Statement by Finland
UNGA72 First Committee 2017
Thematic Debate on Nuclear Weapons

Statement by

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New York, 13 October 2017

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Mr. Chairman

We all in this room share grave concerns related to nuclear weapons and their proliferation. As long as these horrific weapons exist there is a risk of a catastrophe of immeasurable human and humanitarian cost. For this reason we follow with disbelief and condemn in the strongest terms the path chosen by the DPRK's leadership. Its provocative nuclear and missile tests are dangerous and irresponsible and constitute an acute threat to regional and international peace and security. Once again, we urge the DPRK to completely and irreversibly abandon its illegal nuclear and missile programs and to comply with its international obligations.

Our common goal is a world free of nuclear weapons. To achieve that, we need a unified and inclusive approach. To be effective, nuclear disarmament must involve all the countries possessing nuclear weapons. The NPT must remain the cornerstone of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime and the essential foundation for nuclear disarmament. Its key role in the rules-based international security architecture must not be jeopardized in any way.

We reiterate our call on all nuclear weapon states and states possessing these weapons to take concrete actions in nuclear disarmament and confidence building. Increased transparency, enhanced verification, de-alerting, negative security assurances and a no first use policy are among the first steps to alleviate the threat posed by nuclear weapons, paving the way to nuclear disarmament.

Finland is especially concerned about the thousands of tactical nuclear weapons stationed in Europe, in our close vicinity. Today these weapons are not covered by any binding, verifiable agreement. This gap has to be covered. There should also be a clear division between these and conventional weapons – in military doctrines and in exercises.

One concrete way to advance nuclear non-proliferation is to ensure the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) and the efficient implementation of its monitoring and verification mechanisms. The voluntary commitment of all states but one to a nuclear test moratorium is an important confidence building measure, but it cannot substitute a Treaty with legally binding obligations. We urge all states that have not yet done so, especially the Annex II states, to sign and ratify the Treaty without further delay.

The establishment of the High Level Expert Preparatory Group on the fissile material cut-off treaty was a welcomed step. We need to show determination and urgently commence negotiations on a treaty banning the production of weapons-grade fissile material. It's important that the future treaty covers also existing stockpiles in an appropriate way.

The agreement between the international community and Iran, the JCPOA, is a major multilateral achievement in nuclear non-proliferation. We call on all parties to the JCPOA to continue implementing it in full.

Mr. Chairman

Finland is an advocate of pragmatism. We are committed to promoting initiatives that allow for concrete, tangible steps – even if small – that can take us closer to our common goal. We find initiatives such as the IPNDV in creating a verification mechanism for nuclear disarmament and the GICNT in countering nuclear
terrorism valuable. We participate actively in both. For the next two years Finland serves as the international coordinator for the GICNT.

We see many opportunities to move forward, if we act together. We must focus on issues that unite us to support and strengthen the NPT. This is our main message ahead of the NPT 2020 Review Conference.

Thank you.