Statement by Turkey

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

6 May 2015, New York
Mr. Chairman,

I would like to congratulate you on your assumption to the Chairmanship of the Main Committee II. In fulfilling your duties throughout the Committee work, you can be assured of our delegation’s full support.

Mr. Chairman,

Proliferation of the nuclear weapons – and weapon grade fissile material – continue to pose a complex challenge to international peace and security and coping with this challenge is incumbent on all States. The Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of the Nuclear Weapons (NPT) have committed themselves in the broadest terms, as they assumed legally binding obligations under Articles I, II, and III of the Treaty, to preventing the proliferation of nuclear arms.

This is why Turkey sees the NPT as the cornerstone of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime and advocates for the universalization and full implementation of the Treaty. We call upon all nuclear armed States which remain outside the NPT regime to accede to the Treaty as non-nuclear weapon States.

The safeguards system of the International Atomic Energy Agency’s (IAEA) is the fundamental component of the global non-proliferation regime. It needs to be upheld and further strengthened. The Agency’s role in the effective functioning of the NPT is undeniable.

It is evident that all States Parties to the NPT have a common interest in ensuring that the IAEA can effectively carry out its safeguards implementation and verification mandate. The IAEA safeguards system also provides a practical means for the Non-nuclear Weapon States to have access to nuclear energy and technologies for exclusively peaceful purposes.

As a country which has Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement and the Additional Protocol with the IAEA and has obtained “broader conclusion”, Turkey highly values its cooperation with the Agency. We have been in close cooperation with the IAEA since becoming a member in 1957, including also in all phases of developing our nuclear power program in a secure, safe and safeguarded manner. With a holistic approach, Turkey attaches great importance to safeguards, security and safety as complementary dimensions of the peaceful nuclear energy.

Mr. Chairman,

Confident of the professionalism, impartiality and objectivity of the IAEA, Turkey attaches great importance to supporting the IAEA with the necessary funds for the fulfilment of its mandate. We would like to recall that the 2010 Action Plan calls on parties “to ensure that the IAEA continues to have all political, technical and financial support so that it is able to effectively meet its safeguards responsibilities under NPT’s Article III.

Recalling Actions 28 and 29 of the 2010 Action Plan, Turkey is glad to see that more countries now have the IAEA’s Additional Protocol in force. Turkey is convinced that it is in the interest of every country to conclude the necessary safeguards arrangements with the Agency, including the Additional Protocol. We welcome that the number of States with Additional Protocols in force has increased to 125 bringing it closer to universalisation. We call upon those states that
have not yet done so, to sign, ratify and implement their Comprehensive Safeguards Agreements and Additional Protocols without delay.

Equally, as per Action 30, we support the widest possible application of IAEA safeguards to peaceful nuclear facilities in the Nuclear Weapon States as well as the irreversible and verifiable removal of the nuclear material once used for military purposes.

Mr. Chairman,

The non-compliance cases in the Agenda of the IAEA continue to be of serious concern for the international community.

On Iran, we are now closer to a peaceful solution. Turkey welcomed the political understanding on the general framework of a final agreement based on the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JPA) that has been reached by the P5+1 and Iran after intense rounds of negotiations on April 2nd. We congratulate the parties for their reasonable, flexible and constructive approach. Turkey hopes that the current phase of negotiations will result in a comprehensive agreement that will satisfy all parties and thus contribute to peace, stability and security in the region.

We also note with satisfaction that the IAEA regularly verifies the non-diversion of the declared nuclear material in Iran. Turkey wishes to see that all outstanding issues of Iran’s nuclear programme be solved through dialogue and cooperation. Iran’s continued engagement with the Agency with a view to restoring confidence in the exclusively peaceful nature of its nuclear activities is crucial.

In Syria, where the ongoing crisis poses a direct threat to our national security, we take note of IAEA Director General’s reports to the Board of Governors and trust that continued engagement on this case would help the Agency in eliminating ambiguities and eventually closing this file.

The nuclear program of the DPRK continues to remain as a serious concern. The three nuclear explosion tests and ballistic missile launches that this country has conducted over the last review cycle, as well as the public statements favouring more tests, undermine trust, security and stability in the region and beyond. We join many other states to call on DPRK to return to the Six Party Talks, so that the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula would be possible.

Mr. Chairman,

Turkey supports the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones wherever feasible and on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at among states of the regions concerned, and considers it as an important disarmament and non-proliferation measure. The ratification of the protocols additional to the Central Asian Nuclear Weapon Free Zone Treaty by most of the nuclear weapon states is encouraging. The failure of the efforts to convene an international conference on the establishment of a WMD-free zone in the Middle East, on the other hand, is a major disappointment. We would like to express our gratitude to Ambassador Mr. Laajava, Facilitator of the Conference for his commendable efforts and the report he has submitted to the Review Conference.

Mr. Chairman,
The threat of nuclear terrorism has emerged as a challenge that must be seriously taken into account in our non-proliferation efforts. Turkey strongly supports all appropriate measures related to the security of nuclear and other radioactive material and facilities, in order to prevent their acquisition by terrorists. At this point, I have the pleasure to inform that Turkey recently ratified the 2005 Amendment to the Convention on the Physical Protection of the Nuclear Materials.

The responsibility for nuclear security lies with the state concerned. At the same time, we believe that efforts at home need to be coupled with reinforced and effective international cooperation in advancing nuclear security. It is with this understanding that Turkey joined the Nuclear Security Summit initiative from the very beginning and actively supported its follow-up.

We welcome and support IAEA’s evolving work in the field of nuclear security and regard Agency’s role as crucial in fostering international cooperation on nuclear security. In this context, we appreciate the tools Agency has made available to interested member states, in order to support them in their efforts in improving or strengthening their nuclear security structures.

In June 2010, Turkey received assistance from the IAEA Advisory Service on State Systems for Accountancy and Control (ISSAS) and accordingly has revised its national legislation that entered into force on 30 May 2012. More recently, Turkey also requested assistance from the Agency’s International Physical Protection Advisory Service (IPPAS) and looks forward to further benefiting from the Agency’s technical expertise.

Mr. Chairman,

Export control plays a critical role in meeting the nuclear non-proliferation obligations. Bearing in mind the complexity of illicit procurement activities and the duty of preventing the acquisition by unauthorized actors, including terrorists, it is incumbent upon all of us to aim to strengthen export control systems. Effective national controls over the export of nuclear materials and technology as well as efficient international cooperation and solidarity are essential for the implementation of States' obligations.

Finally Mr. Chairman,

We wish to stress the importance of the full implementation of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1540, through the work of the 1540 Committee.

I thank you.