

Opening Address

**How to Address Challenges in the Field of
Disarmament and Non-Proliferation today**

By

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It gives me great pleasure to welcome all of you to the third United Nations-Republic of Korea Joint Conference on Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Issues. I would like first of all to express my most sincere gratitude to the Government of the Republic of Korea for its continued support of the work of the Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific and, in particular, for its effort to host this important annual regional security meeting now widely recognized as the “Jeju process.”

Many of you here today will recall that the theme of last year's gathering dealt with "Challenges to Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Norms in East Asia." The theme this year, however, focuses less upon the threats themselves than upon the concrete actions that are needed to address such threats. This is a very important distinction that I hope will help focus our deliberations over the days ahead. Our challenging task, in short, lies in the realm of practical action, focusing in four vitally-important areas.

In the field of nuclear and other kinds of weapons of mass destruction, the world faces the task of closing the widening gaps in the non-proliferation regimes.

First gap is the one created by non-parties to the disarmament and non-proliferation treaties. In East Asia, our neighbour to the north is not a party to the NPT nor the CWC. Bhutan, Cambodia and Myanmar are not party to the CWC either. Myanmar and Nepal are the only countries in East Asia that are not parties to the BWC. How can we bring them to become parties to these treaties? Let me ask.

The second gap is a new phenomenon and unfortunately has just taken place in this region. It is a withdrawal from the NPT. Those who crafted the Treaty's withdrawal provisions must have thought they would never have to see them actually used. But it happened. The IAEA reported it to the Security Council but the Council has not taken any action on it. Should it be left that way? If the world does not show a firm way to

deal with such a breakout, non-proliferation regimes will precipitously lose their credibility and may ignite cascading effects.

Third, there is the verification gap. The IAEA “Additional Protocol” was devised after the revelation of the Iraqi clandestine nuclear-weapon program to enable the IAEA to verify activities not only at the nuclear facilities reported by countries to the IAEA but also those at related facilities and ultimately unreported sites. The protocol, however, still remains optional or voluntary. The voices are mounting to make the Additional Protocol mandatory under the NPT/IAEA regime. The U.N. Secretary-General’s Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters recommended it, as did his High-Level-Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change. But, will the coming NPT Review Conference do it? If not, how else can we do so? That is the question.

The fourth gap may be called nuclear fuel cycle gap. In recent years we are finding out that surreptitious nuclear aspirants built up their nuclear-weapon production capability under the cover of civilian nuclear fuel cycles. When the NPT was drafted, the production of fissile nuclear material required an advanced industrial infrastructure and large-scale industrial facilities. Today, technology and material have become far easier to obtain, as we have witnessed in the Dr. Khan’s black market. What can you do to close this gap? Can we internationalize the fuel cycle as Dr. Mohammad ElBaradei proposes? Or, should we seek to limit the fuel cycle to certain well-established countries?

The fifth is the rising concern about the terrorist nexus with WMD. The September 11 attack raised the fear of what will happen if, next time around, terrorists use WMD. This concern recently led to the adoption of Security Council Resolution 1540, which created a new global norm against assistance to terrorist groups in acquiring WMD. In the same resolution, the Council also decided that “all States shall take and enforce effective measures to establish domestic controls to prevent the proliferation of nuclear, chemical, or biological weapons and their means of delivery” -- a significant step indeed, insofar as it extends a binding non-proliferation obligation even to non-parties of multilateral non-proliferation treaties, thereby obligating all U.N. Member States and any other State to take actions to prevent spread of WMD and their delivery vehicles to terrorist and other non-state actors. Will this resolution be fully implemented? Will it be enough to stop the terrorist from getting their hands on WMD?

Many of these questions may be answered in the First session of this conference but also in its following sessions.

The Second session will address the challenges facing the 2005 Review Conference of the NPT. There are voices saying the Treaty is losing its relevance and the NPT regime is being eroded. The Conference will likely be difficult for a number of reasons. The States Parties have not yet even agreed on an agenda. Can the Review Conference overcome the differences and regain its relevance? Can the Conference come up with a definition to draw the boundaries of what constitutes the legitimate “peaceful use” of nuclear energy? I would like to put these questions to the President-designate of

the Conference, who is here in Jeju, but ultimately it is up to the participants of the conference to make it a success.

The Third session will specifically address several Northeast Asian questions. In a way, the DPRK is a showcase of proliferation questions. There are nuclear, chemical, biological, missile concerns; it is a case of non-compliance, withdrawal, and use of the fuel cycle for weapons purposes. Right now, everybody is counting on the success of the six-party talks. Can the six-party talks work a magic formula to solve all these questions? Can anybody attending this Jeju Conference offer any magic formula? Can the experience of advancing Mongolia's nuclear-weapon-free status -- or the Central Asia Nuclear Weapon Free Zone that the Regional Centre of the DDA/UN is helping to establish -- offer any suggestions in this respect?

The Fourth session addresses the problems concerning missiles. We know the Hague Code of Conduct Against Ballistic Missile Proliferation. We know the Republic of Korea recently hosted a Plenary of the MTCR. But, while important, their works are all incremental. Still, the Member States of the General Assembly hesitate to acknowledge their works. Under that circumstance, how can we control the proliferation of missiles capable of delivering weapons of mass destruction? How can we secure civil aviation from the threat of MANPADS?

Well, I have thrown many questions. That is the advantage of the first speaker. As we mark next year the sixtieth anniversary of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and the sixtieth

anniversary of the creation of the United Nations, I sincerely hope this conference may shed light to specific ways and means to achieve a world free from the fear of weapons of mass destruction.

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