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PHILIPPINE STATEMENT

H.E. Ms. LINGLINGAY F. LACANLALE

Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Philippines to the United Nations in Vienna, at the General Debate of the First Session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, Vienna, Austria, 01 May 2007

Mr. Chairman,

I wish to congratulate you on your election as Chair of the First Session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the NPT and Ukraine as Vice Chair. You have our full confidence and cooperation as you stir the meeting through challenging waters.

The Philippines associates itself with the statement delivered by the Ambassador of Cuba on behalf of the Group of Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) State Parties to the NPT. In particular, the Philippines would like to emphasize the importance of simultaneous efforts towards nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation.

Mr. Chairman,

The NPT is at a critical juncture since it entered into force over three decades ago as the cornerstone of the global nuclear management regime. The past two NPT review conferences were a disappointment.

We must not allow this stand-off to continue and risk further failure in our 2010 review conference. Growing security threats such as the discovery of a clandestine nuclear weapon supply network; the stalled entry into force of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), ineffective nuclear weapon free-zones, to name a few, multiply the dangers to failure.

Moreover, the international community must contend with such grave challenges as the horizontal proliferation by non-nuclear weapons states; vertical proliferation by nuclear weapons states through modernization and plans for a

new generation of nuclear weapons; and a sense of restiveness, particularly among developed states, from the access by developing states to nuclear technology under Article IV of the Treaty.

Mr. Chairman,

Notwithstanding the current impasse, we see some positive developments that could move us forward.

First, the Secretary General expressed his strong commitment to advance the international disarmament agenda, making disarmament one of his personal priorities. In a recent statement, Secretary General Ban Ki-moon described as unacceptable the current situation where setbacks in the field of disarmament have become the norm, rather than the exception.

Second, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea decided to re-engage in the Six-Party Talks and announced its intentions to shut down its nuclear program in exchange for economic aid and political concessions. We remain hopeful that Pyongyang will abide by its commitment despite missing the April 14 deadline for it to do so.

Third, the UN Disarmament Commission concluded its 2007 substantive session last Friday in New York with a working paper that contained 10 fundamental principles for the implementation of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. We are confident that this would serve as a basis for fruitful discussions and concrete recommendations.

Mr. Chairman,

As we go about our work here in Vienna over the next ten days, my delegation hopes that, in the spirit of cooperation and of shared purpose, we could achieve progress in the following areas:

- Strengthening of the NPT's institutional framework to handle violations including serious consideration of the proposal for the universal adoption of the Model Additional Protocol on Safeguards to strengthen the verification authority of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA);
- Preventing states that are in breach of the NPT from trying to escape their valid obligations simply by withdrawing from the Treaty;
- Strengthening the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material and the cooperation on the security of medical and industrial radiational sources;
- Negotiating the fissile material cut-off agreement and enter into arrangements for a five-year moratorium on additional facilities for uranium enrichment and plutonium separation; and

- Making progress in addressing 13 practical steps for the systematic and progressive efforts in implementing Article IV and the decision on Principles and Objectives for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament.

Mr. Chairman,

The Philippines believes that one very important confidence-building block is for all of us to work for the accession to the NPT of the remaining three non-state parties which possess nuclear weapons.

Mr. Chairman,

Allow me to briefly touch on one of the three pillars of nuclear non-proliferation – the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. My delegation would like to commend the IAEA for its valuable contribution to the non-proliferation regime through its programmes and activities in its three pillars of work – verification, safety and promotional activities. The IAEA is however constrained in its verification role. Article IV of the NPT provides for the inalienable right of States Parties to engage in research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination. While this right should be respected, it must be stressed that there should be full and transparent implementation of strengthened safeguards. Full transparency builds confidence and, in turn, promotes greater international nuclear cooperation.

The Philippines believes that there must be strong incentives for States not to pursue the nuclear weapons option, and disincentives for States which pursue this option. In this context, however, the Philippines recalls the 'grand bargain' arrived at during the negotiations for the NPT, wherein developing states gave up the pursuit of nuclear weapons, in exchange for the nuclear weapons states' firm and unwavering commitment to total nuclear disarmament. After almost forty years, this bargain has not been realized. It is not surprising that the NPT is under threat today.

On nuclear terrorism, the Philippines shares the world's concern over the danger posed by nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction falling into the wrong hands. We cannot overstate the importance of establishing measures to address the trafficking of WMDs. While the Philippines believes that the best way to prevent this from happening is to eliminate such weapons, the problem of proliferation can be effectively addressed also through strategic and proactive approaches that include diplomacy and dialogue. In this regard, the Philippines is currently in the process of establishing a national export control regime which will prohibit the trafficking of WMDs and their components in line with the NPT and other disarmament and non-proliferation conventions – a measure also being undertaken by other states in Southeast Asia.

Mr. Chairman,

During its term as member of the Security Council from 2004 to 2005, the Philippines was actively involved in the negotiations that led to the adoption of Security Council Resolution 1540 on the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. The Philippines co-sponsored that resolution and later served as vice chairman of the 1540 Committee.

The ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) meeting in August this year in Manila is expected to issue a statement to support national implementation of Resolution 1540 in the ASEAN region, in a coordinated manner and in full cooperation with the UNSCR 1540 Committee. This is in pursuit of ARF commitments, particularly the Jakarta Statement on Non-proliferation, adopted by the 11th ARF on 02 July 2004, to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery.

Mr. Chairman,

The Treaty on the Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapon Free Zone (SEANWFZ) would be ASEAN's contribution to the international non-proliferation regime. While there are remaining issues with respect to the Protocol of the Treaty, the ASEAN agreed to continue to work out a consensus on the SEANWFZ Protocol at the meeting of the Executive Committee of the SEANWFZ Commission in Manila on 25 February 2007.

Mr. Chairman,

We all share the NPT vision of a secure world for all and for future generations. Let us muster the political will to bring this vision closer to reality in this session.

Thank you.