

Thailand's Statement
at the High-Level Plenary Meeting of the Assembly to commemorate and promote
the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons
26 September 2016 at 10.00 hrs.,
Trusteeship Council Chamber

Mr. President,
Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and gentlemen,

On behalf of the Thai delegation, I wish to join the others in commending the initiative to organise this very important meeting to commemorate the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons. We are pleased to be here, once again, to join our friends who share the same goal of a world free of nuclear weapons. Each year, we hope to take a step closer to that shared goal, so we take this moment to reflect what has happened in the year that passed.

Mr. President,

Last year, we were here feeling disappointed, partly due to the outcome, or the lack thereof, of the 2015 NPT Review Conference. This year, we have a very different feeling -- more invigorated and hopeful, particularly due to the recent conclusion of the Open Ended Working Group on taking forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations in August 2016 in Geneva. The adopted report of the Working Group, open to all Member States, ***“recommended with widespread support for the General Assembly to convene a conference in 2017, open to all States, with the participation and contribution of international organizations and civil society, to negotiate a legally-binding instrument prohibiting nuclear weapons, leading towards their total elimination”***. As many delegations before me have already echoed this sense of hope, I do not need to elaborate further. The message is clear.

Regrettably, this historic achievement in advancing nuclear disarmament was not celebrated by all. We need to work harder with the international community and change public opinion in support of the elimination of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction. The civil society and the parliamentarians have key roles to play in reshaping public opinion and perception for the common good of mankind. The meeting today is a forum to achieve this.

/ Mr. President,...

Mr. President,

We need to see the world from new and different perspectives. The Humanitarian Pledge, supported by 127 countries, offers a new angle which better reflects the reality of the world today. Then, it is clear that collective security of all the peoples can only be ensured *without* nuclear weapons -- the only weapon of mass destruction still not prohibited despite the first UN resolution adopted in 1946 which established a commission to, among other mandates, “*make specific proposals for the elimination from national armaments of atomic weapons and of all other major weapons adaptable to mass destruction*”. That is why we are here today, 70 years later, still talking about the same thing.

With recent positive development in nuclear disarmament, we have become more encouraged and hopeful. Thailand is heartened that our new generations are more aware of the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons Initiative, as evident from the debating competition of university students, held by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand in commemoration of the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons. If youth around the world see things in this light, I am certain that soon, the world without nuclear weapons will be realized, but it is only the matter of time. For Thailand, the sooner the better.

Mr. President,

As we are celebrating the first anniversary of the Sustainable Development Goals, it is fitting to say that **our collective contributions and commitments to disarmament and non-proliferation of WMD could substantively complement to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, in particular Goal 16 on Peace, Justice, and Strong Institution**. Valuable and limited resources should all be directed at attaining these Goals. No amount of fund should ever be diverted to weapons programmes. Indeed, peace and development are mutually reinforcing, and are cultivating ground for human and collective security of all. Then, there will be no need for any weapon.

The road ahead will be difficult, but working together, working harder, Thailand believes that we can pave the way for a world free of nuclear weapons in the foreseeable future.

Thank you, Mr. President.
