



# THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA

PERMANENT MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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**Statement by Mr. Hong-ghi CHOI**  
**Counsellor of the Republic of Korea to the United Nations**  
**Substantive Session of the United Nations Disarmament Commission**  
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Mr. Chairman,

1. My delegation wishes to join others in congratulating you on your assumption of the chairmanship of this Commission, and also to congratulate the members of the Bureau on their election. I assure you of my delegation's full support and cooperation during the course of these deliberations.
2. Our meeting today at this UNDC substantive session is especially important because it follows a series of setbacks over the past several years to the multilateral disarmament and non-proliferation machinery. As we all know, the longstanding stalemate in the Conference on Disarmament (CD) and the failure to convene a substantive session of UNDC since its unsuccessful negotiations at the 2003 session have brought about a crisis of confidence in the multilateral disarmament machinery. The situation was not improved by the failure to produce an outcome document at last year's NPT Review Conference, or by the failure to address disarmament and non-proliferation issues in the 2005 World Summit Outcome Document. Against this backdrop, the agreement in December 2005 on the substantive agenda of the UNDC session, which has finally brought us back to the table, was an important step forward and a welcome sign of progress.
3. I would now like to highlight several issues related to the substantive agenda that my delegation deems particularly important.

## ***Nuclear Disarmament and Non-proliferation***

Mr. Chairman,

4. Despite all the setbacks and challenges to the multilateral disarmament and non-proliferation machinery, or perhaps because of them, the NPT remains the cornerstone of the global nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament regime. We have every reason to preserve and enhance the integrity of the NPT.

5. But the non-proliferation regime based on the NPT is faced with unprecedented challenges. There is increasing recognition that the monitoring and verification mechanisms of the Treaty need to be strengthened and improved. To this end, my delegation believes that the Additional Protocol to the IAEA Safeguards Agreement should be established as a new global safeguards and verification standard. Universal adoption of the Protocol should be promoted. A bolstered verification system, universally applied, would increase global confidence in the compliance of States Parties with their non-proliferation obligations under the Treaty.

6. Still, no verification system can be wholly foolproof against determined proliferators. To further protect the international community from the danger of nuclear proliferation, we support the ongoing efforts to strengthen existing export control regimes and to create new supplementary measures to secure nuclear materials and technology.

7. Non-proliferation has its counterpart in disarmament. The disarmament obligations on nuclear weapons states, laid out in Article VI of the NPT, are fundamental to the full implementation of the Treaty. We welcome the progress that nuclear weapons states have made over the past decades in reducing their nuclear arsenals, and we look forward to further reductions under the Moscow Treaty. Nevertheless, progress in nuclear disarmament has not matched expectations set by the Final Document of the 2000 NPT Review Conference. As we call on non-nuclear weapons states to strengthen their commitments to non-proliferation, the nuclear weapons states must do their part by making progress in disarmament. My delegation encourages the nuclear-weapon states to be more proactive and transparent in working towards the ultimate elimination of nuclear weapons.

8. At the same time, to relieve the security concerns of non-nuclear weapons states, the nuclear weapons states should provide negative security assurances to those States Parties to the NPT that are in full compliance with their Treaty and other safeguards obligations.

9. The Republic of Korea also strongly supports the early entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) and the immediate commencement of negotiations on a Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty (FMCT). These steps would significantly strengthen the NPT system and lead us closer to a world free of nuclear weapons. In this regard, we welcome the recent ratification of the CTBT by the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam. We urge those states that have not yet ratified the CTBT to do so without delay, particularly those states whose ratification is necessary for the Treaty's entry into force. Pending entry into force, a moratorium should be maintained on nuclear test explosions.

10. As for the FMCT, we welcome the CD's plans to hold a structured, focused discussion on this issue at its second session this year, in May. We hope that substantive progress will be made during this discussion, serving as a catalyst to start the CD negotiating on an FMCT immediately and without conditions.

#### ***Confidence-Building Measures (CBMs) in the Field of Conventional Weapons***

11. Let me turn now, Mr. Chairman, to conventional arms.

12. Though we were unable to agree on a final document at the previous substantive session, my delegation notes the substantial progress that was made on the issue of conventional arms. In this regard, my delegation fully supports the Chairman's proposal that Working Group II take up, as the basis for discussion, the consolidated working paper (Rev. 4) of the previous chairman of Working Group II, thereby facilitating the current discussion.

13. Confidence-building measures should begin in those areas that can be most easily achieved, moving from there to more difficult areas. Furthermore, we must be cautious not to allow a lack of progress on the most controversial issues to be an excuse for inaction in other areas. My delegation is hopeful that we can make substantial progress during this session towards an agreement on confidence-building measures (CBMs) in the field of conventional weapons, which could have a positive effect on our discussions of nuclear disarmament and proliferation.

14. My Government's efforts to promote inter-Korean reconciliation can be understood in this context. We believe that mutual confidence and trust have been substantially enhanced through projects such as the reconnection of railroads and highways across the demilitarized zone(DMZ), the removal of landmines in the vicinity of the DMZ, the development of the Gaesong Industrial Complex, the installation of a hotline between military authorities in Seoul and Pyongyang, and the exploration of opportunities for cooperation in fisheries in the Yellow Sea. We believe that by increasing mutual confidence, these measures will have a positive impact on efforts to resolve many pending security issues.

15. In contrast to the setbacks we have faced on nuclear issues, recent achievements in the area of small arms and light weapons have been quite encouraging. Though there is still much to be done, the adoption of the Programme of Action on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons (PoA) in 2001, followed by the adoption of the International Instrument on Marking and Tracing of Small Arms and Light Weapons and the effectuation of the UN Firearms Protocol last year are substantive steps in the right direction. We hope that further measures to strengthen the PoA, including confidence-building measures, will be discussed and adopted at the upcoming PoA Review Conference.

16. The United Nations Register of Conventional Arms, which is also incorporated in the PoA, is a good example of the practical application of a confidence-building measure on a global scale. Since its inception in 1992, it has contributed to enhancing the level of transparency in military affairs. My delegation welcomes the steady increase in the number of Member States participating in the Register by submitting national reports. We call on those States that have not yet done so to consider participating. We believe that positive consideration should be given to the Secretary-General's suggestion in his report to the Security Council in March to expand the register to include international transfers of small arms and light weapons. Likewise, we would like to see wider participation with the United Nations System for the Standardized Reporting of Military Expenditures.

#### *Measures for Improving the Working Methods of the UNDC*

Mr. Chairman,

17. In today's world, ongoing reform has become a part of life. Throughout the United Nations, it has become clear that achieving greater efficiency and effectiveness is not a matter of choice, but of necessity. The UNDC should be no exception. In this regard, my delegation believes that it is timely and appropriate for us to discuss measures to improve the working methods of the UNDC, and we pledge to participate in such discussions with an open mind.

#### *Conclusion*

Mr. Chairman,

18. The challenges before us are substantial, but some progress is better than none. As we strive to overcome our stalemate, Mr. Chairman, my delegation looks to your wise guidance. But in the end, it will be up to every Member State to find the will and strength to break our impasse and move forward toward a safer and more peaceful world.

Thank you.