Statement by H.E. Mr. CHANG Dong-hee
Ambassador to the Conference on Disarmament
First Committee of the General Assembly
Thematic Debate on Disarmament Machinery
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Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

1. I would like to join previous speakers in extending my sincere gratitude to the distinguished panellists for their excellent presentation on the activities of their respective disarmament bodies. I would also like to pay tribute to their leadership on the difficult task of revitalizing the multilateral disarmament and non-proliferation machinery.

*Conference on Disarmament (CD)*

2. With regard to the Conference on Disarmament, my delegation appreciates the coordinated efforts of the six presidents (P-6) to move its work forward. As a member of last year’s inaugural P-6, I am pleased to note that this year’s P-6 have built effective upon last year’s achievements.

3. Having successfully conducted thematic discussions on major issues, the P-6 managed to present L1 as a proposed programme of work. Regrettably, however, the CD fell just short of reaching consensus on its adoption. I appeal to the CD Member states to be a little more flexible so that we can break the impasse and come back to work.
United Nations Disarmament Commission (UNDC)

4. My delegation believes that the triennial cycle of the UNDC has made steady progress in this second year, building on last year's groundwork. My delegation hopes the UNDC can successfully conclude its work next year, with practical recommendations for the advancement of the disarmament and non-proliferation agenda for both nuclear and conventional weapons.

Mr. Chairman,

United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR)

5. UNIDIR has been actively engaged in a number of discussions and seminars on various issues, from nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and terrorism to outer-space security. We welcome its participation in the informal plenary discussions of the Conference on Disarmament (CD) in 2007. Its participation has deepened Member States' understanding and helped to make the discussions more productive and live.

6. UNIDIR's positive influence was also felt in the areas of regional and human security, as the Institute broadened the views of the international community on the issue of disarmament. My delegation sincerely appreciates the work of UNIDIR’s relatively small but dedicated staff, and we will continue to support its efforts to identify and address key disarmament issues.

Open-Ended Working Group on the Fourth Special Session on Disarmament (SSOD-4)

Mr. Chairman,

7. Convened this year under the able Chairmanship of Ambassador Labbe of Chile, the Open-Ended Working Group on the Fourth Special Session on Disarmament (SSOD-4) was no small success, even if it could not achieve its mandate of agreeing on the objectives and agenda for SSOD-4. The Member States engaged in a serious dialogue and exchanged views in a friendly manner on many of the most difficult issues. As Ambassador Labbe stressed, long-term gains in disarmament must be built upon trust, and trust takes both time and understanding. My delegation believes that there is value in convening SSOD-4 and hopes that we can soon reach a consensus on this important issue.

Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters

Mr. Chairman,
8. My delegation highly appreciates the work and contribution of the Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters, not only in advising the Secretary-General on how to promote the disarmament and non-proliferation agenda, but also in providing insightful ideas and opinions to the whole family of the United Nations. Considering the keen interest the new Secretary-General has shown in revitalizing the disarmament and non-proliferation agenda through greater personal involvement and restructuring of the Secretariat's disarmament body, I am sure that the Advisory Board will play a more important role than ever during the coming years.

9. This year's report of the Advisory Board contains several important proposals for the First Committee to take into account. We hope the Secretariat will look carefully into the recommendations of the Advisory group and seek to reflect them in the Secretary-General's future agenda on disarmament and non-proliferation. Of particular significance to my delegation is the emphasis on enhancing regional approaches that can contribute to global disarmament efforts. The progress being made on the Korean Peninsula is mentioned in the report as an example of such an approach.

10. As my delegation has often noted, the Republic of Korea strongly supports multilateral security cooperation in Northeast Asia and deems it a high-priority issue. We are grateful for the cooperation and support of the countries that helped bring about the agreement at the recent Six-Party Talks on a second-phase action plan for the implementation of the Joint Statement, setting the stage for the success of the second North-South Summit earlier this month. Denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula will strengthen the NPT regime, serving as a useful example of a negotiated solution for similar problems in other parts of the world. We hope that the support of the international community will continue as we strive to achieve a true and lasting peace.

Thank you.