



# **THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA**

**PERMANENT MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

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**Statement by H.E.Mr. CHANG Dong-hee**

**Ambassador to the Conference on Disarmament of the Republic of Korea**

**At the First Committee of the 62<sup>nd</sup> United Nations General Assembly**

**Thematic Debate on Nuclear Weapons**

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Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman,

1. Since the openly stated failures of the 7<sup>th</sup> Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conference and of the World Summit in 2005, there has been growing criticism that multilateral disarmament is in disarray. However, we have recently witnessed some positive developments in disarmament and non-proliferation community. Following the adoption of the Decision on a Compliance Mechanism and the Plan of Action at the Third CCW Review Conference in November 2006, the Sixth Review Conference of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BWC) succeeded in adopting a final declaration. It also agreed on the establishment of the Implementation Support Unit (ISU) and the intersessional work program. The First NPT PrepCom held last May, in preparation for the 2010 Review Conference, is also believed to have constituted an auspicious commencement of the new NPT Review Cycle.

2. Furthermore, although consensus has yet to be reached on a program of work, the Conference on Disarmament, the only multilateral forum for disarmament negotiations, is deemed to have built quite considerably upon last year's achievements by allowing for constructive, structured and substantive discussions. This can be attributed to the successful and effective performance of the six Presidents and the six Coordinators. We believe these positive developments will provide new impetus and a boost of energy to reinvigorate our common efforts in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation.

Mr. Chairman,

3. Nuclear disarmament is of vital importance to secure the effectiveness of the NPT regime. It is a commitment made by the Nuclear Weapon States (NWS) as a quid pro quo for the renunciation of the pursuit of nuclear weapons by Non-Nuclear Weapon States (NNWS). Although significant progress has been made thus far in reducing nuclear arsenals, the five nuclear weapon states still possess more than 26,000 nuclear warheads. It is true that there remains a significant perception gap between the nuclear haves and have-nots about the accomplishment by NWS in terms of nuclear reduction. The best way to close this gap and to restore trust and confidence between NWS and NNWS is for the NWS to faithfully implement their Art. VI obligation as indicated in the outcome documents of the 1995 and 2000 NPT Review Conferences. In addition, it is also important to alleviate the security concerns of NNWS. Providing adequate security assurances to those non-nuclear weapons states that are in full compliance with non-proliferation obligations under the NPT will serve as an incentive to forgo the acquisition of weapons of mass destruction.

Mr. Chairman,

4. The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) celebrated its 11<sup>th</sup> anniversary last month. However, its entry into force remains a distant goal, despite repeated calls upon all States that have not yet ratified the Treaty to do so without delay. As Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon stated in his message conveyed on the occasion of the 11<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the CTBT, this should "not be a time for celebration, but for re-dedication to the noble work that lies ahead in achieving the Treaty's entry into force." We have to bear in mind that a prolonged logjam may lead some states into the temptation of testing, thereby jeopardizing the test ban norms, an important foundation of the NPT.

5. As the next logical step, we cannot overemphasize the importance of the Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty (FMCT), which serves not only as a guarantor of nuclear non-proliferation, but also as a precursor to nuclear disarmament. The Conference on Disarmament, however, has long been paralyzed, unable to initiate substantive discussions on the FMCT.
6. In this vein, we welcome the Presidential Draft Decision (L.1) tabled this year in the CD and hope it will provide us with a good starting basis for negotiations in 2008. In the meantime, considering the pressing need to curb the production of fissile materials, we urge all states possessing nuclear weapons to voluntarily declare and abide by a moratorium on the production of fissile materials for weapons purposes, pending the enactment of the FMCT. This would certainly be conducive to further enhancing transparency and confidence-building among states.

Mr. Chairman,

7. Despite the setbacks and challenges, the NPT still remains the cornerstone of global nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament efforts and it is in urgent need of further strengthening and reinforcement. In addition to continuing to work to ensure universal adherence to the NPT, we should also strive to secure the universal application of the non-proliferation commitments under the treaty with enhanced global safeguards and verification standards. This would enhance global confidence in the NPT system by bolstering its monitoring and verification mechanisms.

Mr. Chairman,

8. It is my great pleasure to inform you of the recent breakthrough in the North Korean nuclear issue. The Six Party Talks has been the main vehicle for the resolution of the North Korean nuclear issue. This process has made significant progress since its launch in 2003. In the Joint Statement of September 2005, the six nations agreed on a blueprint for the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. The Initial Actions Agreement of February this year took that consensus forward another step, laying out the specific actions to implement the Joint Statement.

9. Additional progress has been achieved during the recent round of the Six Party Talks held in Beijing last month; the adoption of the agreement on the "Second-Phase Actions for the Implementation of the Joint Statement" that specify the disablement of the core North Korean nuclear facilities at Yongbyon and a complete and correct declaration of all nuclear programs of the DPRK by the end of this year. Furthermore, the successful completion of disablement and declaration within the stipulated timeframe could allow us to enter the dismantlement phase starting next year.
10. The Korean government will continue to closely cooperate with related parties for the smooth implementation of the agreement and the future advancement of the Six Party Talks. In addition, we will make every effort for the Six Party Talks process to move beyond the resolution of the North Korean nuclear issue and develop into a multilateral dialogue mechanism in Northeast Asia.

Mr. Chairman,

11. Again, we have before us the opportunity to reverse the disappointment and ongoing deadlock in nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. With the 2<sup>nd</sup> NPT PrepCom scheduled for next year, this year's First Committee should redouble the efforts to provide tangible and productive outcomes. Let me conclude my statement by quoting the late U.S. President J. F. Kennedy: "I ask you to stop and think for a moment what it would mean to have nuclear weapons in so many hands, in the hands of countries, large and small, stable and unstable, responsible and irresponsible, scattered throughout the world".

Thank you