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STATEMENT OF HUNGARY

by

H.E. Dr. György Molnár

Director General for Security Policy and Non-proliferation

at the General Debate of the 68th Session of the

UN General Assembly, First Committee

United Nations

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Mr. Chairman,

Let me join previous speakers in congratulating you for assuming this very important post and assure you of my delegation’s full support. Hungary fully associates itself with the statement delivered by the EU. I would, however, make a few remarks from our national perspective.

Disarmament and non-proliferation efforts are fundamental in ensuring that our collective ambition of a world more stable and secure is fulfilled. This year we have witnessed certain events that have created some room for optimism. The resolution on the Arms Trade Treaty adopted by the General Assembly was a milestone on the path to curb illicit trade in conventional arms. Hungary signed the ATT on 3 June and our ratification process is underway. We are pleased that a great number of countries have already signed the Treaty and started or already completed their national processes to ratify it. The ATT has already become an important point of reference and set the standards high.

Regrettably, conventional arms are not the only types of weapons used in armed conflicts as the recent example of Syria demonstrates. We therefore welcome UNSC resolution 2118 and the Executive Council Decision of the OPCW on the dismantling of Syria’s chemical weapons. Their implementation is an important contribution to peace and security in the Syrian Arab Republic. We call on all countries to ratify the Chemical Weapons Convention. Such a step could bring us closer to the establishment of a WMD free zone in the Middle East as well.

The initial changes in the tone of the discussion on Iran’s nuclear program is another development that makes us cautiously optimistic. We hope that the new rhetoric will be followed up by concrete steps.

Mr Chairman,

Our consistently held view is that multilateral diplomacy, the strengthening of international organisations, regimes and co-operation frameworks, as well as active participation in their work, constitute the most important means to mitigate the threat posed by weapons of mass destruction. Hungary has always been willing to do its share of the work and to promote novel initiatives.

This approach is reflected, inter alia, in our long term leadership on the General Assembly’s annual resolution on the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention, a fundamental pillar of the international community's effort against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. It is our honour to chair the 2013 Meeting of Experts and Meeting of States Parties. The 2012-2015 inter-sessional work programme is ambitious. It covers the full scope of the treaty. The theme of our chairmanship is to "bring in more voices". At the recent Meeting of Experts in Geneva, we heard a wide range of perspectives, from a variety of agencies in both developed
and developing countries, from international organisations, from academia and NGOs. It is clear that some of the matters discussed will require further attention and thought. Our aim is to implement the decisions of the Seventh Review Conference and to ensure that the inter-sessional program continues to be an effective tool for dealing with, and reducing the risks posed by, biological weapons.

Mr Chairman,

Hungary remains committed to the objective of a world free of nuclear weapons, a noble goal which is at the heart of the United Nations’ disarmament activities. We are of the view that the Non-Proliferation Treaty is the cornerstone of the nuclear non-proliferation regime and remains essential for pursuing nuclear disarmament. Hungary attaches equal importance to each pillar of the Treaty, and strives towards a balanced implementation of the Action Plan set forth in the Final Document of the 2010 Review Conference. We hope that further progress can be made during this review cycle.

We consider nuclear security as an increasingly important aspect of non-proliferation efforts. We were greatly honoured by the fact that the Hungarian foreign minister was the chair of the International Atomic Energy Agency’s first ever high level International Conference on Nuclear Security in July. We sincerely hope that the results of this conference will contribute to a safer world.

As an Annex II State, Hungary not only attaches great importance to the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty but, together with our fellow Article XIV coordinator Indonesia, will make every effort to bring us closer to that goal. We strongly believe that the CTBT is a uniting force in the multilateral system and its entry into force will strengthen global peace and security. We are pleased that the Article XIV. Conference on 27 September under the co-presidency of Hungary and Indonesia was a success, and welcome the ratifications by Guinea Bissau and Iraq, announced shortly before the Conference. We are also pleased that as incoming co-presidents we could contribute to launching the initiative of the executive secretary of the CTBTO to set up a Group of Eminent Persons. We are confident that the activities of this Group and those of the Article XIV coordinators will complement each other, and our joint efforts will inject new energy and dynamics into the entry into force process.

Hungary regards the conclusion of a Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty as an indispensable step towards a world free of nuclear weapons and an important contribution to non-proliferation efforts. In response to the UN Secretary General’s call, Hungary submitted its views on the various aspects of an FMCT and is prepared to participate in the work of the Group of Government experts to be set up. We stress the importance of commencing negotiations for a treaty at the earliest. Recent developments, in particular the decision to set up an Informal Working Group of the CD to develop a programme of work, are also to be explored in good faith in order to end the continued deadlock in the Conference on Disarmament.
In 2013 Hungary was the first of the six presidents of the CD and we made an honest attempt to revitalize the Conference. The very first step towards that would have been the adoption of a Programme of Work. Our proposal has often been referred to as an innovative attempt at breaking the longstanding deadlock in that body. Unfortunately, we did not succeed, but Hungary remains committed to finding a way out from the impasse in the CD. We are grateful to our P6 colleagues who have been equally active and ambitious in finding a way towards consensus on a Programme of Work, which, despite our collective efforts, once again eluded us this year. The CD is at a crossroads with regard to the way forward, and we will follow the debates about the Conference’s future here in the First Committee very closely.

Mr Chairman,

In conclusion let me refer to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, or Ottawa Convention. In early 2011, Hungary discovered a previously unknown minefield along the Hungarian-Croatian border that was a spill-over from conflict in the former Yugoslavia in the 1990s. Hungary immediately notified the Convention’s States Parties of its findings and promptly acted to eliminate the danger. By the end of September 2013, Hungary has completed demining work along its border with Croatia and it is now free of all known mine fields. A formal Declaration of Completion will be presented at the Thirteenth Meeting of the States Parties which will take place in Geneva in December 2013.