STATEMENT BY

HIS EXCELLENCY MR. RY TUY
AMBASSADOR, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE
OF THE KINGDOM OF CAMBODIA
TO THE UNITED NATIONS

United Nations conference to negotiate a legally-binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons, leading towards their total elimination

The 71st Session of the United Nations General Assembly

New York, 27 March 2017
Madame President,

First of all, I wish to join other colleagues to wholeheartedly congratulate you on assuming the Presidency of the UN Conference to negotiate a legally binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons, leading towards their total elimination. We appreciate your efforts on responsibilities of this conference.

While aligning myself with the statement delivered by the Philippines on behalf of ASEAN, I wish to deliver my national statement as follows:

Madame President,

Over the past decades, despite efforts made to move on with disarmament and non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, we have seen less or no progress.

The humanitarian consequences resulting from any use of nuclear weapons would be huge to human kind, and therefore a forward looking move towards multilateral negotiation for a world without nuclear weapons has become more important for us, as this has been reflected through the General Assembly resolution 71/258 which was adopted last year.

I would like to reaffirm Cambodia's principled position on nuclear non-proliferation, and disarmament and emphasize that the total elimination of nuclear weapons is the only guarantee against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. Nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation in all its aspects is essential to strengthening international peace and security which is an integral part of the United Nations Charter.

As we are going to listen to all member states' suggestions during these sessions and the upcoming sessions in June, this year, I wish to state that our on-going negotiation must be conducted in transparently and open, and in an all inclusive and fair manner taking into consideration the concerns of all member states. Accessibility to all negotiation processes should be also accorded to member states. Views from member states and groups should be fairly considered.

While sharing ASEAN's proposal towards the negotiation which centers on the provisions contained in those of the Treaty of Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapons Free Zone and the Non Proliferation Treaty, I wish to make the following comments:

- Of the three pillars, the NPT per se may be more successful in containing the proliferation and regulating peaceful use of nuclear energy, but has failed so far to achieve nuclear disarmament. Therefore, disarmament of nuclear weapons should be the center of our negotiation which needs to be strengthened in the provisions of the draft instrument;
- The instrument should seek to complement and fill in the legal loophole of the NPT rather than undermining it;

- The fact that major regions have rejected nuclear weapons through promoting their Nuclear Weapons Free Zones is an important momentum for us to strengthen the international law;

- The main concern is the entry into force, which would require time and political commitment for this to happen. One example is that the CTBT, which is still facing a high hurdle as it has yet to enter into force;

- I believe that the ultimate goal of the instrument is to make it become universalized so that it reaches to achieve our final objective of a world without nuclear weapons.

Madame President

Constructive and flexible engagements are key elements for success to the entire negotiation processes. I am certain that under your wise leadership and guidance we would be able to formulate a new instrument that would contribute to the promotion of a strong global norm on nuclear weapons.

Thank you