PHILIPPINES

Cluster on Regional Issues

Mr. Chairman,

- We associate ourselves with the statement delivered by the Ambassador of Indonesia on behalf of the NAM states parties to the NPT.

- Very briefly, allow us to highlight a few points. On the Middle East, we support the call for the establishment of nuclear weapons free zone and we believe that this would significantly contribute to regional peace and security. In this connection, we join other delegations in calling upon Israel to accede to the NPT. We continue to believe that dialogue is the right approach in achieving this aim.

- Also in the context of the Middle East, the Philippines looks forward to a long-term solution to the Iran nuclear issue, which can only be achieved through diplomacy and dialogue. We also look forward to continued negotiations on the issue within the framework of cooperation between Iran and the IAEA. These two issues are critical to realizing a nuclear weapons free zone in the Middle East.

- In our part of the world, Mr. Chairman, the Philippines supports the continuing process of the 6-Party Talks. We are encouraged by the recent developments towards a resolution of the DPRK nuclear issue. We hope that the DPRK will comply with its obligations arising from the Joint Statement of September 2005 and implementation of the actions agreed by all the Parties at the Six-Party Talks in February 2007. We reiterate our position that dialogue is the best approach to resolving the issue, and we look forward to the early resumption of the Six-Party process in support of the agreements reached in September 2005 and February 2007. Early resolution of this issue through dialogue and peaceful means would contribute significantly to peace and security in the Asia-Pacific region.

Mr. Chairman,

- Finally Mr. Chairman, the Philippines joins the call of other delegations for the accession to the NPT of the three remaining non-states parties, Israel, India and Pakistan, which would be an important confidence-building development towards maintaining the credibility of the NPT regime.