2010 NPT Review Conference
Main Committee II
Statement by H.E. Ambassador KIM Bong-hyun
Deputy Permanent Representative
10 May 2010
New York

<Check against Delivery>

Mr. Chairman,

I would like to extend my warmest congratulations to you on your assumption of the chairmanship of Main Committee II. I assure you of my delegation’s full support and cooperation as you carry out your valuable work.

The NPT has been the cornerstone of the global nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament regime for the past 40 years. Yet, the Treaty is now faced with unprecedented challenges in each of the three pillars. Of these, the most serious ones may lie in the area of non-proliferation.

The DPRK’s nuclear development represents a serious threat to regional peace and security and the international non-proliferation regime. The DPRK is the only country that announced its withdrawal from the NPT and went as far as to conduct nuclear tests in 2006 and 2009. Against such provocations, the UN Security Council demonstrated a unified and resolute response through the adoption and implementation of resolutions 1718 and 1874, which reaffirmed that the DPRK cannot have the status of a nuclear-weapon state in any case and impose sanctions against the DPRK.

Aside from building pressure through sanctions, we have also pursued dialogue with the DPRK. The countries concerned remain committed to realizing denuclearization of the DPRK through the Six-Party Talks.
Moreover, my government is pursuing a comprehensive and fundamental resolution to the DPRK nuclear issue through the Grand Bargain initiative. By encompassing in a single agreement all steps related to the DPRK's irreversible denuclearization and the Five Parties' corresponding measures, we will dissuade the DPRK from pursuing its nuclear capabilities.

The Republic of Korea urges the DPRK to fulfil its denuclearization obligations under UN Security Council resolutions and its commitments under the Joint Statement of September 19, 2005. In this regard, we would like to emphasize that Security Council resolutions should be fully implemented until the DPRK takes significant denuclearization measures. We call upon the DPRK to fully implement its denuclearization commitments and to return to the NPT.

Mr. Chairman,

Iran's nuclear program – not only the revelation of a number of undeclared nuclear activities since 2002, but also the lack of progress on several outstanding questions – constitutes a serious challenge to the international non-proliferation regime.

While it is our firm belief that the right to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy described in Article IV of the NPT should be fully respected, all suspicions and concerns regarding Iran's nuclear program should be addressed in accordance with its international obligations. We are deeply concerned that Iran has continued its enrichment related activities in defiance of the resolutions of the UN Security Council and IAEA Board of Governors. If Iran has failed in gaining the confidence of the international community, constructing additional enrichment facilities and enriching uranium up to the sensitive level of 20 percent would only weaken the basis for confidence-building. We sincerely hope that Iran will take decisive steps to fully cooperate with the international community to restore confidence in the peaceful nature of its nuclear program. In this respect, we believe that the proposal to supply nuclear fuel to the Tehran Research Reactor (TRR) provides an instrumental opportunity for a diplomatic resolution of the issue.

Mr. Chairman,

The IAEA safeguards system, a fundamental underpinning of the global non-proliferation regime, needs to be further strengthened. With an increasing number of states considering nuclear power as a part of their national energy policy, the international community needs to develop an effective response to potential proliferation challenges while preserving the right of all States Parties to the NPT to peaceful uses of nuclear energy.
The expanded uses of nuclear energy will inevitably require more credible assurances such as the absence of undeclared nuclear activities. My delegation believes that a credible international non-proliferation regime centered on IAEA safeguards will also produce the requisite mutual confidence to facilitate cooperation in the field of peaceful uses of nuclear energy. In this regard, the importance of an effective and efficient IAEA safeguards system cannot be overemphasized.

We strongly support the universalization of both the Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement and the Additional Protocol, which constitutes the verification standards of today. We welcome the significant increase in the number of ratifications by States Parties since the last Review Conference in 2005, namely 29 for the Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement and 36 for the Additional Protocol. My delegation urges those States Parties that have not yet done so to conclude and bring into force the Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement and the Additional Protocol without further delay.

The Republic of Korea also notes with satisfaction the entry into force of the Central Asian Nuclear Weapons Free Zone (NWFZs) Treaty, which stipulates the Additional Protocol as a condition for its entry into force. We encourage other mechanisms to adopt the Additional Protocol as a core safeguards standard, including as a condition for the supply of nuclear materials and equipment. We also would like to draw attention to the importance of the ratification of the revised Small Quantities Protocol for countries with minimal nuclear activities.

Despite the evident merits of the Additional Protocol as a strengthened safeguards standard, no verification measure can be wholly foolproof against determined proliferators. In this regard, we support various efforts to buttress and complement the NPT regime, including export control regimes. We also fully support Security Council resolutions 1540 and 1887, which set out overarching tasks that must be taken on nuclear non-proliferation, security, safety and safeguards.

The potential threat of nuclear terrorism is an issue which warrants our urgent attention. The Republic of Korea continues to play its part in international efforts within the framework of the G-8 Global Partnership, and the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism (GICNT) to prevent the spread of sensitive nuclear materials and equipment and combat nuclear terrorism. I would also like to remind you that the Republic of Korea will host the Plenary of the GICNT in 2011.

The Republic of Korea welcomes the Nuclear Security Summit held in Washington last month as a timely initiative to translate our political will into concrete actions to enhance nuclear security. Taking stock of
the first summit, the Republic of Korea, as the host of the next summit in 2012, will do our best to prepare for the successful meeting and facilitate international cooperation for nuclear security.

Mr. Chairman,

As a continuous supporter of the guidelines and principles on the establishment of Nuclear Weapon Free Zones (NWFZs) that were adopted at the 1999 UN Disarmament Commission, the Republic of Korea acknowledges the important role of NWFZs in global and regional peace and security. By eliminating nuclear weapons and offering negative security assurances within these zones, this can contribute to reinforcing the NPT regime. The Republic of Korea welcomes the recent announcement by the United States of its plan to pursue ratification of Protocols to NWFZs in Africa and the South Pacific.

We would like to reaffirm the significance of the Resolution on the Middle East adopted at the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference, and reiterate our support for the creation of a Zone Free of Nuclear and other WMDs and their delivery means in the Middle East. My delegation hopes that this Conference will make progress in taking practical steps toward implementing the Resolution in its entirety. My delegation would also like to stress importance of universality of the NPT, as we consider various means to strengthen the non-proliferation pillar of the NPT.

Mr. Chairman,

It is often said that the NPT is at a crossroads. However, this crossroads can also bring about an opportunity to tide over the pressing challenges that we face and renew our commitment to the Treaty. Upholding the non-proliferation pillar of the Treaty is the first task we must achieve together. Thank you.