

**CANADA**  
**STATEMENT ON NUCLEAR WEAPONS**  
**FIRST COMMITTEE OF THE 72<sup>nd</sup> SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL**  
**ASSEMBLY**

Mr. Chair,

The global nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament regime is facing serious challenges. One need only look to the growing threat posed by North Korea's nuclear and ballistic missile programs, in repeated and flagrant violation of global norms and successive UN Security Council resolutions. Heightened tension between states possessing nuclear weapons, and a deepening polarization within the international community, provide cause for deep concern.

We must also consider the impact of the *Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons*, or ban treaty. To speak plainly, the ban treaty has contributed to a further divide in the international community. If these divisions cannot be managed, they could place the current review cycle of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty at risk. To make progress towards a world free of nuclear weapons, united action is needed.

Although Canada has serious reservations about the ban treaty, we share the sentiment behind it. Progress on nuclear disarmament has been too slow, and the Nuclear Weapon States need to demonstrate renewed leadership. Likewise, states not signatory to the NPT need to focus on reducing, then eliminating, their reliance on nuclear weapons.

The continuing reticence of some to ratify the *Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty* is another area where more leadership is required.

The gravity of these issues warrants more pragmatic and inclusive action. This is why Canada is pleased to be chairing the High-level FMCT Expert Preparatory Group that is developing treaty elements for eventual negotiation. The value of this work, and informal consultations with the broader UN General Assembly, cannot be overstated. We are confident this work will reaffirm the critical value of an FMCT for strengthening the global non-proliferation and disarmament framework. Permit me to remind delegations that Ambassador Heidi Hulan will brief this Committee on the Preparatory Group's progress on Friday, October 13<sup>th</sup> at 3pm.

Via a voluntary contribution of \$175,000 in support of the *International Partnership for Nuclear Disarmament Verification*, Canada also supports the development of global capacity and new techniques necessary for nuclear disarmament verification and which are currently lacking globally.

While we pursue these efforts, we cannot ignore the immediate threat of North Korea. Nor can we lose sight of the pressing need to tighten global sanctions against it, counter its proliferation networks, and persuade it to pursue constructive political dialogue.

The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) subjects Iran to an extensive international verification regime, and as long as it is fully implemented, will help to ensure that Iran's nuclear

program is exclusively peaceful in nature. By demonstrating the value of diplomacy in furthering nuclear non-proliferation objectives, the *JCPOA* also offers an example that provides some hope and possible lessons for responding to North Korea.

Finally, Canada remains concerned about the evolving threat of nuclear terrorism, and strongly supports enhancing the security of nuclear and radioactive materials and facilities globally. Canada committed over \$30M last year to support projects to secure nuclear and radiological materials, prevent their illicit trafficking, and reinforce relevant regulatory and legal frameworks. We thus welcome the 10th anniversary of the entry into force of the *International Convention for the Suppression of Nuclear Terrorism*.

In closing, Mr. Chair, Canada believes that further progress on nuclear disarmament *is* possible. Despite the array of threats and challenges we face today, we are not deterred. Canada is devoting significant resources to credible initiatives that are inclusive and help build the trust and confidence required. Rather than focusing on divisions, let us work together toward our common objective of greater security for all in a world without nuclear weapons.