

NEPAL

Statement by H. E. Mr. Madhu Raman Acharya Ambassador / Permanent Representative of Nepal at the General Debate on Disarmament and International Security agenda items of the First Committee during the 63rd Session of the UN General Assembly

(New York, 13 October 2008)

Mr. Chairman,

First of all, let me congratulate you and other members for election to the bureau of the Committee.

On behalf of delegation of Nepal, I would like to express our sincere appreciation to Mr. Sergio Duarte for his comprehensive presentation.

Nepal would like to align with the statement made by Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

Mr. Chairman,

Today, our world continues to pay hefty bills on arms, but offers very little for development. Thus, the “disarmament dividend” is still very illusive.

We continue to be disappointed due to continued lack of progress in multilateral negotiations on disarmament. That is making the notion of general and comprehensive disarmament, which we advocate, a distant dream. In absence of any progress towards that, the international peace and security hangs on the existence of large stockpile of nuclear weapons, with eminent danger of proliferation including that of the weapons of mass destruction (WMD) at the hands of terrorists.

As a party to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), Nepal favours complete non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and stresses that the provisions for safeguards and verification should be rigorously applied to prevent proliferation of nuclear materials. The IAEA must continue to strengthen its safeguards mechanism to make non-proliferation more effective. We also need to make tangible progress towards the 2010 NPT Review Conference.

The Conference on Disarmament in Geneva should endeavor to make progress in the negotiations for the fissile material cut-off treaty (FMCT). There should be also efforts for the entry into force of the Comprehensive Test Ban treaty (CTBT) and its universal adherence.

Mr. Chairman,

Nepal is against any encroachment of the outer space for military purposes. The sanctity of the outer space should be preserved as common heritage for peaceful uses of mankind at all costs.

We are for a stringent control on the proliferation and indiscriminate use of conventional weapons, especially of small arms and light weapons and in favour of the implementation of the Program of Action (POA) on illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. The United Nations Register of Conventional Arms should be updated effectively to keep a tab on the conventional weapons.

Similarly, there is a strong reason for an early conclusion of an Arms Trade Treaty. We support creation of a working group for preparation of negotiations.

We should also strive to make progress towards the fourth special session of the General Assembly on disarmament (SSOD-IV) at the earliest for starting a genuine process in the entire gamut disarmament.

Mr. Chairman,

Nepal believes that regional disarmament initiatives make building blocs to global disarmament. For that matter, we support regional treaties and initiatives including nuclear-weapons-free-zones.

Nepal is pleased to host the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific (RCPD), which has started its operation from Kathmandu starting August this year. On behalf of delegation of Nepal, I would like to express our sincere thanks to all of you, individually and collectively, for supporting the relocation of the Regional Centre from New York to Kathmandu through the resolutions of the General Assembly. I would also like to express my special thanks to the High Representative and the Office of the Disarmament Affairs for realizing this transition in accordance with the resolutions of the General Assembly and the agreements signed between the Government of Nepal and the UN Secretariat.

The Government of Nepal has provided modest financial contribution for the operation of the Regional Centre. I would like to urge the member states to generously contribute to the programs of the Centre, which runs on voluntary contributions.

The Secretary General, in his report has outlined the need to core funding for its staffing and operations. The delegation of Nepal will be pleased to introduce a draft resolution, including this aspect of the Regional Centre. As usual, I look forward to receiving your positive support in making the Regional Centre effective in carrying out its mandated activities.

Mr. Chairman,

In conclusion, any further delay in disarmament is increasing the opportunity cost for development and for international peace and security. We must strive to achieve concrete results towards the goals of compressive disarmament. The current impasse should not continue any further.

We have an urgency to revive the result-oriented negotiations on disarmament issues. We continue to stress that the United Nations is best poised to make that headway. For that, we must reignite the existing mechanisms for negotiations. All we need is renewed focus and a greater political will to do so. On its part, Nepal remains ready to support any purposeful initiative towards that direction.

I thank you.