



# BANGLADESH

*Please check against delivery*

**Statement by Ambassador Ismat Jahan, Permanent Representative of Bangladesh to the United Nations at the General Debate of the First Committee of the 62<sup>nd</sup> UNGA  
10 October 2007**

---

**Mr. Chairman,**

Let me begin by congratulating you, and your bureau, upon your well-deserved election. I am confident that under your capable leadership, the work of this Committee will see a successful outcome. We also congratulate Ambassador Sergio Duarte on his appointment as High Representative for Disarmament Affairs.

Mr. Chairman

My delegation aligns itself with the statement made by Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement. However, we would like to add the following points:

Bangladesh believes that the greatest threat to humanity comes from the continued existence of weapons of mass destruction. The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) are the cornerstone of the global nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament regime. We must ensure full universality of the NPT, CTBT and other international instruments without any single exception. But it is a matter of great regret that although the process of NPT began in 1968 with great expectations, it has not been able to live up to it. The treaty, signed by almost all countries of the world, provides a guarantee that while the non-nuclear nations would forgo building nuclear weapons, the nuclear nations would divest themselves of their own nuclear weapons. However, the lack of political will of a few has cast shadow over the prospect of making the world a safer place. Similarly for the CTBT there has been little development in the last few years.

We are nonetheless heartened to see that there is some glimmer of hopes. We are confident that it is possible to build on the outcome of the First Preparatory Commission for 2010 NPT Review Conference held in Vienna earlier this year. We need to work in the right earnest to ensure the Treaty's continuing relevance and strength.

In this context, we wish to underscore that, article IV of the NPT guarantees the inalienable rights of all States to develop, research, produce and use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. These must apply without discrimination and the rights of non-nuclear-weapon States to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and technology must be upheld.

Mr. Chairman,

Bangladesh is constitutionally committed to disarmament and non-proliferation. Accordingly, our disarmament and non-proliferation records are impeccable. We have consciously and unconditionally decided to remain non-nuclear. Bangladesh is the first Annex 2 nation in South Asia to have signed and ratified the CTBT. We are party to almost all disarmament related treaties including the NPT, the CTBT, the CWC, the CCW, the APMT and the BWC. We have also concluded safeguards agreement with the IAEA including the Additional Protocols. These are tangible testimonies to our unwavering commitment towards the goal of disarmament.

As a member of the Conference on Disarmament and a party to the Geneva Convention 1925, Bangladesh became one of the early signatories and ratifying States of CWC. Bangladesh has never pursued production, procurement, or use of chemical and biological weapons. Indeed, we always condemned the use of such weapons of mass destruction against mankind and environment. Bangladesh always supported the OPCW's efforts in making the convention comprehensive, non-discriminatory, verifiable and ultimately a universal instrument for the elimination of chemical weapons from the world.

Mr. Chairman,

We are concerned that a huge number of civilians, including women and children, still fall victims to anti-personnel landmines in conflict and post-conflict situations around the world. We call upon those States, which have not yet done so, to become parties to the Anti Personnel Mine Treaty. We wish to inform that Bangladesh has destroyed all its stockpiles of landmines in fulfilment of its commitment to the international instruments on landmines. We urge the international community for providing assistance to landmine clearance operations as well as in rehabilitating the victims.

Mr. Chair,

Bangladesh continues to believe that a Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty (FMCT) is ripe for negotiation. It is our expectation that in the upcoming session, the Conference on Disarmament will negotiate and conclude an agreement on complete elimination of such materials.

Mr. Chairman,

We are also concerned at the continued development and deployment of anti-ballistic missile defence systems and the pursuit of advanced military technologies capable of being deployed in outer space. Bangladesh reiterates its call for resumption of work on the prevention of arms race in the outer space in the framework of the Conference on Disarmament.

Bangladesh strongly believes in regional approaches to nuclear disarmament. Confidence-building measures through the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free-zones (NWFZ) can contribute significantly to this goal. We welcome the recent creation of the Central Asian Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone (CANWFZ) by five Central Asian States. We appreciate all other such existing NWFZs and call for the establishment of similar zones in South Asia, in the Middle East and in other parts of the world. In South Asia, we would urge India and Pakistan to relinquish their nuclear option and join the NPT. Israel must do the same in the Middle East. We also believe that the recent trend of bilateral agreements on civilian use of nuclear energy should not, in any way, hinder the cause of regional disarmament. We also call for universal access to the Comprehensive Safeguards Agreements and Additional Protocols, as these have had so far a deterrent effect on nuclear proliferation.

Mr. Chairman,

Bangladesh strongly believes that there should be a control mechanism to prevent the spread of conventional arms. An effective Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) will ensure a responsible transfer of conventional weapons. As a country committed to disarmament and non-proliferation, Bangladesh will extend all possible cooperation to a successful conclusion of such a treaty.

Mr. Chairman,

It is appalling that the global military expenditures have been rising steadily for the last couple of years. In 2006 the world spent US \$ 1.12 Trillion for military purposes only. Such mindless expenditures are the result of a frantic arms race that is increasingly having negative impact on our development agenda. We urge all countries, particularly the major military powers, to divert part of these resources to poverty alleviation in developing countries. Such a move would greatly advance the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by 2015.

Mr. Chair,

Bangladesh hopes that this session of First Committee will play its due role in strengthening the international peace and security regime. Before concluding, I would like to reaffirm our commitment to working with you and other delegates towards that end.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.

\*\*\*\*\*