

***-PLEASE CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY-***

Statement by Turkey  
Thematic Debate on Nuclear Weapons  
First Committee  
71<sup>st</sup> Session of the United Nations General Assembly  
October 17, 2016

Mr Chairman,

Turkey is fully committed to the goal of a world without nuclear weapons.

We attach utmost importance to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) as the central mechanism of the global nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime.

The NPT's implementation through **practical steps** in an **incremental** manner is still the only viable way forward. Equally important is proceeding with **consensus**.

We do not subscribe to the idea that banning nuclear weapons without the participation of their possessors will eventually result in their elimination.

We urge 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.

Turkey also aligns itself with the statement made by Germany on behalf of a group of States regarding our general approach on how to proceed with nuclear disarmament negotiations.

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.

This year we mark the **20<sup>th</sup> anniversary** of the opening for signature of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). As underlined in the **joint statement at the Eighth CTBT Friends Ministerial** in New York last month, 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.

The **20th Anniversary Ministerial in Vienna** in June was 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.

Turkey **co-sponsored 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**.

[Turkey aligned itself with the NPDI statement read by Germany on October 14 on DPRK's nuclear tests and ballistic missile launches.]

Being an active supporter of the efforts against proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery, we wish to reiterate our **condemnation** of DPRK's nuclear tests and ballistic missile launches. These are a threat to regional and international peace and security. We 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, we expect the uninterrupted and full implementation of JCPoA in full transparency under the supervision of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

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.

Turkey remains deeply concerned by the **possible humanitarian catastrophes**, should these lethal weapons be used intentionally or accidentally.

Finally, it is our 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.

Thank you.