

**FIFTY-EIGHT SESSION OF THE
GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

FIRST COMMITTEE

GENERAL DEBATE

**STATEMENT
by
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to the United Nations**

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Mr. Chairman,

Let me begin by congratulating you most sincerely on your election as Chairman of the First Committee. I wish to assure you of our full support in the discharge of your important responsibilities.

This gives me the opportunity to also warmly welcome the appointment of Mr. Nobuyasu Abe, as Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs, we look forward to cooperate with him and his team.

Romania fully associates itself with the statement delivered by the Italian Presidency on behalf of the European Union. In addition, I would like to make the following remarks:

New challenges and threats

Present-day security and stability is being challenged, both globally and regionally, by the risks associated with the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and their means of delivery. September 11th has given a greater sense of urgency to common efforts required from all states to prevent WMD from getting into the hands of terrorist groups.

The proliferation threat gained a new dimension: the prospect of transnational groups seeking to acquire and use weapons of mass destruction. There is increasing concern that radicals or terrorist groups might obtain weapons of mass destruction from unstable or hostile regimes.

We all are aware that there is no panacea nor "one-size-fits-all" policies to counter the threat posed by WMD proliferation.

In pursuing our goal of WMD elimination, we have to use the means that we judge will be most effective in each particular case. There are a number of tools at the disposal of the international community. All are necessary: none is sufficient in itself.

The spread of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons has been successfully limited by international arms control and disarmament agreements. These multilateral treaties and the regimes they establish help to deter the pursuit of WMD programmes, and contribute to increasing related political costs.

But these treaties are not yet universal. Recent experience shows that, on their own, they cannot prevent determined proliferators from not complying with their international obligations.

What must be changed to respond more efficiently to these increasingly ominous challenges and threats?

The Security Council has the primary responsibility in the field of maintaining international peace and security. The Security Council should agree to broaden its definition of what situations "constitute a threat to international

peace and security" to cover also situations related to WMD, for the international community to be able to act timely and effectively in addressing them.

We have to modernize the system put in place by the United Nations Charter in terms of both preventive diplomacy and enforcement and develop a new multilateral approach aimed at delegitimizing the acquisition or use of all WMD.

This approach should comprise not only the goal of universal adherence to, and effective implementation of, conventions that prohibit WMD, but also robust and intrusive verification systems and reliable enforcement measures to effectively counter efforts by any country to illicitly acquire WMD.

This demands stricter national export control legislation and procedures consistent with the international standards. It requires also an effective global approach to the physical protection of nuclear and other radioactive material, better controls for chemical and biological agents and effective measures for prohibiting the transfer or transport of WMD, their delivery systems, and related materials to states or non-state actors of proliferation concern.

Nuclear Non-Proliferation

The goals set forth in the Treaty for the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), namely to control the further spread of nuclear weapons and to move towards nuclear disarmament, are under considerable pressure. The NPT remains in our view the cornerstone of the global non-proliferation regime and the essential foundation for the pursuit of nuclear disarmament.

The IAEA's safeguards system is the fundamental pillar of the international nuclear non-proliferation regime. Romania considers Additional Protocols an integral part of the IAEA safeguards system and attaches a high priority to their implementation by all concerned states. We therefore urge all states to conclude and implement an Additional Protocol as soon as possible.

Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT)

The prohibition of all nuclear weapon test explosions or any other nuclear explosions and entry into force of a CTBT will constitute an essential step towards achieving nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament.

It is important that all states that have not yet done so to sign and ratify the CTBT as soon as possible. In the meantime we welcome the fact that several countries which have not yet been able to sign or ratify the Treaty are nonetheless observing moratoria on nuclear explosions.

FMCT

The negotiations at the Conference on Disarmament (CD) of a non-discriminatory and universal Treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices constitutes an essential stage in nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament. We regret that consensus was not yet reached in the CD in order to launch the said negotiations.

We restate the view that the work of the CD's subsidiary bodies should begin without delay on the basis of mandates which are sufficiently pragmatic and broad to make the subject of an agreement.

Ballistic missiles

Romania is deeply concerned about the growing proliferation of ballistic missiles capable of carrying WMD. We welcome the adoption of the International Code of Conduct against the proliferation of ballistic missiles as a primary step towards the integration of ballistic missiles in the multilateral non-proliferation and disarmament regime and encourage other countries to join the ICOC.

Chemical Weapons Convention

The possible misuse of chemical materials and equipment in an offensive programme or by terrorists is too great a risk to permit any complacency.

Romania firmly believes that establishing sound national export control system is one of the fundamental obligations of every State Party under the Chemical Weapon Convention. It provides significant security benefits for all States Parties, by reducing the risks that chemical weapons will be developed and used anywhere.

Effective national export controls voluntarily coordinated between states, together with the improved transparency resulting from full implementation of the Convention's verification measures, will enhance international security and improve mutual confidence.

Biological Weapons Convention

The Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention represents a key instrument to prevent biological agents or toxins from being used as weapons. The total ban of such weapons of mass destruction becomes especially important in the light of their potential use for terrorist purposes.

Romania attaches high priority to the issue of national compliance and legislative and regulatory implementation measures and supports proposals to strengthen such measures.

Export controls

I already underlined the importance of effective national export control legislation and enforcement institutions. In our view it is essential that all exporting states assume their responsibility and take appropriate measures to ensure that exports of sensitive materials, equipment and technologies are subject to strict control. Export controls must ensure that transfers are made only for peaceful purposes as required by the relevant conventions and treaties facilitating also international cooperation and technological development.

Romania supports all efforts undertaken by the Wassenaar Arrangement, the Nuclear Suppliers Group, the Australia Group and the MTCR to prevent the proliferation of WMD and their means of delivery and to promote, in case of the WA, transparency and greater responsibility in transfers of conventional arms and dual-use goods and technologies.

Small Arms and Light Weapons

The first biennial conference on the implementation of the UN PoA to combat illicit trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons helped all states to give consideration to starting work on unresolved and newly relevant issues to maximize the chances for success through the 2005 biennial meeting and the 2006 Review Conference.

Progress has been achieved so far at global, regional and national level. Nevertheless, many SALW related issues are still to be discussed and agreed upon, in particular on strengthening the export controls, marking and tracing, brokering and fostering international cooperation and transparency in arms transfers.

Anti-Personnel Mines

Romania remains strongly committed to promote a global eradication of anti-personnel mines and will continue to campaign for a universal application of the Ottawa Convention.

The convention sets forth strict time limits for the destruction of stockpiles and the clearance of mined areas. Even though the Convention gives some degree of flexibility, we must do our utmost to achieve the objectives within the set deadlines. Compliance with the convention and humanitarian mine activities are mutually reinforcing activities.

Mr. Chairman,

Romania remains committed to work closely with other member states in bringing about comprehensive reform of the United Nations. In this regard multilateral mechanisms in the field of international security, disarmament and non-proliferation should be adapted in order to respond more effectively to the current needs of the international community. We therefore stand ready to join ongoing efforts to improve the deliberative process of the First Committee.