collective efforts in pursuing the realization of its aforementioned priorities in the 2015 review process of the Treaty.

35. The Group underscores the imperative for all Treaty States Parties to rise above their differences, and launch themselves in the Treaty review process with renewed zeal to build upon the outcome of the 2010 Review Conference and realise befitting progress for 2015 review process.

36. NAM States Parties to the NPT are presenting nine Working Papers, which present the detailed positions of the Group on the various related issues.

37. The Group will leave no stone unturned to that end. Let us all work in concert to help attain a prosperous, peaceful and secure world for present and future generations.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.