STATEMENT

by

MR. RAPHAEL S.C. HERMOSO
Second Secretary

at

the Thematic Debate on Disarmament Machinery
of the
First Committee

66th Session, General Assembly

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New York
Mr. Chairman,

The Philippines is pleased to address the First Committee on the topic of the Disarmament Machinery and associates itself with the statement to be delivered later on by Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

The Philippines reaffirms its belief that multilateral diplomacy is the best way in order to achieve further progress in nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. In this regard, there must be a fully functioning disarmament machinery.

The Conference on Disarmament or CD remains an important part of the machinery and in this regard my delegation wishes to make the following points:

1. With regard to the advocacy of the CD Informal Group of Observer States (IGOS) to bring attention to the question of membership in the Conference, the Philippines regards this question as a matter of principle - if the CD functions on the basis of the sovereign equality of states, then those member states who wish to participate fully in the work of the body should be given the opportunity to do so. The UN Charter itself does not prescribe any discriminatory measures in this regard. The distinction between member and observer is an anachronism, rooted in the dynamics of the "Cold War" (or the politics of the past century).

2. In the interest of promoting greater inclusivity and dynamism in the CD, the Philippines calls for the review of the membership of the Conference as stipulated in its rules of procedure, and to allow for the expansion of its membership. Numerous countries, presently observers in the CD, possess the legitimate aspiration to full membership in the Conference. To facilitate this review, the Philippines calls for the appointment by the CD of a Special Rapporteur/Coordinator on Enlargement.

3. Given the situation of the CD and the need to take a holistic diagnosis of the Global Disarmament Architecture, with nations from a broad spectrum of the UN membership, both North and South, voicing concerns over the status quo in the disarmament milieu, with some even prepared to take extraordinary measures including abandoning the CD – the Philippines urges CD members to overcome outstanding differences regarding the adoption and implementation of a programme of work, but failing to do so, within a specified period of time, sees no option, but to find alternative means in order to take forward multilateral disarmament negotiations for it is not just the disarmament process that is put into question, but the multilateral process as a whole is at stake.
Mr. Chairman,

The Philippines also feels that States must desist from venturing into activities that have proven time and time again to be ineffectual and there are other bodies in the disarmament machinery aside from the CD, which cannot function or come up with substantive results and/or recommendations. Given the difficult economic situation countries are faced with and the limited resources now available, such resources are better spent for more productive endeavours, such as disarmament education.

In this regard, the Philippines wishes to emphasize the importance of enhancing Disarmament Education and the related need to increase support for UNIDIR. The Philippines sees Disarmament Education programs as a way to ensure that the next generation of disarmament leaders will be ready to take on the responsibility of pushing through the agreements we are able or unable to reach today. Furthermore, as a confidence building measure the Philippines recalls Action 22 of the 2010 NPT Final Document which encourages States to implement recommendations contained in the report of the Secretary-General of the United Nations (A/57/124) regarding the UN study on disarmament and non-proliferation education, in order to advance the goals of the Treaty in support of achieving a world without nuclear weapons.

The Philippines also wishes to recall Action 21 of the 2010 NPT RevCon Final Document which calls for a standard reporting form and to determine appropriate reporting intervals for the purpose of voluntarily providing standard information without prejudice to national security. This reporting is important to multilateral disarmament process.

Mr. Chairman,

In closing, the Philippines also wishes to recognize the contribution that civil society can and has made to the multilateral disarmament process.

I thank you Mr. Chairman.