



PHILIPPINES

STATEMENT

Delivered by

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Permanent Representative
Permanent Mission of the Republic of the
Philippines to the United Nations in New York

General Debate of the First Committee
UN General Assembly Hall, United Nations Headquarters,
New York 3 October 2022, 3:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.

Mr. Chair,

The Philippines congratulates you on your assumption as Chair of the First Committee and assures you and the Bureau of our support. We support the statement of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and Thailand on behalf of ASEAN.

Mr. Chair,

Even as we struggle to recover from a global pandemic, widening geopolitical polarities and intensifying strategic competitions pose profound challenges to our collective security.

On Nuclear Disarmament and Other WMD

We remain beset by dangerous nuclear rhetoric and postures and continued modernization and expansion of nuclear arsenals. These set us back in our shared aspiration of a world rid of nuclear weapons. As Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. said in his statement at the UNGA General Debate, "we must reject the notion of deterrence and remain committed to decreasing the global stockpile of nuclear weapons."

No aspiration or ambition can justify the use of weapons, which destroy indiscriminately and completely. These weapons of death put us all at mortal risk, especially if they fall in the hands of terrorists. Only their complete elimination will protect us from the catastrophic impact of their use.

We take pride in being the 53rd Member State to ratify the TPNW, which outlaws nuclear weapons founded on irrefutable humanitarian principles, establishes environmental remediation as a global norm, and represents an advancement of Article VI of the NPT.

The NPT remains the cornerstone of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime. It is fundamental to a rules-based international order that guards the security of nations and the conditions for our peoples to thrive in peace. We regret that we concluded the 10th NPT Review Conference last month without a consensus outcome.

We call upon the eight remaining Annex II States to ratify the CTBT without further delay and usher its entry into force.

We remain committed to the full and effective implementation of

the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC).

We continue to support the work of the OPCW, and we look forward engaging actively to help bring about a successful outcome of the 9th BWC Review Conference.

On Conventional Weapons

The Philippines supports the implementation of comprehensive norms and regulations covering conventional weapons. We are proud to have ratified the Arms Trade Treaty and CCW Protocol V this year, which makes us one of the few countries that are States Parties to all humanitarian disarmament conventions.

As the Chair of the BMSB, the Philippines' leadership was characterized as inclusive and transparent. These attributes were pivotal and contributory to the progress and success in achieving consensus on the outcome of the Eighth Biennial Meeting of State on the implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. We welcome the decision to establish the SALW Fellowship Programme in the next budget cycle, the consideration to establish an open-ended technical expert group prior to the 4th Review Conference, the responsible disposal, preferably through destruction, of SALW surplus, and the preservation of mainstreaming of gender perspective in the BMSB outcome document.

The Philippines strongly supports the work in Geneva to operationalize

the aims of the Convention on Conventional Weapons, the Anti-Personnel Landmines Convention and the Cluster Munitions Convention. Our engagement is guided by our twin advocacies of victim centrality and enhanced independent national capacities of affected countries. We also continue to call for collaborative action to counter the threat posed by improvised explosive devices, particularly by armed non-state actors.

We must work to render our global governance regime future-proof amidst rapid advances in technologies. At the start of UNGA77, our President called for legal rules to prevent the weaponization of artificial intelligence. To this end, the Philippines, together with a group of like-minded states, has submitted a draft Protocol VI of the CCW to prohibit and regulate autonomous weapon systems.

On Disarmament Aspects of Outer Space

We reaffirm our aspiration of a legally binding instrument that will prevent an arms race in outer space. We support all efforts to enhance outer space security. As President Marcos said, it is important for the international community to clarify the norms of responsible behavior in outer space.

In this regard, we welcome the establishment of the Open-Ended Working Group (OEWG) pursuant to General Assembly Resolution 76/231. We see this process as an important step towards building robust structures to support and promote outer space security. We believe that the principle of "due regard" is a foundational standard with which to measure responsible behavior.

Other Disarmament Measures and International Security

The multilateral disarmament, non-proliferation, and arms control regime is an important component of the rules-based international order that has underpinned global peace, security, and stability since the founding of the United Nations. Its integrity and credibility rests on structures developed over time through expert-driven processes.

As a country that implements a Strategic Trade Management framework, we are of the view that export control regimes do not place undue restrictions on international cooperation on peaceful uses and instead concretely uphold our non-proliferation obligations.

Technology pervades almost every facet of our human lives, and there are emerging and evolving non-traditional security threats powered by technology. Thus, it is timely and relevant that we discuss the rules, norms and responsible behavior of States in the security of and in the use of ICT. We recognize the strides achieved by the OEWG created by Resolution 75/240 and the consensually agreed Annual Progress Report of the OEWG.

Disarmament Machinery

The UN Disarmament Commission (UNDC) substantive session in the past three years has been unduly subjected to organizational, procedural and political issues. We appreciate that despite the difficult geopolitical environment, the UNDC successfully resumed its work as a subsidiary body of the General Assembly this year. We look forward

to the final year of the work cycle of the UNDC in 2023.

In closing, Mr. Chair,

We view recent developments in the Asia Pacific within the context of the primacy of commitments in the Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapon Free Zone (SEANWFZ) and the NPT. We welcome the reaffirmation of ASEAN Member States to continuously engage nuclear-weapon states and intensify ongoing efforts of all parties to resolve all outstanding issues in accordance with the objectives and principles of the SEANWFZ Treaty and the nuclear-weapon states' statements of readiness to engage for that purpose.

Finally,

We reaffirm the wisdom of the founders of our United Nations. This means transcending our differences and committing to ending war, upholding justice, respecting human rights, and maintaining international peace and security.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.