Right of Reply  
General Debate of the United Nations General Assembly First Committee,  
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In the statement by the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea earlier this morning, it was suggested that those countries which had intervened in the General Debate urging it to abandon its nuclear weapons programme were not motivated by a genuine and fair resolution of the nuclear issue. New Zealand was one of those countries which dealt with this issue in the General Debate, and the DPRK should have no doubt about the strength of New Zealand’s views on the nuclear issue.

In this respect, New Zealand deplores the claim by the Government of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea last night that it has conducted a nuclear test, which I note the representative of the DPRK, rather oddly, did not refer to in his statement this morning. If those claims are true, this action is unpardonable and inconsistent with the behaviour expected of a state seeking security and other guarantees from the global community.

New Zealand joins others in condemning DPRK’s actions. We absolutely reject the use of nuclear weapons and the testing of these weapons. New Zealand is profoundly concerned by DPRK’s flagrant disregard for regional and international peace and security. Its decision to test a nuclear weapon is a travesty of the spirit of the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime and also the global moratorium on nuclear testing that is in place, pending the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty.

As we stated in this Committee’s General Debate last week, when we addressed this issue, committed dialogue, rather than military brinksmanship, provides the best possible course of action for achieving a peaceful and comprehensive resolution. We urge the DPRK to return to the Six Party talks without preconditions, to act in accordance with UNSC resolution 1695 and work towards the expeditious implementation of the 19 September 2005 Joint Statement, and to refrain from further provocative actions of the sort announced last evening.