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**Statement
by
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at

**The First Preparatory Committee for the 2010 Review Conference of
the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons**

General Debate

**April 30, 2007
Vienna**

Mr. Chairman,

Allow me to join the previous speakers in congratulating you on your assumption of the Chairmanship of the First Session of the Preparatory Committee (PrepCom) for the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). I am confident that under your able leadership, this session will prove highly fruitful. I assure you of my delegation's full support and cooperation as together we rise to the crucial tasks before us.

Mr. Chairman,

The NPT, since its inception, has served as the cornerstone of the global nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament regime. The Republic of Korea takes this opportunity to reaffirm its strong commitment to the Treaty. We are convinced that maintaining the delicate balance among the three pillars of the NPT is vital to the integrity and viability of the Treaty. Given that nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy are mutually reinforcing and complementary, the weakening of any one pillar will debilitate the whole balance. A holistic approach is crucial to ensure the Treaty's continuing relevance.

This year, we embark upon a new NPT review cycle. To our disappointment, the international community has been unable to seize rare opportunities in the fields of disarmament and non-proliferation. The 2005 NPT Review Conference and the subsequent UN World Summit could not produce any substantive outcome, and furthermore the multilateral disarmament machinery is still in disarray with no visible breakthrough.

This first PrepCom is particularly important because it will serve as a bellwether for the next Review Conference in 2010 and, indeed, for the future of the nuclear non-proliferation regime. In this regard, my delegation is concerned that there is no agreement yet on the agenda and the indicative

timetable, even as we open the session this morning. I strongly hope that these procedural issues should be resolved as soon as possible, so that we can have a good start for substantive discussions.

Mr. Chairman,

The unprecedented challenges the NPT regime has faced in recent years have not been resolved. The nuclear weapons programme of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) has long been a source of serious concern, and its October 2006 nuclear test drew criticism from around the world. It was therefore a welcome development when the Six-Party Talks achieved an agreement on February 13 on "Initial Actions for the Implementation of the September 19 Joint Statement". The February 13 Agreement is significant in the sense that it lays the foundation for fulfilling the letter and the spirit of the September 19 Joint Statement in which all parties agreed on the verifiable dismantlement of all nuclear weapons and existing nuclear programmes.

Moreover, when the Six-Party Talks achieve denuclearization and succeed in incorporating the DPRK into the global community, that forum will function as a basis for a multilateral security regime in Northeast Asia. The experience of resolving one of the most serious security threats facing the region through cooperation and dialogue will serve as a valuable learning process in responding to new global security challenges.

While some progress has been made, there are still daunting challenges ahead on the path to the complete dismantlement of the DPRK's nuclear weapons and programmes. What are now needed are tireless efforts to bring the DPRK into full compliance with the September 19 Joint Statement and the February 13 Agreement.

There are serious concerns elsewhere in the world as well. Iran has been found by the IAEA Board of Governors to be in non-compliance with its

safeguards obligations, and the UN Security Council has demanded in three resolutions that Iran suspend all enrichment-related activities. We believe that the Iranian nuclear issue should in no way undermine the foundation the NPT stands on and that the issue should be swiftly resolved in a peaceful and diplomatic manner.

Meanwhile, we cannot neglect the new proliferation threat posed by nuclear black market. Since the revelation of A. Q. Khan's procurement network, the danger of WMD and their delivery means falling into the wrong hands has become increasingly real. Despite strenuous efforts to look into the procurement network, we do not yet have its full picture. The detection of smuggled fissionable or radiological material is another source of pressing concern that requires an immediate and urgent response by international community.

Mr. Chairman,

To respond to these daunting challenges, we believe there is no alternative to upholding and strengthening the current NPT-based non-proliferation regime. With this in mind, my delegation wishes to highlight the following points as steps to address the shortcomings in the non-proliferation regime.

First, we place great importance on strengthening the compliance and verification mechanisms of the nuclear non-proliferation regime. In this light, the role of the IAEA, which has long served as a guarantor of Article III of the Treaty, can be further reinforced by universal adherence to the Additional Protocol. The meaningful achievements of the IAEA over the past 50 years have set an irreversible course and it is my view that this trend must be maintained and strengthened without a hitch. Although the Additional Protocol is not a panacea, there is no doubt that the Additional Protocol is the main driving force for safeguards and verification and that it should also

serve as a condition for the supply of nuclear materials and technology to non-nuclear weapon states.

Given that fact that no verification measure can be entirely foolproof against determined proliferators, we also attach great importance to existing export control regimes and to the development of supplementary measures coupled with the UN Security Council Resolution 1540 and its renewal 1673.

Second, my delegation is of the strong belief that nuclear disarmament is the sine qua non to realize a world free of nuclear weapons. Significant progress has been made thus far in reducing nuclear arsenals and in making commitments for further reductions under the Strategic Offensive Reduction Treaty (the Moscow Treaty). Nevertheless, there is significant demand for deeper cuts based on the observation that the number of existing warheads is still roughly at a standstill at the level of warheads when the NPT was launched in the early 1970's. The challenge is how to address the perception gap between nuclear haves and have-nots regarding the qualitative and quantitative implementation of disarmament obligations. To narrow this perception gap, we believe that nuclear weapon states must demonstrate a higher standard of compliance through sustainable nuclear disarmament measures. I firmly believe that voluntary deeper cuts can lead nuclear weapon states to gain greater moral authority and political legitimacy to demand non-nuclear weapon states to join with them in strengthening non-proliferation norms. With this in mind and with the 2010 NPT Review Conference in sight, it is highly advisable for nuclear weapon states to put forward a more concrete blueprint for further disarmament based on the Principles and Objectives document adopted at the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference and the Final Document of the 2000 NPT Review Conference.

Needless to say, my delegation underscores the necessity of the early entry into force of the CTBT. The conclusion of a Fissile Material Cut-off

Treaty (FMCT) is another prerequisite that is long overdue. It is encouraging that the Presidency of the Conference on Disarmament including myself has put forward a common platform to break the deadlock last year, which has been further developed into more concrete proposals by the six presidents of this year.

The international community should extend its wholehearted support to such efforts of the Conference on Disarmament to overcome the current stalemate. Any meaningful progress in the pace of negotiations for the conclusion of the FMCT will serve as a locomotive to revitalize the whole disarmament regime stuck in quagmire. Furthermore, it is imperative to maintain the moratoria on nuclear test explosions and the production of fissile materials by all countries possessing nuclear weapons pending the entry into force of the CTBT and conclusion of the FMCT. This is because the lack of comprehensive moratoria might be capitalized on by any country with clandestine intentions to obtain fissile materials to increase its stockpiles.

Third, the right to peaceful uses of nuclear energy is a fundamental element of the NPT which justifies the Treaty's *raison d'être*. The Republic of Korea depends on nuclear energy for more than 40 percent of its electricity and has the world's sixth-largest civil nuclear energy production, with 20 fully operational commercial reactors and eight more under construction. Based on such real industrial needs, the Republic of Korea regards this inalienable right as crucial to its sustainable economic development.

At the same time, I would like to make clear that the inalienable right granted in Article IV is neither absolute nor unconditional. This right under Article IV is contingent on full compliance with the non-proliferation and safeguards obligations enshrined in Articles I, II and III.

Given the nexus between proliferation danger and sensitive fuel-cycle technologies and facilities, we recognize the need to control their transfer,

particularly to countries of proliferation concern or those countries that have no legitimate need for such technologies and facilities in terms of their economic feasibility or energy security. We believe that ironclad guarantees of a secure fuel supply at a reasonable price should be provided to those countries that voluntarily forego the possession of sensitive fuel-cycle facilities.

With this in mind, we welcomed the initiative by the IAEA Director-General on Multilateral Approaches to the Nuclear Fuel Cycle and the convening of the Special Event last September to discuss a new framework for the use of nuclear energy in the 21st century. Various related proposals and ideas have been put forward, and serious attempts are being made to realize multilateral controls. We sincerely hope to see early progress through the discussions of the IAEA Board of Governors and other relevant fora.

Fourth, there is a need to address the root causes of "perceived insecurity," which is presumed to be the primary incentive for States Parties to go nuclear. The Republic of Korea values the significant role that security assurances by nuclear weapon states can play in reducing the threats perceived by non-nuclear weapons states. We believe that credible and reliable negative security assurances (NSAs) should be accorded to those non-nuclear weapon states which are in full compliance with non-proliferation obligations under the Treaty. In addition, we see merit in providing an increased level of individual security assurances and other incentives to those states that accept additional non-proliferation commitments beyond those set out in the Treaty.

Mr. Chairman,

My delegation wishes to stress the importance of universal adherence to the NPT, and therefore calls on the three states outside the NPT to accede to the Treaty at an early date. At the same time, noting that abuse of the Article X withdrawal clause has seriously undermined confidence in the NPT, we

believe that the NPT withdrawal clause requires further attention and significant improvement during this session and beyond. My delegation is ready to actively participate in the related deliberations.

The Republic of Korea shares the concern that the current inertia in the NPT system may stem from an unavoidable institutional deficit. We believe that the NPT needs better tools to respond more effectively and promptly to extraordinary and troubling situations involving threats to the Treaty. In this regard, we welcome proposals suggested so far to adopt new arrangements for a more regular conference that would have decision-making power and be served by a small secretariat.

Last but not least, in addressing procedural issues, I would like to draw your attention to the lesson from the previous Review Conference in 2005. The strict and indiscriminate application of decision making rule does not always contribute to achieving our objectives. It was also observed that the regional grouping system has more often than not stood in the way throughout the whole process.

Mr. Chairman,

Despite a prevailing sense of pessimism, it is worth noting that the NPT is still perceived as the cornerstone of the international nuclear non-proliferation regime, and indeed, is playing an indispensable role in preserving the regime. We believe that the 2005 NPT Review Conference should not be considered as a simple failure; I think the failure in adopting substantive outcomes should be distinguished from the failure of the NPT system itself; no one has branded the NPT as outdated or obsolete, nor has anyone suggested that the NPT be replaced by a different type of regime.

The NPT has, throughout its history, successfully survived challenges and frustrations. It is our earnest hope that through a synthesis of innovations and adaptations, the NPT will continue to serve as a credible and

effective force in the global security regime. My Government joins all the other States Parties in reaffirming its commitment to the NPT regime and its enthusiasm for the brighter future of the regime. We appreciate this opportunity to underline our willingness to continue to play our part in supporting this crucial Treaty.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.