

**-PLEASE CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY-**

Statement by Turkey  
General Debate of the First Committee  
71<sup>st</sup> Session of the United Nations General Assembly  
October 10, 2016

Mr Chairman,

I would like to congratulate you and the members of the Bureau on your election. Turkey attaches importance to the First Committee's work, and you can count on our cooperation during your tenure. We also wish to thank Ambassador Van Oosterom of the Netherlands for his successful chairmanship of the Committee at the 70<sup>th</sup> session.

Turkey strongly supports global disarmament and non-proliferation efforts. We are firmly convinced that multilateralism and international cooperation are crucial in obtaining effective results.

We are fully committed to our shared goal of a nuclear-weapon-free world. We will continue to work with our partners towards that ultimate goal. We see the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) as the centerpiece mechanism of the global nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime.

We would like to reaffirm our firm conviction that the NPT's implementation through **practical steps in an incremental manner** is still the only viable way forward. Equally important is proceeding with **consensus**. Turkey attaches importance to the NPT and urges all stakeholders to refrain from any action that could undermine **the integrity of the Treaty** or create an alternative to its **full implementation** and universalization. We also wish to underline the importance of **universalizing the NPT** and reaffirm our commitment to a **Middle East WMD Free Zone**.

With these in mind, we look forward to contributing to a successful NPT review cycle and hope to see progress at the First PrepCom meeting in 2017.

As we mark the **20<sup>th</sup> anniversary** of the opening for signature of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), we wish to emphasize the need for the **early entry into force** of that Treaty. As underlined in the **joint statement at the Eighth CTBT Friends Ministerial**, we regard the Treaty as a core element of the international nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime.

We welcome the ratification of the Treaty most recently by Swaziland and Myanmar, and once again invite all states, particularly the eight remaining Annex II states, to ratify the Treaty without further delay.

Both last month's Eighth Friends Ministerial Meeting in New York and the **20th Anniversary Ministerial in Vienna** in June were helpful in raising awareness on the need for the early entry into force of the Treaty. We welcome the **P5 joint statement**, by which these states pledged to strive for the Treaty's early ratification and reaffirmed their **moratoria** on nuclear weapons test explosions.

Similarly, Turkey was a **co-sponsor of Security Council resolution 2310**, which recognizes that early entry into force of the Treaty will constitute an effective nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation measure and calls upon states to refrain from conducting any nuclear explosion and to maintain their

moratoria. That said, we wish to reiterate our clear conviction that these cannot be a substitute for the entry into force of the Treaty itself.

Turkey also values its relations with the CTBTO, and is willing to further its contributions to the Provisional Secretariat, including its **representation**.

Being an active supporter of the efforts against proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery, Turkey **condemns** in the strongest terms DPRK's nuclear tests and ballistic missile launches. We consider these a threat to regional and international peace and security, and expect DPRK, as the only country that has conducted nuclear tests in this century, to immediately and fully **comply with its international commitments**.

Deeming diplomacy and dialogue as the only option in the resolution of the Iranian nuclear file, and having facilitated a deal in 2010, Turkey welcomes the agreement on the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPoA) regarding the Iranian nuclear programme. This agreement strengthens the NPT as the cornerstone of the nuclear non-proliferation regime.

Full, transparent and uninterrupted implementation of the JCPoA, as well as Security Council resolution 2231 (2015) with its annexes (that endorsed this agreement under the supervision of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)) will help reassure our neighborhood against proliferation concerns and contribute to regional and international security.

The Security Council resolution 2231 will ensure the enforcement of the JCPoA and guarantee that the IAEA will continue to verify Iran's compliance with its nuclear-related commitments.

Nuclear and radiological security is a key priority for Turkey. We value the international safeguards system of the IAEA as the fundamental tool in global non-proliferation efforts. Turkey recognizes the need for the further **strengthening and universalization** of the Agency's verification authority. We regard the **comprehensive safeguards** and the **Additional Protocol** of the Agency as an indispensable verification standard. We call on all states that have not yet done so to sign, ratify and implement them as soon as possible. Strengthening the safeguards system and promoting the Agency's role and finances are also essential for the sustainability of the NPT regime in the long run.

States in full compliance with their safeguards obligations should have unhindered access to civilian nuclear technology, as provided for in the NPT. This would contribute to the further strengthening and universalization of the NPT regime. We must also ensure that all requisite steps are taken so that there will be no diversion of nuclear programs from peaceful to military uses.

Creating conditions for a world without nuclear weapons and other WMDs, is a major investment towards a safer future and undiminished security for all. Turkey remains deeply concerned by the **possible humanitarian catastrophes**, should these lethal weapons be used intentionally or accidentally.

It is our firm belief that the time is right for starting negotiations on the Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty. This will be a significant contribution to disarmament and non-proliferation efforts. It will also pave the way for parallel advances in the other core agenda items of the CD. We note the GGE's recommendations and believe that they should be followed-up upon. Centrality of the CD and moving forward by consensus are paramount to the success of any initiative to that end.

The Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTCW) are important components of the global system against proliferation of WMDs. Turkey does not possess any such weapons and reiterates its call for a **wider adherence** to and a **strict implementation** of these Conventions. We actively support the efforts to promote the universalization of these instruments.

In a few months's time, we will be working together to enhance the implementation of two important instruments: BTCW and CCW. First, at the upcoming Eighth Review Conference of the Biological Weapons Convention, we need to work towards consensus outcomes that would ensure the continued relevance, effectiveness and strengthening of the Convention. A stronger intersessional period would be one area to look at.

Mr Chairman,

Turkey attaches great significance to the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), which is one of our time's most valuable instruments. The most important and relevant aspect of the CWC today is its implementation.

The OPCW, despite all its efforts, has not been able to verify the Syrian regime's declaration, and that there remain "gaps, inconsistencies, and discrepancies" in the regime's declarations.

Recently, the OPCW-United Nations Joint Investigative Mechanism (JIM) has ascertained the liability of the Syrian armed forces in at least two cases that have been under investigation.

These findings confirm that the Syrian regime has not fulfilled its obligations and continued to use chemical weapons after its attacks on Ghouta in 2013. JIM's findings also demonstrate that Turkey has been justified by its previous warnings.

Now, as we look forward to JIM's final report on three more cases where the regime is again the primary suspect, the international community must prepare to take action.

The use of chemical weapons is a crime against humanity and a war crime. The perpetrators of these horrific attacks must be held accountable. There can be no impunity. We cannot allow the use of chemical weapons to become the 'new normal'. The next step must be measures against the Syrian regime, in accordance with Security Council resolutions 2118 and 2209.

Syrian Armed Forces are not the only entity that is using toxic chemicals as weapons. The use of chemical weapons by DEASH amid its vicious terrorist acts has also been established by the JIM in its third report. Our efforts to counter DEASH will continue with resolve. Turkey strongly condemns all use of chemical weapons in Syria and elsewhere, by anyone and under any circumstances.

On the other hand, Turkey welcomes the successful implementation of "The Plan for the Destruction of Libya's Remaining Category 2 Chemical Weapons Outside the Country". We see this as a positive and important development for Libya's stability and a good example of the implementation of the CWC.

We recognize the importance of strengthening international efforts to prevent both states and non-state actors from acquiring and using WMDs. The Eighth Review Conference of the Biological Weapons Convention and the Comprehensive Review of Security Council resolution 1540 are extremely important opportunities to take that action.

Chair,

Turning to conventional disarmament, the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) constitutes an indispensable element of the international law on conventional weapons with indiscriminate effects. Universality of the Convention as such, remains a key objective. Turkey fully implements the Convention and its annexed Protocols to which it is a party, and has been seizing every opportunity to encourage adherence to this fundamental international regime.

We expect that the **Fifth Review Conference** of CCW in December will consider the discussions we have had in the last five year's cycle and also prepare the basis for the next intersessional cycle, particularly on issues such as Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) and Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems (LAWS). We welcome the adoption of a political declaration on IEDs.

The threat to our safety, security and social and economic development posed by the proliferation of illicit conventional weapons, particularly small arms and light weapons, is no less important than that of WMDs. The illicit transfer, destabilizing accumulation, uncontrolled spread and misuse of small arms and light weapons must be eradicated.

Turkey remains committed to the **effective implementation** and **further strengthening** of the UN Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons (PoA) and the International Tracing Instrument (ITI). We welcome the successful conclusion of the Sixth Biennial Meeting of States on the United Nations Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons (**BMS6**) in June this year. PoA's Third Review Conference in 2018 provides us the opportunity to come up with improved mechanisms for assistance and cooperation and countering the threat from new weapons-related technologies.

The entry into force of the **Arms Trade Treaty** (ATT), in December 2014 is an important milestone in setting common international standards for the international trade in conventional arms, preventing their illicit trade and diversion. Since its outset, Turkey supported and actively participated in the process, thereafter **signing** the Treaty. **Pending approval** of the Turkish Parliament for ratification, we would like to reaffirm our keenness to accede to the Treaty in the near future. Together with **Security Council resolution 2117** (2013) on SALW, ATT will complement and reinforce the POA. We welcome the successful conclusion of the Second Conference of States-Parties to the ATT in August.

Safety and security of space is also important, and deserves our equal attention. We note the recommendations of the 2013 Group of Governmental Experts on Outer Space.

On cyber security, we supported the establishment of the fifth Group of Governmental Experts on developments in the Field of Information and Telecommunications in the Context of International Security. We are following its briefings on its deliberations and expect its work to be **as inclusive as possible**. In view of the increasing attacks against critical infrastructure, including nuclear power plants, we look forward to its report to the General Assembly next year.

Turkey has remarkably strengthened its national legislation and international cooperation in the recent years, and wishes to **register its desire to provide an expert** to the next GGE in this increasingly important field.

Mr Chairman,

Each of the seven clusters that we will address in the First Committee deserves particular emphasis. Each challenge grouped in these clusters is our common challenge. So is the responsibility to stand up to them. We should jointly uphold this responsibility. I wish to conclude by reiterating my delegation's full support and cooperation in doing so.

Thank you.