



BANGLADESH

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Statement by H. E. Dr. Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Bangladesh to the United Nations, at the Main Committee III of the 2005 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, New York, 23 May 2005

Madam Chairman,

Allow me first to congratulate you on your election as Chairman of the Main Committee III and assure you of my delegation's full cooperation in the successful conclusion of business of the Committee.

My delegation associates itself with the statement made in this Committee by Malaysia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement States Parties to the NPT.

We extend our support to the working paper NPT/Conf.2005/WP.20 on the substantive issues to be considered by this Committee submitted by the NAM States Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

Madam Chairman,

Article IV of the NPT guarantees the inalienable rights of all States Parties to the NPT to develop research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination and in conformity with Articles I and II of the Treaty. The NPT thus obliges States Parties to cooperate among themselves in the matter of exchange of equipments, materials and scientific and technological knowledge and information on peaceful uses of nuclear technology on condition that the provisions of Articles I and II are complied with by the nuclear and non-nuclear weapon States respectively.

We note with concern, however, that undue restrictions on exports to developing non-nuclear-weapon countries of material, equipment and technology for peaceful purposes continue to persist through measures incompatible with the provisions of the Treaty. Those barriers should be removed. We wish to underscore that the IAEA, under its statutory obligations, pursues the goals of technical cooperation in peaceful applications of nuclear energy as one of the three pillars of its activities.

We wish to recall that the IAEA is entrusted with putting in place necessary safeguards and verification regimes, and monitor their compliance in conformity of the obligations of the States Parties to the NPT. We are disappointed that extraneous reasons are being used by some nuclear weapon States to deny the rights of non-nuclear-weapon States to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and technology in their pursuit of sustainable development. We reject any attempt to use IAEA technical cooperation programme as a tool for political purposes. Bangladesh calls upon all

concerned to engage in constructive dialogue in order to implement the provisions of Articles I, II and IV in an environment of trust and confidence.

We are concerned at the freestyle interpretation of the Treaty provisions. This would not help any of us. We must acknowledge that peaceful uses of nuclear technology hold great promise for the humanity. We should not let this opportunity go by just because of our misplaced concern about proliferation of nuclear weapons. My delegation would state again, even at the risk of being repetitive, that the best guarantee against proliferation of nuclear weapons is their total elimination. Nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation are not mutually exclusive and one should be held hostage to the other under any circumstances.

We are convinced that peaceful uses of nuclear technology with the IAEA safeguards and verification regimes in place would immensely contribute to our common endeavour of sustainable development. In addition to electricity generation, nuclear technology may help tackle some old as well as contemporary development challenges that we confront today particularly with regard to hunger, disease, natural resource management, environmental pollution and climate change.

Nuclear techniques boost production of tropical plants and combat insects and plant diseases. Nuclear tools improve the food safety and help to cut air pollution. Radiology saves lives of cancer patients. And most importantly many of these nuclear technologies are cheap, simple to handle and offer excellent and often unique benefits in such areas as insect control, water resources management, human health and environmental protection.

Bangladesh, a country whose commitment to remain non-nuclear emanates from its constitution, has concluded the safeguards arrangements with the IAEA including the Additional Protocols. We call upon the States Parties that have not yet done so to adhere to the IAEA comprehensive safeguards arrangements.

Finally, we wish to reaffirm the inviolability of peaceful nuclear activities. We consider that any attack or threat of attack against peaceful nuclear facilities poses a great danger to human beings and the environment, and constitutes a grave violation of international law, the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter and the regulations of the IAEA.

I thank you Madam Chairman.