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Statement by Ambassador CHUNG Eui-yong, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Korea to the UN and other International Organizations in Geneva, at the Plenary Session of the Conference on Disarmament on 31 July 2002

Mr. President,

Let me take this opportunity of my first intervention under your Presidency of the Conference on Disarmament to congratulate you on your assumption of the Presidency at this important juncture. I am confident that your leadership and rich experience in disarmament fora will guide us to a productive outcome of the CD. I assure you of my delegation's full cooperation.

I also wish to extend my appreciation to Mr. Sergei Ordzhonikidze, Secretary-General of the CD, Mr. Enrique Roman-Morey, deputy Secretary-General, and to the other able members of the Secretariat for their contribution to our work. We hope that such efficient management of the conference by the Secretariat will continue to help the CD revitalize its work.

Mr. President,

Since the Conference on Disarmament opened its first session of this year last January, I have listened with great seriousness and appreciation to all the statements made by the distinguished colleagues and by other high-level speakers. Different speakers have provided us with various perspectives on a broad range of issues of our common concern. Whatever differences there may be, I could detect certain commonalities cutting across these statements. Among other things, there is a widely shared belief that the global security environment is going through major changes as a result of recent events, most notably the September 11th terrorist attacks on the United States and the significant US-Russian agreements to reduce the offensive nuclear weapons and to work out a new strategic framework for the 21st century.

Another point is that under these circumstances, multilateralism, instead of falling in disrepute, has been reaffirmed as a core principle of disarmament and non-proliferation. It appears that the right way to address the challenges we have faced since last September is through political solidarity and international coalition. This belief is confirmed in the determination of the UN Resolution (56/24T) "Multilateral cooperation in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation and global efforts against terrorism."

Multilateral efforts should go hand in hand with bilateral, regional and plurilateral efforts. We have witnessed progress in the modest outcome of the first PrepCom to prepare for the 2005 NPT Review Conference in last April and in the agreement by G-8 Leaders on the "G-8 Global Partnership Against the Spread of Weapons and Material of Mass Destruction" on June 27 to prevent the proliferation of WMD to terrorists. We welcome the development in nuclear disarmament with the signing of the Treaty of Moscow by Russia and the United States last May, and are also encouraged by high-level US-China talks to strengthen the constructive and cooperative relations between the two countries. My delegation hopes that all these developments can provide a renewed momentum for multilateral disarmament negotiations, particularly at the CD.

Mr. President,

Despite these positive signs, our mind-set still needs to adapt further to the evolving global security environment. The Conference on Disarmament, as the single multilateral negotiating forum for

disarmament, is being urged to break out of its prolonged impasse and to start its substantive work with a renewed sense of urgency. In this regard, I would like to extend my appreciation to you and your predecessors, as well as other representatives, for having made strenuous efforts in the past years to break the deadlock involving the CD's work program.

Today, we stand at a critical moment when similar leadership and collective will are desperately needed to make the world safer from the real threat of WMD, including anthrax and dirty bombs, and to reduce the danger of proliferation not only to States of concern but also to non-State actors. Here at the CD, we have a full agenda to enable us to address our concerns, including nuclear disarmament, FMCT, PAROS, and NSA. Furthermore, we have the best available option in the Amorim proposal, as contained in CD/1624, which is the culmination of painstaking work to induce agreements with flexibility and strategic ambiguity. We thus support the Amorim proposal as the basis upon which we can reach consensus on a work program. The task remaining before us is to get out of the zero-sum mentality and instead to exercise political will and the spirit of compromise so that we may move the process forward.

Such efforts have been reflected well in many realistic proposals brought forward on the program of work and the views expressed in most of the previous statements made by fellow representatives. We also share the views expressed by several ambassadors who stressed that every issue should be dealt with independently, without linkages to other issues.

Certainly, the FMCT negotiations are the next logical step we have to pursue as a matter of top priority. This is particularly so in view of the mandate we have already agreed upon and the commitment we have made during the 2000 NPT Review Conference and in the UNGA resolutions. My delegation is in full support of and encourages constructive efforts to facilitate the early start of negotiations on the FMCT. In this context, we appreciate South Africa's substantive working paper on the "Fissile Material Treaty" circulated on May 28 (CD/1671) and extend our thanks to the Netherlands for having hosted an open-ended informal meeting on FMCT on June 7.

Despite different views still remaining on the mandate of PAROS, the differences seem to become narrower and more countries have begun to demonstrate their political will to resolve the issue. We will therefore welcome any proposals or initiatives which would contribute to reaching consensus on the programme of work. To reach a final agreement on the work program, however, it will require all member States to show further flexibility and wisdom for the common objective of international peace.

Mr. President,

The Republic of Korea, due to its unique geopolitical security environment and long under the threat of WMD, has been, and will continue to be, unreservedly committed to the cause of multilateral disarmament and non-proliferation. This unflinching commitment is demonstrated by the fact that it has ratified all WMD treaties, such as the NPT, the BWC, the CWC, and the CTBT. My country is now expediting the domestic procedure required for ratifying the IAEA Additional Protocol; and as a member of several important export-control arrangements, including the MTCR, the Australia Group, and the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG), we are doing our part to reinforce the global non-proliferation efforts. In this regard, we support the ongoing efforts of countries within and outside the MTCR to adopt the International Code of Conduct against missile proliferation in a transparent and constructive manner, and we will host the plenary meeting of the NSG in Korea in May 2003. In addition, since the tragic incident of September 11, we have continuously worked to strengthen various anti-terrorist measures by joining in the global efforts against terrorism.

Mr. President,

Taking this opportunity, I wish to express my appreciation to delegations for entrusting me with the important task of serving as the Special Coordinator on the Review of the Agenda. Even though coordination on procedural issues can be no substitute for substantive work, I have conducted useful bilateral and small group consultations with the full support of delegations. I hope to submit a report on my consultations concerning the review of agenda during the last several months before the end of August.

Thank you.