



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

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**STATEMENT BY JEANETTE KWEK,
DELEGATE TO THE 63RD SESSION
OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY
GENERAL DEBATE
FIRST COMMITTEE,
10 OCTOBER 2008**

Mr Chairman,

1. Allow me to begin by congratulating you on your election as Chairman of the First Committee and members of the bureau on their appointments. My delegation looks forward to working with you as we go through the next few weeks together.

Mr Chairman,

2. We face increasingly complex challenges in our quest for peace and security. New fronts are emerging in the global fight against terrorism, even as we continue with ongoing multinational efforts in areas such as Afghanistan and Iraq. In today's interconnected world, terrorists are able to easily and effectively reach beyond national borders, and are harder to confine to one geographical location. It is also more difficult to distinguish between what is and what is not a weapon. Technological advances have made the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, as well as related systems and materials, much easier. The free flow of information, materials and personnel between countries compounds the difficulty of preventing proliferation in today's environment.

3. In the face of these challenges, it is imperative that the international community strengthen its efforts to address the issues of disarmament and non-proliferation. Traditional initiatives and approaches to non-proliferation need to be supplemented with measures that not only adhere to international law but can assist states in a practical and effective manner. As a global transshipment hub and responsible member of the international community, Singapore has taken decisive measures to strengthen our exports control regime in order to implement coordinated and effective measures to disrupt the illicit transfer of WMD-related materials. This is our commitment towards non-proliferation. Additionally, in support of these efforts, Singapore participates in both the Container Security Initiative (CSI), as well as the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI).

Mr Chairman,

4. As a small country, Singapore remains deeply concerned about the continued existence of nuclear weapons. We urge all members of the international community to work together toward the elimination of nuclear weapons. To achieve this, global co-operation in disarmament and non-proliferation is crucial. This requires a multilateral approach based on the rule of law. Treaties and conventions, especially those related to nuclear weapons and weapons of mass destruction, must see concrete implementation of commitments in order to remain credible. To be fully effective, they must also be universal. Singapore has consistently supported multilateral non-proliferation instruments that serve the interests of international security and stability. We reiterate our support for the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), and the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC). Closer to home, we have the South East Asia Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone (SEANWFZ).

Mr Chairman,

5. Together with sustainable development and respect for human rights, the desire for peace and security was one of the fundamental pillars upon which the UN has been built. Thus the UN must remain ever vigilant and continue playing a lead role to find resolutions for the security issues on the agenda, and in finding pragmatic and practical ways for us to cooperate with one another. My delegation would like to express our hope and confidence that under your able leadership, this committee will be able to work together toward effective disarmament and non-proliferation regimes. Thank you.

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