



PHILIPPINES

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PHILIPPINE STATEMENT

by

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to the United Nations

Thematic Debate on Nuclear Weapons

First Committee

68th Session of the General Assembly

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Mr. Chairman,

The Philippines aligns itself with the statement delivered by Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

The Philippines is deeply concerned over the lack of progress in the field of nuclear disarmament. The road to a nuclear weapon-free world remains long and perilous. It is imperative that we move forward by building on the momentum we have achieved in the past couple of years and continue creating new impetus.

The Philippine Constitution states our policy of freedom from nuclear weapons in our territory. It is a policy that we also actively advocate for in other territories given the presence of millions of Filipinos in areas where there are nuclear weapons.

In the United Nations, the Philippines continues to strongly support efforts to keep the twin issues of nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation on the agenda. We have been supporting an annual resolution on the follow-up to the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice on the Legality of the Threat or Use of Nuclear Weapons.

In the past, we also lent a hand to efforts aimed at criminalizing the possession of nuclear weapons.

In the negotiations in the Preparatory Commission for the International Criminal Court (ICC), the Philippines vigorously pushed for the inclusion of nuclear weapons in the list of prohibited weapons.

But just two years before the 2015 Review Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons Treaty (NPT), we still see little progress in the implementation of our obligations under the "Conclusions and recommendations for follow-on action" of the Outcome Document of the 2010 NPT Review Conference. We have to seriously take stock of what we have achieved so far to ensure the credibility and integrity of the NPT regime.

In this regard, my delegation welcomes the Egyptian initiative announced by the Foreign Minister of Egypt at the general debate of the 68th UN General Assembly consisting of three steps to ensure the credibility of the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime.

For the Nuclear Weapons States, it is imperative that we see progress in Actions 3, 5 and 21. The Philippines calls on the NWS to set specific timelines for the destruction of their nuclear weapons and delivery systems in a verifiable and irreversible manner. We look forward to seeing clear progress next year on how the NWS are meeting their obligations through a publicly accessible repository to be set up by the Secretary-General.

The 2010 NPT Review Conference also tackled head on the difficult and complex issue of the Middle East and weapons of mass destruction. The Philippines is hopeful that a conference on the establishment of "a Middle East

zone free of nuclear-weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction", to be held under the auspices of the United Nations Secretary-General, and to be attended by all states of the Middle East, be convened this year.

The creation of the zone is long overdue and the Conference will be an important first step to start the process towards the establishment of a nuclear weapon-free zone Middle East.

The Philippines welcomes the continuing "P5 Process" aimed at promoting dialogue and mutual confidence among the five nuclear weapon states on nuclear issues. It is our hope that this process would produce a substantive report that the P5 could present to the 2015 NPT Review Conference.

As a member of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, the Philippines also urges the five NWS to accede to the protocol of the Southeast Asian Nuclear Weapons Free Zone Treaty (SEANWFZ) without reservations. We believe that further consultations will pave the way for the resolution of the outstanding issues expressed by the NWS.

The Philippines expresses concern over the danger posed by tactical nuclear weapons which, given their small size, could fall into the hands of non-state actors. Future discussions for the 2015 NPT Review Conference must therefore include the issue of tactical nuclear weapons.

Mr. Chairman,

The entry into force and universality of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) remain a priority. We again laud Guinea-Bissau and Iraq for their recent ratification of the CTBT and the Philippines urges the remaining eight Annex 2 States to ratify the Treaty without delay.

The Philippines has consistently called for discussions on the enlargement of the Conference on Disarmament (CD) if it is to continue negotiating on behalf of the global community. The Philippines calls for the appointment of a Special Rapporteur to Review the Issue of Membership in order to bring fresh impetus to the work of the CD.

The Philippines welcomes the report of Ambassador Manuel Dengo on the outcome of the Open-Ended Working Group charged with "taking forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations for the achievement and maintenance of a world without nuclear weapons." We will support efforts to continue the OEWG process and to continue building up the much-needed momentum.

We also look forward to the establishment of a Group of Governmental Experts to discuss a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices.

Mr. Chairman,

Discussions on nuclear weapons must not just focus on traditional national security concepts but on the effects of these weapons on humanity. The humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons must guide our deliberations and motivate our efforts to outlaw and eliminate these weapons. In this connection, the Philippines associates itself with the joint statement on the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons delivered by New Zealand.

The catastrophic humanitarian impact of any use of nuclear weapons underlines the urgent need for a ban on nuclear weapons. We look forward to the follow-up Conference in Mexico in February 2014 and hopes that this meeting will provide an opportunity to discuss significant steps towards banning and eliminating nuclear weapons.

The Philippines also supports the NAM-sponsored resolution on the "Follow-up to the 2013 High-level meeting of the General Assembly on Nuclear Disarmament" that lays down a number of steps that we could collectively undertake in the coming years. These include the immediate start of negotiations for a nuclear weapons convention (NWC) that is universal, inclusive and comprehensive.

In closing, the Philippines is of the firm belief that the path to achieving our goal of a nuclear weapon-free world is through a Nuclear Weapons Convention that declares nuclear weapons, their use, and their possession as illegal. The Philippines is ready to support efforts towards the creation of a Convention that establishes a definitive timeframe for the elimination of nuclear weapons.

Thank you.