Statement by Turkey

at the 2015 Review Conference of
the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of
Nuclear Weapons
(Main Committee I)

6 May 2015, New York
Mr. Chairman,

I would like to begin by congratulating you on your assumption to the Chairmanship of the Main Committee-I. Let me also thank you for your leadership during the last PrepCom. You can count on our delegation's support.

Mr. Chairman,

Turkey sees the NPT as the fundamental instrument for nuclear disarmament, hence remains fully committed to its objectives and provisions, its further strengthening and universalization.

We are firmly convinced that the achievement of the ultimate goal of a world without nuclear weapons depends first and foremost on the successful and universal implementation of the NPT regime.

Throughout the review cycle, Turkey engaged with its NPDI partners to promote the implementation of the consensus outcomes of the 2010 Action Plan. NPDI has provided working papers that would be useful at the deliberations at the present Review Conference. Based on this constructive and forward-looking approach, we have submitted our concrete recommendations (NPT/CONF.2015/WP.16) with a view to contributing to the next review cycle. We hope these recommendations will be reflected in the outcome document.

Beyond our active participation in the preparatory process of the 2015 RevCon, we closely followed developments pertaining to the nuclear disarmament. Doubtlessly, the New START was the most noteworthy and encouraging development in that regard. The announcement of some additional arms control measures by certain Nuclear Weapon States (NWS) was also a good sign. Turkey welcomed these bilateral and unilateral steps forward. In this regard, we hope the United States and the Russian Federation will continue their efforts in order to achieve further reductions in their nuclear arsenals.

Transparency stands out as a significant aspect of the overall nuclear disarmament efforts. In that regard too, we are glad to see progress as the nuclear weapons states submitted their reports to the NPT. The NPDI has also contributed to this process by formulating report templates.

Nevertheless, we cannot ignore the level of frustration stemming from the shortcomings in the effective implementation of the 2010 Action Plan in particular Article 6.

The failure of convening an international conference on the creation of a WMD-free zone in the Middle East in accordance with the 1995 Middle East Resolution, which was part of the NPT Grand Bargain, as well as the 2010 NPT RevCon Final Document has been another grave disappointment.

Mr. Chairman,

The undesirable shortcomings show us that the realm of the nuclear disarmament is by no means disconnected from the real world; to the contrary, it is inherently linked to and interacts with existing tensions among actors, divergent threat perceptions and strategic calculation of the interplay among scores of different dynamics.
As a matter of fact, Turkey pays due attention to various lines of thinking in nuclear disarmament. These trends also involve growing awareness towards the necessity to end the predominant role that nuclear forces play in security and defence policies and doctrines. Decades after the Cold War, there is still much more that needs to be done in this regard. Turkey believes that this growing awareness should be transformed into a general understanding, which should encompass all relevant actors so that it would result in the overall and systematic reduction of the dependence on nuclear weapons.

Turkey is concerned at the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of any use of nuclear weapons, as expressed in the Final Document. The catastrophic humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons fundamentally underpins all our work for nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation in pursuit of a world free of nuclear weapons.

It is worth mentioning that no single step can suffice in our global efforts for nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. Turkey is convinced that only a step-by-step process, based on building blocks can ultimately lead our world to the objective of Global Zero. Effective, irreversible and verifiable nuclear disarmament takes place in a strategic context where undiminished security for all as the guiding principle should be upheld.

Mr. Chairman,

Turkey underscores the need for further reductions by all states possessing nuclear weapons in their nuclear arsenals as practical measures towards general and complete nuclear disarmament in a transparent, irreversible and verifiable manner. In this regard, we welcome the International Partnership for Nuclear Disarmament Verification launched by the United States.

Mutual trust is the key factor in creating a conducive climate for further practical steps in nuclear disarmament. Turkey also welcomes that the nuclear weapon states have a working coordination among themselves as has lastly been demonstrated in London. Yet, addressing the issue of trust between nuclear weapon haves and have nots is a much wider problem. Negative security assurances by the nuclear weapon states to the non-nuclear weapon states are seen as a viable solution to this issue, within the three-pillars regime of the NPT.

The entry into force of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) will be a significant step forward and constitute an important building block. As a state-party to the CTBT since 2000, Turkey calls upon all States that have not yet signed and ratified the Treaty, to do so, in particular, the Annex II countries. Pending the entry into force of the Treaty, maintaining the moratorium on nuclear explosion test is of crucial importance. Turkey also wishes to commend the remarkable technical work done by the CTBTO.

Also, the commencement of negotiations on a non-discriminatory, multilateral, and verifiable treaty to ban the production of fissile material (FMCT) for nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosive devices would be another building block in nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. Turkey considers that the report of the Special Coordinator (CD/1299) and the mandate contained therein provide necessary guidance to kick-off the negotiation process. In the same vein, Turkey notes the news about the successful completion of the GGE report and believes that this will contribute to the deliberations in the Conference on Disarmament (CD).
Thank you.