

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

Main Committee II (Non-proliferation)

New York

<As Delivered>

Thank you, Madam Chair.

We would like to congratulate you on your election as Chair of Main Committee II. Let me assure you of full cooperation of my delegation.

We all agree that the NPT, since its historic inception in 1970, has served as the cornerstone of the global non-proliferation system. State Parties have strived to keep up with their commitments on non-proliferation and to enhance the effectiveness of the regime.

Since the last 9th NPT Review Conference, in particular, four countries ratified Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement (CSA) and thirteen countries ratified Additional Protocol (AP). This is a tangible showcase of the international community's enduring endeavor towards establishing solid non-proliferation regime. We therefore urge all those that have not yet done so to conclude and bring these key safeguards instruments into force without further delay. We also encourage States with minimal nuclear activities to ratify the revised Small Quantities Protocol (SQP) soonest.

The Republic of Korea also supports the IAEA's efforts to optimize and strengthen the safeguards regime. We have been among the first to adopt the State Level Approach (SLA) aimed at enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of the Agency's verification activities. We look forward to the SLA's universalization.

Madam Chair,

Despite these progress, some persistent as well as recent events threaten to upend the trend. Among them are Russia's armed aggression on Ukraine and its nuclear rhetoric, the DPRK's relentless pursuit of nuclear and missiles programs, and stalled negotiations to restore the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

In terms of nuclear non-proliferation, the most pressing challenges arguably stems from the DPRK. It is regrettable that the DPRK is the first and only country which developed nuclear weapons within the NPT regime and announced its withdrawal from both the NPT and IAEA. To make matters worse, while relentlessly developing nuclear and missile programs, the DPRK has been launching ballistic missiles at an unprecedented frequency, 31 this year alone. Furthermore, the DPRK is assessed to be technically ready for yet another nuclear test, which would be its 7th test. The Republic of Korea condemns in the strongest terms the DPRK's continued nuclear and missile activities in flagrant violation of the UN Security Council resolutions.

In this vein, my delegation reiterates its deep regret that the Security Council failed to correctly respond to the DPRK's attempt for proliferation back in May due to the vetoes by the two Permanent Members. There shall not be such a set back again and the international community should stay united in order to dissuade the DPRK from further provocations. We must continue to mount collective pressure against the DPRK to abandon its nuclear weapons and missile programs in a complete, verifiable, and irreversible manner, and respond positively to the call for dialogue.

Madam Chair,

As a strong supporter of the JCPOA, the Republic of Korea reiterates its firm support for the restoration of this milestone agreement. In this regard, we wish the ongoing talks in Vienna will contribute to breaking the current deadlock and achieving substantial progress in the negotiations to restore the JCPOA. In the meantime, we reiterate the immediate need for Iran's full and unfettered cooperation with the IAEA, which is of great importance to its monitoring and verification capacities.

The Republic of Korea also believes that effectively verifiable nuclear-weapon-free-zones play an important role both in promoting non-proliferation and enhancing regional peace and stability. We support the ongoing efforts and look forward to positive results that are satisfactory to all parties concerned.

Madam Chair,

Along with the other two pillars, the nuclear nonproliferation commitments enshrined in the NPT have safeguarded the world from plunging into a nuclear catastrophe. The Conference this year offers the State Parties yet another appropriate opportunities to enhance the global security structure. The Republic of Korea reiterates its full commitment to working together with other State parties to move towards a safer and more peaceful world through the achievements realized at this Conference. I thank you. /END/