

2022 NPT Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

Main Committee I (Nuclear Disarmament)

New York

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Mr. Chair,

At the outset, I would like to extend my warmest congratulations to you on your assumption of the chairmanship of the Main Committee I. My delegation stands ready to assist you in bringing about a successful conclusion of this Review Conference and carrying out our valuable collective work.

If we reflect on the last few years, we can certainly notice a sense of pessimism sweeping across disarmament and non-proliferation arena albeit modest progress. To overcome the unprecedented challenges before us, my delegation firmly believes that the three pillars of the NPT should be sought in a mutually reinforcing and complementary manner. Notwithstanding, unequivocal undertaking by nuclear weapons states to accomplish disarmament commitments should pave the way forward.

Mr. Chair,

The threat of the use of nuclear weapons has become an unprecedented concern to the international community. We have witnessed Russia's precarious and irresponsible nuclear rhetoric as well as heightened nuclear alert level during its aggression on Ukraine, which has reduced the chances of genuine dialogues among nuclear weapon states (NWS) and gradually decreased the level of confidence between NWS and non-nuclear weapon states (NNWS). Such reckless behavior should stop. This security environment underscores that sincere efforts by the NWS are required to reduce nuclear risks and achieve actual progress in nuclear disarmament. The P5, in particular and

among others, should assume special responsibilities under Article 6 of the Treaty.

In the same vein, we join others in expressing our grave concern on nuclear build up taking place in stark deviation from the spirit and purpose of the NPT. We strongly urge all nuclear powers to faithfully carry on nuclear arms reduction and maintain transparency in their nuclear stockpiles to say the least.

Having said that, we strongly urge the NWS to translate the stated willingness in the P5 Leaders' Statement on January 2 into concrete and pragmatic actions. We also urge all P5 to engage in meaningful bilateral and multilateral endeavors to reinforce stability and mutual understanding. In addition, the leading role of the NWS is of particular importance in implementing the commitments they previously agreed on, including the "13 Practical Steps" of the 2000 Review Conference and the "64-item Action Plan" of the 2010 Review Conference.

At the same time, the Republic of Korea will continue to actively take part in bridging efforts along with both the NWS and the NNWS to advance our disarmament goal. In this sense, we take note of the potential contributions to nuclear disarmament by recent confidence-building approaches, including the Creating an Environment for Nuclear Disarmament (CEND), the International Partnership for Nuclear Disarmament Verification (IPNDV), and the Stockholm Initiative. We call on others to align with these initiatives as well.

Mr. Chair,

In our common effort to finally realize a world without nuclear weapons, it is imperative to ensure the early entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear Ban Treaty (CTBT).

We call upon those states that have not yet ratified it, in particular the remaining eight Annex II states, to do so without further delay. We would also like to stress the significance of maintaining moratorium on nuclear testing until the entry into force of the Treaty. In the same context, the negotiations on the Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty (FMCT) should take off at the earliest possible date. After more than 20 years of preparation for the negotiations on the treaty, all the groundwork is in place and the political will is there. My delegation sincerely hopes that we are able to translate this long-awaited collective will into reality.

Mr. Chair,

The Republic of Korea shares the view that Negative Security Assurances (NSAs) by NWS can serve as an intermediate step towards realizing our ultimate goal of a world without nuclear weapons. NSAs can contribute substantially to nuclear non-proliferation in that such assurances could reduce the NNWS's incentives for developing, acquiring, and possessing nuclear weapons. However, we uphold the principle that these assurances should be applied only to those who faithfully comply with the NPT as an NNWS.

Mr. Chair,

History tells us that the window of opportunity opens ensuing a moment of crisis. Even if the international community has faced with critical challenges, with sincere and utmost efforts to seek our areas of convergence, we can indeed accomplish what we have set out to do. The Republic of Korea stands ready to work with all parties towards the goal of maintaining and strengthening the NPT regime. Thank you.

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