STATEMENT by

H.E. Mr. Y. Halit ÇEVİK

PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF TURKEY
TO THE UNITED NATIONS

at the

3rd Preparatory Committee

of the

2015 NPT REVIEW CONFERENCE

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Mr. President,

Allow me, at the outset, to congratulate you and the members of the Bureau on your election. We have full confidence in your leadership, diplomatic skills and experience. You can count on Turkey’s support during the discharge of your duties.

Mr. President,

It is our common vision to create a world where nuclear weapons no longer exist, where nuclear accidents do not happen, where communities do not fear nuclear terrorism, where all assets are fully geared for peaceful uses of nuclear energy. This vision has brought about the NPT and continues to drive us.

However, we continue to be challenged in the areas of non-proliferation and disarmament. The overall system is not functioning to the extent that we would have wished. Nuclear weapons exist in high numbers and there is a constant risk of proliferation. The important challenge of striking a balance between disarmament and non-proliferation looms before us.

However, positive developments are also taking place, especially concerning Iran’s nuclear program. We remain hopeful on the negotiation process following the Joint Plan of Action, and wish to see an early and mutually satisfactory resolution of the issue.

On the other hand, the deliberations at the UN General Assembly High Level Meeting on Nuclear Disarmament last September were fruitful. Turkey aimed to contribute to the HLM and remains ready to engage in further discussions to that effect.

Mr. President,

Turkey is resolutely committed to the ultimate goal of a world without nuclear weapons. Turkey’s security policy excludes the production and use of weapons of mass destruction. Their proliferation is a matter of serious concern for Turkey, which is therefore party to all international non-proliferation instruments and export control regimes. We support their universalization, as well as effective implementation in good faith and consistency.

On the other hand, as a country seeking to integrate nuclear power into its energy supply mix, Turkey supports the greatest possible enjoyment of the benefits of nuclear energy, by all States that are in full compliance with their international obligations. We believe that non-proliferation, safety and security measures must in no way hinder international cooperation and access to nuclear technology, equipment and material, for peaceful uses.

Despite its shortcomings, NPT remains the cornerstone of the global system where such goals and concerns of disarmament, non-proliferation and peaceful uses of nuclear energy are addressed in a balanced manner. The NPT regime should therefore be safeguarded and further strengthened. It is our common duty to strive for the universalization of the NPT.

Mr. President,

We have come to the end of the NPT Review cycle. I regret to have to state that it is difficult to talk about a significant progress vis-à-vis the implementation of the 2010 Action Plan.
An overall reduction of the global stockpiles of nuclear weapons, in accordance with Article VI, in a transparent, irreversible and verifiable manner, and the elimination of these weapons from military doctrines are of key importance, if we wish to realize the common aspiration of Global Zero.

Another important priority is the establishment of internationally recognized and effectively verifiable zones free of nuclear weapons and other Weapons of Mass Destruction, wherever feasible. We hope to see all Nuclear Weapon States affiliating themselves with the existing Treaties establishing such zones.

Mr. President,

At this stage, allow me to take up a pending critical element of the 2010 Action Plan – convening an International Conference in 2012 on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction.

I cannot but stress the importance of convening this Conference. This is not a choice. It is even more than a promise. Considering the events that have been unfolding in the Middle East, it is clearly a necessity.

Therefore, I would like to underscore our disappointment for the postponement of this conference. This initiative not only can prove to be an important confidence building measure, at this critical juncture in the Middle East, but it can also provide a significant stimulus to the NPT Review Process.

Very frankly speaking, if this Conference is not realized as soon as possible, there will be inevitable repercussions on the 2015 Review Conference. We should all realize the cost of having an unsuccessful Review Conference and shape our approaches accordingly. To this end, we call on all relevant States to undertake a constructive approach and exert genuine efforts for the expeditious realization of this Conference. Turkey’s unwavering support to the Facilitator and his team will continue.

Having said these, let me bring to your attention that the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative, to which Turkey is a member, prepared a Working Paper on this issue, which has been distributed as Working Paper 7. In this Working Paper, the NPDI stresses, inter alia, the high expectation towards convening the conference at the earliest convenience and an unwavering support to the Facilitator.

Mr. President,

Possible benchmarks for the sustainability of the NPT in the long term include universalization of the Treaty, strengthening of the IAEA safeguards system, reinforcement of export controls, resumption of FMCT negotiations without further delay, early entry into force of the CTBT and the peaceful settlement of the cases of non-proliferation concerns through dialogue and diplomacy.

The longstanding stalemate at the Conference on Disarmament (CD) unfortunately continues. Turkey wishes to see the immediate resumption of substantive work at the Conference. There is an urgent need to adopt a consensual Program of Work. This development would not only
pave the way towards the commencement of negotiations on an FMCT, but would also facilitate parallel advances on other agenda items.

Proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery becomes all the more worrying in the context of terrorism. We continue to support the implementation of Security Council Resolution 1540, as well as the commitments undertaken at the Nuclear Security Summit process, which has been yielding fruitful outcomes.

Last but not least; we remain concerned by the risk that nuclear weapons pose for humanity. Turkey has been engaged in and actively contributes to the process examining the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons. However, we should be cautious not to create parallel processes that could undermine the NPT system.

Mr. President,

This Third Preparatory Committee will be the last important occasion for ensuring the success of the 2015 Review Conference. In turn, next year’s Review Conference will be decisive for the future of the whole system. An inconclusive Review Conference will undoubtedly deal a heavy blow on the entire NPT system. During this session, and next year at the Review Conference, we wish to see the constructive atmosphere that prevailed in 2010, in order to ensure a more secure and prosperous future for our world.

Thank you.