



ARMENIA

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UNGA 63/ First Committee
General Debate

Statement by H.E. Mr. Armen MARTIROSYAN, Ambassador, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Armenia to the United Nations

Mr. Chairman,

First of all, allow me to extend to you, Ambassador Suazo, my congratulations on your assumption of the chair of the First Committee. We are confident that under your keen stewardship the Committee will have a productive and successful session. I would also like to extend my appreciation to Ambassador Badji for his remarkable work during the 62st Session.

Mr. Chairman,

Armenia's geographical location puts it in a position where it is confronted with the issues related both to conventional weapons and the weapons of mass destruction. Therefore, Armenia is deeply interested in the unconditional implementation and further strengthening of the existing disarmament and non-proliferation agreements as well as international verification mechanisms and institutions.

Armenia believes that the Non-Proliferation Treaty plays a central role in maintaining the nuclear non-proliferation regime. We are concerned about the developments around the Iranian nuclear program and its potential regional repercussions. We closely follow the discussions conducted in the Security Council and hope that the negotiations under the auspices of the International Atomic Energy Agency coupled with diplomatic efforts will lead to a mutually acceptable solution.

We would also like to stress the tremendous importance of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. Armenia believes that entry into force of this agreement, along with the enhancement of the safeguard capacities of the International Atomic Energy Agency and reinforcement of the national export control systems, can drastically strengthen the NPT system and lead us closer to the righteous objective of the world safe from the scourge of nuclear weapons.

Mr. Chairman,

Armenia attaches great importance to conventional disarmament. Armenia will continue to actively support the efforts of the United Nations and other international organizations to curb and stop the uncontrolled spread of Small Arms and Light Weapons. In particular, Armenia is committed to effective implementation of the UN Program of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All its Aspects and systematically submits its biannual reports on this issue. In this regard, we are pleased that the Third Biennial Meeting to Review the United Nations Program of Action led to the adoption of a substantive report. We believe that the report will genuinely contribute to the improvement and strengthening of the Program of Action.

Armenia fully supports the efforts of the international community to eliminate Anti-Personal Mines. In this regard, I would like to point out that since its entry into force of the Ottawa Convention, Armenia has consistently expressed its willingness to accede to the treaty. However, Armenia's accession to the Convention is contingent upon the readiness of other countries of our region to adhere to this international agreement and comply with its regime. We believe that the simultaneous accession of the regional countries will ensure the effectiveness of the Convention and reduce security threat perceptions in the South Caucasus.

Conventional arms control at regional and sub-regional levels is an issue of primary importance for the security of my country. Armenia is located in a region where a number of unresolved conflicts still exist. Furthermore, there is a lack of regional security arrangements in the South Caucasus. It goes without saying that under such circumstances the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe and unconditional and complete observance of its provisions play a fundamental role for the maintenance of stability and peace in the South Caucasus.

Unfortunately, this pivotal agreement is being challenged in our region. Over the past few years, the ceilings of the conventional weapons established for the countries of our region have overtly been disregarded posing a direct threat to the fragile stability in the South Caucasus.

We believe that the international community, and primarily the OSCE member states, should react to this explicit breach of the norms of international law and take all necessary steps to restore the validity of the Treaty in our region. It is undisputable that strict observance of the Treaty by all three countries of the Southern Caucasus is one of the fundamental preconditions for security and stability in this region.

Mr. Chairman,

In my statements made during two previous sessions of the General Assembly, I have drawn the attention of the Committee on the unprecedented arms race that has been unleashed in the region of the South Caucasus and its possible

consequences. Indeed, parallel to the violation of the CFE Treaty in the South Caucasus we have been witnessing an unprecedented arms race along with the enormous growth of military budgets resulting in the escalation and deterioration of the overall security situation in the region.

It was not accidental, that the accumulation of armament in the region, which is missing viable security arrangements, coupled with the raise of militaristic rhetoric in lieu of genuine political dialogue, led to a military confrontation.

These events have evidently demonstrated that the use of force yields absolutely no result to the solution of existing conflicts in the region. It is obvious that quick-fix approaches to conflict resolution are not viable. There is no alternative to conflict resolution resulting from negotiations based on political compromise and ultimate commitment of parties to non-use of force.

Mr. Chairman,

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate Armenia's commitment to its international obligations with regard to arms control and disarmament. We are confident that full compliance with the United Nations resolutions and regional arrangements on arms control and disarmament is one of the most essential and critical factors that can bring us closer to stability and durable peace in the South Caucasus.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.