
Mr. Chairman,

At the outset, let me also join others in congratulating you on your election as Chairman of the Second Prep. Com. Session of the 2005 Review Conference of the NPT. The other members of the bureau also deserve our congratulations on their election. I am confident that with your ability and wisdom, you will be able to guide the deliberations of the Session into a fruitful conclusion paving the way for the third Prep. Com and eventually leading to a successful Review Conference in 2005.

I also wish to reiterate Nepal’s deep commitment to the NPT which, it believes, provides the solid foundation for the pursuit of the goal of nuclear non-proliferation and global disarmament, including promotion of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. In the past thirty years, the NPT has, by and large been an effective bulwark against proliferation, even in the midst of threats. We remain convinced that increased promotion of universal adherence to the treaty and full compliance by all parties with all its provisions will stem the proliferation of all weapons of mass destruction and enhance international security. It is in this context that the strengthened review process of the NPT assumes added importance.

Mr. Chairman,

When an overwhelming majority of non-nuclear weapons states joined NPT in 1968, they did so for the reason and with the hope that the nuclear weapons states would fulfill their obligations in accordance with article VI of the treaty. That obligation was to pursue negotiation in good faith on effective measures relating to the cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date and to nuclear disarmament, and on a treaty on global and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control. Therefore, commitments under article VI demand effective action. Non-proliferation, nuclear disarmament and international security are interconnected and they reinforce each other.

Mr. Chairman,

Universality, non-proliferation, nuclear disarmament, nuclear weapon-free zones, security assurances, safeguards measures, peaceful uses of nuclear energy and resolution on the Middle East are the main elements of the principles and objectives of the 1995 review conference. The current Preparatory Committee meeting is mandated to consider these principles and objectives and ways in order to promote the full implementation of the treaty, and to make recommendation to the Review Conference in 2005.
Mr. Chairman,

Nepal would also like to reiterate its support for the position agreed at the 2000 NPT Review Conference on the legally binding security assurances by the five nuclear-weapon states, and pending the attainment of the goal of a general and complete disarmament, efforts for the early conclusion of a universal unconditional and legally binding instrument must begin without further delay. It is in this area the prep-com needs to devote serious attention, and come up with concrete recommendations for consideration of the 2005 Review Conference. Working papers proposed by various delegations as well as Draft Instrument in this respect are in our opinion, important contributions and add value to the work of the Prep. Com.

The conclusion of CTBT was an important milestone in the efforts towards nuclear non-proliferation. While CTBT marks a major breakthrough, the inability to conclude the negotiations on a non-discriminatory and universally applicable Convention banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices is a serious setback. The conference on Disarmament should resume its work on fissile material cut off treaty as a matter of urgent priority.

The establishment of internationally recognized nuclear weapons free zones on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at among states of the region concerned contributes greatly to enhancing global and regional peace and security. We welcome the Treaties of Tlatelolco, Rarotonga, Bangkok and Pelindaba as positive steps towards achieving the objectives of nuclear disarmament. We welcome more of such nuclear weapons free zones in other regions of the world as they are important steps towards peace and security and are also important confidence building measures. Of equal importance is the establishment of nuclear weapon free zones in the Middle East and South Asia in order to promote peace and stability in these regions. The nuclear weapon states need to cooperate and support the relevant protocols of the nuclear weapons free zones. Such efforts not only render the nuclear weapons free zones and their protocols effective but also constitute as a guarantee against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons against states covered by the NWFZ.

Mr. Chairman,

As lack of understanding and mistrust reinforce fear and sense of insecurity, and thus could be the major source of tension and conflicts, dissemination of information about disarmament, and about the danger of proliferation among the general public is critical to enhancing their understanding of these issues. Additionally, greater interactions among disarmament experts, academia, member of the civil society will help form enlightened opinion on the issues of disarmament. It is precisely for this reason that the Regional Center for Peace and Disarmament for Asia and the Pacific has been set up in Kathmandu, Nepal.
The Regional Center known as Kathmandu Center has been organizing seminars and workshops since the early nineties, on the topical issues of disarmament, non-proliferation, security assurances, NWFZ etc, by bringing together leading disarmament experts, diplomats, intellectuals and other related professionals of the region to exchange views in quiet and informal settings. Its conclusions and recommendations are disseminated and are known as the Kathmandu Process. We believe that such efforts can also make contributions to promote confidence building measures and also to enhance public awareness, on the issues related to disarmament in general and nuclear disarmament in particular.

Furthermore, Nepal strongly supports measures aimed at preventing terrorists from acquiring WMD. In this context, the role of IAEA must be further strengthened to enable it to undertake stringent verification measures, tight export control regime and stricter inspection of nuclear facilities, so as to prevent the misuse of nuclear material by states or non-state actors.

Mr. Chairman,

The thirteen practical steps, agreement on the need for a legally binding security assurances by the nuclear weapons states to the NNWS, and the renewed commitment to the implementation of obligations flowing from article VI of the NPT are some of the major outcomes of the 2000 Review Conference of the NPT. This Prep. Com. needs to seriously ponder ways, as to how these steps could be implemented with a view to advancing systematically and progressively in the coming years. Universality, indivisibility and mutuality of obligations and effective realisation of the NPT objectives are key to our pursuit of nuclear disarmament. Nepal's commitment to NPT is based on the principle that NPT is a cornerstone of a stable international security order. Sincere and sustained efforts by all parties to fulfill the commitments with concrete and interlocking steps are therefore indispensable. The delegation of Nepal is ready to contribute to this noble endeavour.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.