



# BANGLADESH

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**Statement by H. E. Dr. Iftokhar Ahmed Chowdhury, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Bangladesh to the United Nations, at the General Debate of the 2005 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, New York, 05 May 2005**

Mr. President,

I should be derelict of my responsibilities were I to begin without congratulating you upon *your* election. Your prodigious skill is well-known and we have every confidence your leadership will lead the work of the Conference to fruition.

Bangladesh associates itself with the statement of the distinguished Foreign Minister of Malaysia on behalf of Non-Aligned State Parties.

Mr. President,

Three and half decades ago when we adopted the NPT, hope and optimism had filled our minds and hearts. We believed that the process had begun towards total nuclear disarmament. The essence of the agreement was that each contracting party would have a role and responsibility in ensuring that goal. Today we can all perceive that progress has been modest. It is true, though, a nuclear war has indeed been avoided. And undeniably, the world is a better place because of the NPT.

The NPT is founded on three pillars of equal importance. One-Prevention of spread of nuclear weapons and weapons technology; Two-Promotion of co-operation in peaceful uses of nuclear energy; and Three-Achievement of nuclear as well as general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control. During this review conference, we are expected to take stock of our achievements and failures in fulfilling our obligations in these respects. An objective assessment would help us chart our future direction. On it the security of mankind could hinge.

I am happy to be able to reiterate that Bangladesh has an impeccable non-proliferation record- We are committed to full compliance of the NPT and the CTBT. We have unconditionally opted to remain non-nuclear. Our unequivocal commitment to the full implementation of the NPT in all its aspects emanates from our constitutional obligation to a general and complete disarmament. We have also concluded safeguards agreement with the IAEA including the Additional Protocols. We

are party to all disarmament related treaties including the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) and the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC). These are tangible testimonies to our unswerving commitment towards the goals of the Treaty.

Mr. President,

Nuclear proliferation, both vertical and horizontal, must be dealt with in a comprehensive manner if we were to achieve our stated goal of general and complete disarmament. We would call upon all to implement the 13 steps outlined in the final document of the 2000 NPT Review Conference to achieve the desired ultimate objectives. We are concerned at the lack of progress in compliance of the nuclear-weapon States in this regard. We wish to stress that the threat to humanity emanates from the continued existence of thousands of nuclear weapons, and of their possible use or threat of use.

Bangladesh regrets the stalemate at the Conference on Disarmament. Its working methods are a candidate for serious review. We urge upon all States to start negotiations in good faith in order to conclude a non-discriminatory, multilateral and internationally and effectively verifiable treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons. The International Court of Justice has held that there is an obligation to pursue in good faith and to bring to conclusion negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament in all its aspects under strict and effective international control.

We welcome reduction of nuclear arsenals through arrangements outside the NPT. However, we believe that those should complement, not substitute the NPT. We are also concerned at the continued development of new types of nuclear weapons. Enhanced sophistication and increased precision can only raise the dangers of use. At the time of conclusion of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), it was believed that the Treaty would prevent improvement of existing nuclear weapons. Also development of new types of nuclear weapons. We regret the fact that the CTBT has not entered into force even after ten years of its adoption. This in spite of the fact a vast majority of the Member States have signed and ratified it.

Article IV of the NPT guarantees its States Parties' right to develop, research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination in conformity with Articles I and II of the Treaty. New measures, outside the Treaty provisions, ought not to limit the rights of States Parties to peaceful use of nuclear energy.

We support establishment of Nuclear-Weapon Free Zones (NWFZs) in all parts of the world. This would include the Middle-East and in South Asia. We congratulate the five Central Asian States for establishing one in their region. We also welcome the Nuclear-Weapon-Free status of Mongolia. Bangladesh regrets the frustration of the efforts to establish a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in the Middle East. We urge Israel to immediately join the NPT and submit their nuclear facilities under IAEA surveillance as envisaged in the final outcome document of the 2000 NPT Review Conference.

Bangladesh attaches particular importance to universalization of the NPT. As all would know, my country is geographically located in an extremely volatile part of the world. Also two states in our

region, India, and Pakistan, have acquired the nuclear weapon capability. We are encouraged by their decision to impose self-moratorium on fit flier nuclear testing. We would, however, call upon them to join the NPT. Also to submit their nuclear facilities under full surveillance of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) as envisaged in the final document of the 2000 NPT Review Conference.

We welcome Cuba and Timor Leste who have joined the NPT since 2000 NPT Review Conference.

Negative security assurances are vital to strengthening the NPT. It discourages non-nuclear States to opt for nuclear weapons. This arrangement has largely been diluted in recent years through imposition of unrelated pre-conditions by the nuclear-weapon States. We call upon the nuclear-weapon States to reaffirm their commitment to providing negative security assurance. This would go a long *way* towards preventing proliferation of nuclear weapons.

We place enormous value on the work of the IAEA in preventing nuclear weapons proliferation. We would encourage the Agency to further strengthen its comprehensive safeguards and verification systems. We also favour further deepening of the IAEA's technical assistance programmes. I make particular mention of the fields of health, agriculture, environment and industrial process minimization. States Parties need to allocate more resources to the IAEA to accomplish these tasks.

We recognize the important role of the civil society organizations in raising awareness and in creating momentum on these issues of vital importance to the mankind. We encourage their continued participation in activities towards achieving a nuclear-weapon-free world\_ We support the Mayors for Peace movement. Also their vision to realize a nuclear-weapon-free world by 2020.

Mr. President,

We believe our security does not lie in making weapons but in making peace through establishing linkages among the peoples. We should promote a culture of peace, rather than a culture of war. A culture of peace would promote greater understanding among peoples and tolerance of differing views. We need to promote unity in diversity. It is in this perspective that Bangladesh has been tabling a resolution every year on this subject. We have also recommended along with NAM that it be reflected in the UN Reforms document. Also to establish a mechanism in the Secretariat in this respect. There may be a price for the promotion and maintenance of peace. But it is less than that of fighting a war, and then making peace.

Bangladesh shares with many others some concern as to this Conference's outcome. But we will work with others to prevent this concern from translating into disappointment. We will keep burning the candle of hope. For hope is what will all help us sustain ourselves, assist us to confront the forces of adversity and inspire us to positive action.

I thank you Mr. President.