



**PERMANENT MISSION OF THAILAND  
TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

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**STATEMENT**

**BY**

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**FIRST SECRETARY**

**PERMANENT MISSION OF THAILAND**

**TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

**AT THE GENERAL DEBATE OF THE FIRST COMMITTEE**

**57<sup>TH</sup> SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

**NEW YORK, 7 OCTOBER 2002**

**PLEASE CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY**

Mr. Chairman,

On behalf of the delegation of Thailand, I would like to join other distinguished speakers before me in congratulating you on your election as Chairman of the First Committee. I am confident that under your able leadership and guidance, the First Committee will produce tangible results, thus contributing to disarmament efforts worldwide. I would also like to convey the appreciation of my delegation to Ambassador Andre Erdos of Hungary and other members of his bureau for their contributions to the success of the First Committee last year.

Thailand would like to associate itself with the ASEAN Statement to be delivered by Myanmar.

Mr. Chairman,

The outrageous attack that led to the sad loss of lives of thousands of innocent civilians on 11 September last year serves to remind us of the desperate and unimaginable measures which terrorists are willing to take to achieve their ends. We can never dismiss the possibility that weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and related technologies could some day fall into the hands of international terrorists. This requires upon all of us to be even more vigilant.

It is essential that we reinforce multilateralism and support multilateral regimes, particularly those in the disarmament field. For the challenge posed by international terrorism and its possible acquisition of WMD can only be met effectively through the concerted and coordinated action of all States, large and small. Indeed, we should take up the Secretary-General's call in his recent address to the UNGA to "make full use of multilateral institutions." How best can we achieve this?

First, we need to continue to maintain if not accelerate the momentum in existing multilateral disarmament regimes. At the global level, the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) remains the bedrock for the total elimination and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. The results of the First Meeting of the Preparatory Committee for the NPT Review Conference in 2005 held in April this year should help strengthen the momentum in the NPT process. We welcome Cuba's recent decision to accede to the NPT and to ratify the Tlatelolco Treaty. The IAEA's critical role in helping ensure nuclear safety and nuclear non-proliferation should be reinforced. In this connection, we are encouraged that at the recent Meeting of the IAEA Board of Governors and the IAEA General Conference in Vienna, members of the international community attached high importance to measures to strengthen international cooperation in nuclear radiation, transport and waste safety, as well as nuclear verification and security of materials. It is therefore essential that developing countries have ready access to technical assistance so that they may build their capacities to ensure greater nuclear safety in the development of research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. At the regional level, nuclear weapon free zones are an important instrument in disarmament and non-proliferation efforts. We thereby call on all States, particularly the Nuclear Weapons States (NWS), to support the Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapon Free Zone (SEANWFZ). We also welcome the recent progress in the discussions for the establishment of the Central Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone.

Second, we need to reverse the detrimental trends in some multilateral disarmament regimes brought about by both unilateral action and inaction. The failure of the 5<sup>th</sup> Review Conference of the BWC last November to produce substantive results has potentially placed the BWC regime in jeopardy. Despite the holding of the Conference on Facilitating Entry into Force of the CTBT in last November, the refusal by key Annex 2 States, particularly the NWS, to ratify the Treaty has the potential of eroding confidence in this important instrument for nuclear non-proliferation. On our part, we are expediting our internal processes in order to ratify the CTBT as soon as possible.

Third, we need to support new initiatives to strengthen multilateral disarmament regimes. The launching of the Fourth Special Session of the General Assembly devoted to Disarmament (SSOD IV), which should among other things help promote nuclear disarmament, is long overdue. We therefore hope that the SSOD IV will be convened as early as possible with the participation of all States.

Mr. Chairman,

The threat of WMD looms over all of us, but we should not be complacent with small arms and light weapons either for they are the real culprits, causing death and destruction every day. More and more people, including women and children, are being killed or maimed by small arms and light weapons as well as landmines. It is these very weapons that could give our common enemies, the drug traffickers, the upper hand in our war against drugs. The international community took a significant step forward to address the challenge posed by the uncontrolled spread of small arms and light weapons (SALW) with the adoption of the Programme of Action (PoA) at the UN Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in all its Aspects in July 2001. Thailand has taken many steps since then to follow-up the results of the Conference. A national coordinating body under the leadership of the National Security Council has been established to examine ways to ensure effective implementation of the PoA. Thailand also actively participates in the UN's Group of Governmental Experts which met this past July in Geneva to assist the Secretary-General in examining a study on the feasibility of developing an international instrument to trace illicit small arms and light weapons. We support all efforts to ensure strong momentum in the follow-up to the PoA, leading up to the biennial meeting on SALW next year. Regarding the venue and timing of the biennial meeting, we strongly urge that it be held in New York in July in order to ensure that the greatest number of delegations are able to participate in the SALW process. We also ask that member states make good on their commitments to provide technical and financial assistance in order for all States to have the requisite capacity to implement effectively the PoA.

The recent conclusion of the Fourth Meeting of the States Parties to the Ottawa Convention on Anti-Personnel Mines (APM) in Geneva brings into focus yet again the devastating humanitarian impact of the landmines problem and the need to achieve universalization of the Convention as soon as possible. Thailand has played an active role in promoting the issue of victims assistance and in comprehensively addressing the landmines issue at the regional level through two seminars held in Thailand in November 2001 and May 2002 this year. Our contribution to help address the global challenge posed by APMs will culminate in Thailand's hosting of the Fifth Member States Parties to the Ottawa Convention in September 2003. I therefore take this opportunity to invite all States Parties and other countries to attend and participate in this meeting.

Mr. Chairman,

Multilateralism and effective multilateral disarmament regimes are our best bet to overcome the challenges posed by international terrorism, WMD and the threat of proliferation of nuclear weapons. Let us renew our commitments to multilateralism and jointly undertake efforts to make our world a safer and more secure place for our future generations.

Thank you.