

First Committee of the 77th Session of the UN General Assembly

Cluster 1 (Nuclear Weapons)

Mr. Chair,

We are currently facing a complicated security environment and diverse challenges. From the Russian Federation's nuclear threat during its war of aggression on Ukraine to the DPRK's continued provocation with its nuclear and missiles programs, and the stalemate of the negotiations on the resumption of the JCPOA, the prospect is bleak. The P5 Leaders' Joint Statement in January has faded amid the subsequent war.

Amid this backdrop the failure to adopt the consensus report at the long-awaited 10th NPT Review Conference due to the objection from one country came as a huge disappointment. However, the NPT remains the utmost important cornerstone of the global non-proliferation regime. It is our shared obligation to work for the credibility and relevance of the regime in the run up to the next review cycle.

It is noteworthy that the draft final document reflected the broad support for key elements on the three pillars. The draft also recognized the importance of diverse voices and commitment to empower and enable youth participation. We also note that 79 State Parties together in the joint statement expressed deep concern over the DPRK's continued violations of

relevant UN Security Council resolutions through the sustained development of its nuclear and missile programs. Moreover, in one voice, 191 NPT Member States condemned six nuclear tests by the DPRK and called on it to take concrete measures to abandon all its nuclear weapons and existing nuclear programs in a complete, verifiable, and irreversible manner in the draft final document of the NPT RevCon.

As a strong supporter of the NPT regime and as a state in full compliance with the NPT, the Republic of Korea will further strengthen its commitment to the NPT to promote all three pillars of the Treaty during this review cycle, preparing for the next RevCon in 2026.

Mr. Chair,

It is deplorable that the DPRK continues to launch various types of ballistic missiles while threatening the use of tactical nuclear weapons. On top of its nuclear blackmail and missile provocations, it is now assessed to be ready for yet another nuclear test, which would be its seventh. Should the international community fail to rein in Pyongyang's nuclear ambition, the crack will slowly but surely widen, potentially drawing others into the nuclear pit.

The Republic of Korea will continue to work to achieve sustainable peace on the Korean Peninsula through the complete denuclearization of the DPRK under President Yoon Suk Yeol's "Audacious Initiative." It is a

testament to our sincere willingness to engage in serious and sustained dialogue with the DPRK. We reiterate to urge Pyongyang to cease all destabilizing actions violating multiple UN Security Council resolutions, positively respond and immediately return to dialogue.

Mr. Chair,

The tall order to realize a world without nuclear weapons requires effective multilateralism. It requires pragmatic and realistic approaches.

First, the P5, in particular and among others, should assume their due responsibilities and translate the 2022 P5 Leaders' Joint Statement into concrete actions. We join others in calling upon the P5 to engage in meaningful bilateral and multilateral dialogues to enable substantive nuclear arms and risk reductions.

Second, many long-standing issues including the commencement of the FMCT negotiations and the entry into force of the CTBT requires our full attention. We therefore support resolutions tabled in this regard and call on all States to contribute to these efforts. We also reaffirm our support for ongoing efforts towards establishing effectively verifiable nuclear-weapon-free-zones around the world.

Third, we call on the international community to align with bridge-building initiatives to close the perception gap and mistrust between States. We take

note of the potential contributions to nuclear disarmament by recent confidence-building approaches, including the Creating an Environment for Nuclear Disarmament (CEND) in which the Republic of Korea chairs one of its subgroups, the International Partnership for Nuclear Disarmament (IPNDV) and the Stockholm Initiative.

Finally, the Republic of Korea recognizes that negative security assurances (NSAs) can contribute substantially to nuclear non-proliferation in that such assurances could reduce non-nuclear weapon states' incentives for acquiring the weapons. However, we uphold the principle that these assurances should be applied only to those who faithfully comply with the NPT as a non-nuclear weapon state.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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