STATEMENT
BY H. E. MR. J. ENKHSAIKHAN PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF MONGOLIA IN THE GENERAL DEBATE OF THE FIRST COMMITTEE

2 October 2002

Mr. Chairman,

I would like to join the preceding speakers in extending to you the warmest congratulations of my delegation on your election to guide the work of this Committee. My delegation is confident that your rich experience will be an invaluable asset to our Committee. I also congratulate the other members of the Bureau on their well deserved election.

Mr. Chairman,

In 2000 through the Millennium Declaration the heads of State and Government of member States expressed their solemn resolve to, inter alia, free peoples from the scourge of war and eliminate the dangers posed by weapons of mass destruction (WMD). However, during the past two years neither a breakthrough nor any significant progress have been made in multilateral negotiations on the elimination of WMD. Moreover, United Nations Disarmament Commission could not hold its session this year, while the Conference on Disarmament (CD) could not agree on its work program for four consecutive years.

In view of the widely recognized urgency of nuclear disarmament, this lack of genuine progress defies logic. Is it because the accumulation of “rust” in multilateral disarmament machinery that the Secretary General spoke about got so thick that it is inhibiting its functioning or perhaps the machinery is overburdened by the vestiges of cold war and requires a profound overhaul? How can we explain such a lethargic movement towards the cherished goal of ordinary men and women who are waiting eagerly for the implementation of unequivocal undertaking of nuclear powers to accomplish total
elimination of their nuclear arsenals. It is specially so in light of the security challenges presented by international terrorism. The tragic events of 9/11 have left a deep impact both on international relations and on the minds of peoples. It opened eyes to dangers and risks brought by the proliferation of WMD and their means of delivery. The tragedy signaled the increasing danger of possible possession and use by non-State actors of such horrible weapons.

On a positive note, the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, signed by 165 States, has been ratified by 93 States. Of the 44 states whose ratification is necessary for the entry into force of the CTBT 31, have already ratified it. 165 States have signed the Chemical Weapons Convention and 146 of them have already ratified it. The agreement between the USA and the Russian Federation to reduce the deployment of strategic nuclear weapons, the initiative approved at G8 Kananaskis summit to earmark $20 billion to assist the Russian Federation and other countries in reducing and eliminating WMD raises the hope that verifiable and transparent disarmament involving other nuclear powers could become a reality in the coming years.

Mr. Chairman,

Strengthening international peace and security through disarmament process and making its own modest contribution to this end has always been a priority of Mongolia’s foreign policy. In doing so, it always attached special importance to elimination of WMD and means of their delivery. In this context, Mongolia attaches special importance to the reduction and destruction of destabilizing tactical nuclear weapons. We firmly believe that nuclear disarmament is not only the key to the solution of a wide range of disarmament and non-proliferation issues, but also for maintaining and strengthening of international peace and security. Therefore, my delegation fully shares the view that there is a pressing need to make tangible progress in the areas of nuclear disarmament, in particular, in non-proliferation and the reduction of tactical nuclear weapons.

During the 2000 NPT Review Conference, the States Parties to the Treaty have committed to implement the important conclusions and recommendations contained in the Final Document. In this context, my delegation welcomes the decision of the Government of Cuba to accede to the NPT and ratify the Tlatelolco Treaty.

The Review Conference also concluded that there was a need to establish in the CD of an appropriate subsidiary body to deal specifically with nuclear disarmament issues and called for an immediate establishment of such a body. Breaking the impasse at CD and displaying necessary political will to start the discussion of substantive issues on its agenda are of crucial importance. Mongolia reiterates its belief that the “Amorim proposal” could serve as a useful basis for further consultations. Our position is flexible. We are ready to consider any proposal that may facilitate the start of the substantive work within the CD.

A year ago the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Mongolia, speaking at CD session, proposed that pending the negotiation of the Fissile Materials Cut-Off Treaty, the
nuclear-weapon States declare a moratorium on the production of weapons grade fissile materials and promote greater transparency through disclosure of their present stocks. He also urged the United Nations to establish a Register for all stocks of weapons-grade fissile material. The recent seizure of enriched uranium in Turkey clearly demonstrates the importance and timeliness of such action.

Mr. Chairman,

Mongolia consistently supports consolidation of existing and establishment of new nuclear-weapon-free zones, which are important components of nuclear non-proliferation that positively impact regional security and stability. My delegation would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the five Central Asian States on reaching an agreement on the content of a treaty establishing a nuclear-weapon-free zone in that region. In conjunction with properly institutionalized Mongolia’s nuclear-weapon-free status, this new treaty could make a significant contribution to strengthening nuclear non-proliferation and turning the entire Central Asian region, which merely a decade ago housed thousands of nuclear weapons, into a zone of peace and predictability. This would foreclose the possibility of “nuclear great games” in the heart of Asia by States or non-State actors.

Ten years ago Mongolia declared its territory a nuclear-weapon-free zone. As seen from the report of the Secretary-General contained in document A/57/159, Mongolia has taken a number of concrete steps to institutionalize the status at the national and international levels. Nationally, we adopted a legislation that legally defines the status, imposes penalties for its breach and sets up a national mechanism to implement the legislation. Internationally, together with the appropriate UN bodies, Mongolia is working to find ways of properly institutionalizing it. The 2001 Sapporo meeting of independent experts of the five nuclear-weapon States, Mongolia and of representative of DDA/UN has thoroughly examined the issue and the participants have come to agreed conclusions and recommendations. In line with those recommendations, Mongolia proposed to institutionalize the status by concluding a multilateral agreement, to which our two immediate neighbors – China and Russia- have in principle responded positively.

Mongolia is interested in moving forward on this issue on the basis of general agreement. It is open-minded on the ways and means of further consolidating and institutionalizing the status. Being a special case, perhaps it needs an individual approach to consolidating the status and addressing the external challenges. It is bearing this mind that Mongolia, together with UNDP and some other UN bodies, is undertaking two studies on its economic and ecological vulnerabilities. The outcome of the studies would be useful in further consolidating the basis of Mongolia’s status.

At this session of the General Assembly Mongolia will present a procedural resolution that would invite member States and relevant UN bodies to continue their assistance in consolidating its nuclear-weapon-free status.
My delegation shares the legitimate concerns of the international community over the increasing threat from the spread of small arms and light weapons and their illegal trade. The 2001 Conference adopted a comprehensive action program to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit trade of these types of weapons at all levels. It also pointed out the concrete ways of developing international cooperation and assistance, as well as ensuring its follow-up. Any positive step in implementation of the program will mark an important building block for resolving wide ranging humanitarian and socio-economic issues related to this issue.

My delegation shares the view of Under-Secretary-General Dhanapala concerning the daunting challenges presented by non-proliferation education and missiles. On the initiative of Mongolia, years 2003 to 2013 have been declared a decade of literacy. My delegation is confident that literacy will empower the poor and neglected, enable them to participate actively in the life of society, including in the struggle for disarmament.

Mr. Chairman,

Mongolia welcomed the entry into force of the anti-personnel landmines convention as an important step in conventional disarmament. Mongolia is carefully studying the possibility of its accession to the convention. It is also my delegation's belief that further reduction of conventional arms and arms trade, and increase in transparency of military budgets of States would promote confidence-building.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, my delegation wishes to underscore that the current setbacks in the multilateral disarmament process should serve as the call to member States to redouble their concerted efforts for the search of practical and far-reaching measures of disarmament, first and foremost, in the field of non-proliferation of WMD and nuclear disarmament.

Thank you.