Statement by

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At the Second Session of the Preparatory Committee
for the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the
Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

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Mr. Chairman,

Let me begin by conveying our warm congratulations to you on your election to lead the Second Session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2010 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conference. We are confident that under your able leadership this session will reach a successful and fruitful conclusion.

I am pleased to assure you of the support, cooperation and goodwill of the delegation of Botswana in carrying out this onerous responsibility.

We would like to associate ourselves with the Statements made by Indonesia on behalf of the Non- Aligned Movement.

Mr. Chairman,

As we meet here today to prepare for the review conference, it is imperative to remind ourselves of the higher purpose of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. The concern for the spread of nuclear weapons and related technologies remain as valid today as it was over 35 years ago when this treaty was established.

Then we undertook to collectively prevent the spread of nuclear weapons and promote cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. The question today should be whether the Treaty has, or is, achieving its intended objectives.

Mr. Chairman,

Botswana is a State Party to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, fully committed to the achievement of its objectives including, and most importantly, complete disarmament and non-proliferation. As a small developing country this Treaty embodies our aspirations for a peaceful, safer and prosperous world, free of weapons of mass destruction.

Nuclear energy, if used responsibly, has tremendous potential to contribute to causes of common good instead of threatening the annihilation of humanity. This is why we should be concerned by the increasing number of States that are aspiring to acquire nuclear weapon technology. The refusal by nuclear weapon States to abide by the existing non-proliferation instruments is even a matter of utmost disquiet.
The continuing failure of the Disarmament Commission to generate global consensus in the disarmament debate does not augur well for the forthcoming 2010 Review Conference. It indeed reminds us of the challenges ahead and the obstacles to be overcome on issues of disarmament and non-proliferation.

We can only call on nuclear weapon States to provide required leadership, flexibility and compromise in the search for the much needed consensus. In the absence of their leadership, the disarmament debate will turn out, regrettably, to be a dialogue of the deaf with no end in sight, and much to the detriment of our development efforts.

Be that as it may, we still remain hopeful that we will have the collective will and the unity of purpose to overcome the setbacks that undermined the 2005 NPT Review Conference. Let us ensure that the 2010 Review Conference produces a tangible outcome that will significantly contribute to the greater goal of achieving nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation in the world. As a preparatory committee we can and indeed must, give that necessary direction.

Mr. Chairman,

Botswana in its own small way continues to contribute to the implementation of NPT. In this respect, in August 2006 we ratified the Additional Protocol.

Furthermore, Botswana hosted a Regional Technical Meeting on the Implementation of the Additional Protocol to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty in Gaborone in October 2007. As has already been mentioned in the Statement by the International Atomic Energy Agency (I.A.E.A.) during the General Debate, this was one of the outreach activities organised by the Agency in the area of strengthened safeguards.

We were indeed honoured and privileged in this regard to be part of this programme of action. We continue to work with the I.A.E.A on technical cooperation projects aimed at peaceful uses of nuclear technology in a safe and secure manner for ensuring sustainable development as well as the attainment of the globally agreed development goals, including the MDGs.

Such is our commitment to the work of the United Nations, and in particular, of the I.A.E.A. in achieving international peace and security through peaceful nuclear cooperation.
Mr. Chairman,

My delegation is fully convinced that nuclear technology can ameliorate our energy needs and provide solutions to complex medical problems afflicting our world. This is where we should exert our collective endeavours and focus.

We therefore commend the International Atomic Energy Agency in its efforts to enhance work in this area. It is very important to give the Agency necessary resources and support to ensure that it delivers on its mandate effectively.

Mr. Chairman,

I wish to underscore that Botswana firmly acknowledges and supports regional mechanisms as part of the global architecture for nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. It is for this reason that we call upon the international community to support regional initiatives, such as the Treaty of Pelindaba, as building blocks to achieving the ideals of the NPT.

In conclusion, allow me to reiterate the importance of a successful outcome of this meeting, and subsequently for the 2010 Review Conference. Matters of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation are critical to international peace and security, and most fundamentally, to our shared prosperity. It is therefore our conviction that we cannot leave these challenges for future generations because it will be too late.

Let us make the 2010 Review Conference a success.

I thank you.