



STATEMENT by
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TO THE UNITED NATIONS

at the
GENERAL DEBATE OF THE
67th SESSION OF THE
UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY
FIRST COMMITTEE

8 October 2012, New York

Mr. Chairman,

Let me begin by joining the previous speakers in congratulating you and the other members of the Bureau on your election. We are confident that the First Committee will successfully complete its deliberations under your able leadership.

Mr. Chairman,

We live in a world where security has become indivisible. We all benefit from a secure environment and suffer from its absence. On the other hand, contrary to old thinking, we are at an age when one cannot argue that more arms would bring more security. There lies the virtue of disarmament.

We have common issues, common challenges; sometimes even common threats. We must collectively and energetically strive to address them. Indifference leads to lethargy which in turn creates ossified problems that are ever harder to overcome. To that end, the international community needs to establish and maintain effective and dynamic cooperation. Our ability to respond efficiently to the most pressing challenges to international peace and security depends mostly on how we make best use of multilateral fora. The United Nations assumes a central role in our common efforts to ensure a safer world for future generations.

Although we are witnessing some promising developments recently, it is also a truism that there is unfortunately an on-going malaise in the overall sphere of arms control and disarmament. The vision of "global-zero" is nowhere near. There is a stalemate, if not a deadlock, in the Conference on Disarmament for over a decade and a half. We have outstanding challenges, mainly of universalization issues in other Conventions. Our collective assessments of "progress" and "success" are unfortunately met at bars with lower levels than we would have expected.

Having shared with you these preliminary thoughts, allow me to briefly say a few words on the Turkish perspective vis-à-vis different issues in our agenda.

Mr. Chairman,

Located in a region of particular concern with respect to proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, Turkey vigilantly monitors the developments in this field and takes part in collective efforts aimed at producing measures to reverse this alarming trend.

Turkey's security policy excludes the production and use of all kinds of Weapons of Mass Destruction. We advocate global, overall disarmament and support all efforts in the field of sustaining international security through multilateral arms control, non-proliferation and disarmament. Turkey is a party to all international non-proliferation instruments and export control regimes and wishes to see the universalisation, effective implementation and further strengthening of them.

Mr. Chairman,

There has been some progress in the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation agenda in recent years. There has been some progress in the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation agenda in recent years: The UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's five-point proposal for achieving a nuclear-weapon free world in 2008; the successful NPT 2010 Review Conference, where a comprehensive Final Document was adopted; the entry into force of the New Start Treaty in 2011; and the first session of the 2012 Preparatory Committee of the NPT 2015 Review Conference and

the fruitful 2010 Washington and 2012 Seoul Nuclear Security Summits are some of these developments.

However, notwithstanding this progress, the vision of a world free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction is still a long way off. Turkey wholeheartedly shares this vision and supports working towards this goal within the framework established by the Non-Proliferation Treaty. This is the main international instrument in the nuclear sphere and a well-balanced framework consisting of three complementary and mutually-reinforcing pillars: Nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and peaceful uses of nuclear energy. Turkey believes that an equal and balanced treatment of these three pillars will reinforce the integrity and credibility of the NPT regime. However, some countries still unfortunately remain outside this regime. We support its universalization, as well as its effective implementation in good faith and consistency.

Turkey, together with nine like-minded countries, has joined the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative (NPDI) that aims to work towards implementation of the consensus outcomes of the 2010 Review Conference. Turkey also participates in the work of the Nuclear Discussion Group, an informal group established under the leadership of Kazakhstan that provides a forum for frank and open discussion on how to achieve progress towards nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

Mr. Chairman,

We acknowledge the international safeguards system of the IAEA as the fundamental tool in global non-proliferation efforts. In this context, Turkey recognizes the need for further strengthening and universalization of the Agency's verification authority. We regard the comprehensive safeguards and the Additional Protocol of the IAEA as an indispensable verification standard. We call on all States that have not yet done so to sign, ratify and implement the Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement, as well as the IAEA Additional Protocol as soon as possible. We believe that the strengthening of the safeguards system of the IAEA and promoting the Agency's role in advancing safe, secure and peaceful use of nuclear energy are also essential for the sustainability of the NPT regime in the long run. It is our firm belief that States in full compliance with their safeguards obligations should have unhindered access to civilian nuclear technology, as provided for in the NPT. In our view, this would only contribute to the further strengthening and universalization of the NPT regime. Having said that, we must also ensure that all requisite steps be taken so that there will be no diversion of nuclear programs from peaceful to military uses.

Turkey recognizes that the cessation of all nuclear weapon test explosions constitutes an indispensable measure of both nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. In this regard, we stress the crucial role of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty in achieving the objectives pertaining to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. Turkey has honored its political, financial and technical commitments stemming from the outset and will continue to do so in the future. We will also continue our efforts to contribute to the early entry into force of the Treaty. Turkey also remains firmly committed to supporting the CTBTO. Turkey hosted in November 2011, a joint regional conference with the CTBTO to raise broader awareness and deeper understanding of the role of the CTBT as a building block in the security architecture for a nuclear weapons free world.

In the last twelve months, we have seen an enhanced political momentum behind the CTBT, where promoting entry into force of the Treaty remains a priority. We again urgently call on the remaining Annex 2 States to ratify this Treaty without delay and bring about its entry into force.

Mr. Chairman,

It is our firm belief that nuclear weapons or any other weapons of mass destruction cannot provide additional security for any country in this era. On the contrary, the possession of and the pursuit for acquisition of such weapons undermines regional security and stability. Turkey therefore attaches great significance to and endorses all meaningful steps for the establishment of effectively verifiable zones free of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery, particularly in the Middle East. We therefore look forward to the convening of a Conference in 2012 on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction, pursuant to the decision taken at the NPT 2010 Review Conference.

We view this conference as an initial step in a long process, the success of which will depend on the genuine political engagement and participation of all states in the region. We welcome and support the Facilitator's efforts to successfully convene this Conference.

Mr. Chairman,

The work of Conference on Disarmament (CD), needs to be revitalized, in order for this body to reassume its leading role. While there are many different views as to how the CD should be revitalized, our preference is for this process to take place within the CD itself. Other efforts, such as the General Assembly meetings that took place in September 2010 and July 2011, could be useful to build momentum and convey the strong expectation of the international community for the resumption of the substantive work of the Conference.

There is no question that the parameters for the negotiation of the Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty (FMCT) are at the core of the current deadlock in the CD. On the issue of the FMCT, we face another test. Unfortunately, the CD's 2012 session again concluded without agreement on the commencement of negotiations. In considering its next steps, Turkey will support a resolution that takes stock of the current situation, supports ongoing efforts to break the impasse in the CD, and proposes an acceptable ways forward.

Progress on the FMCT issue may also allow the CD to make parallel advances in other fields, including nuclear weapon free zones, negative security assurances and prevention of arms race in outer space.

Mr. Chairman,

The Chemical Weapons Convention and the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention are also important components of the global system against proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Turkey does not possess any such weapons and reiterates its call for a wider adherence to and an effective implementation of these Conventions. We actively support the efforts to promote the implementation of these instruments in the Mediterranean, the Middle East and the adjacent regions.

Mr. Chairman,

The threat of proliferation is not confined to weapons of mass destruction. Proliferation of conventional weapons is also a cause of concern for Turkey. Indeed, the excessive accumulation and uncontrolled spread of small arms and light weapons pose a significant threat to peace and security, as well as to the social and economic development of many countries. There is also a very well-documented relationship between the illicit trade in arms and terrorism. As a country suffering from terrorism, Turkey will continue to actively contribute to all efforts within the UN and other fora to foster international cooperation in the fight against terrorism, including through

the establishment of effective norms and rules aimed at eradicating illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects. In this regard, Turkey remains committed to the effective implementation and further strengthening of the UN Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons. In this context we are pleased that the 2012 Review Conference yielded results.

Turkey also continues to support the conclusion of an Arms Trade Treaty, which should halt unregulated and uncontrolled trade of conventional arms worldwide and establish strong and robust legally binding common standards for their international trade. Even though the 2012 Conference was unfortunately not able to conclude successfully, we should not seize our efforts to achieve our objective. We therefore support the convening of a Conference in early 2013, based on the draft text submitted by the President on 26 July 2012.

Another worrying issue in the field of conventional weapons is the scourge of Anti-Personnel Land Mines. As a party to the Ottawa Convention since 2004, Turkey fully supports the efforts for the universalization and effective implementation of the Ottawa Convention and the vision of a world, free from anti-personnel mines. Turkey has also been involved in the Oslo process on Cluster Munitions and actively participates in the ongoing work in the Governmental Experts Group on Cluster Munitions meetings within the context of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons. We share the humanitarian concern behind the international efforts to limit the use of cluster munitions.

Mr. Chairman,

We hope that the deliberations of the First Committee will contribute to revitalizing the UN disarmament machinery and help us to eliminate the obstacles standing in the way of a safer and more secure world. I wish to conclude by assuring you of our delegation's full support and cooperation in bringing this session to a successful conclusion.

Thank you.