



Bangladesh

Statement under the Thematic Discussion on “Regional Disarmament and Security” at the First Committee of the 71st Session of the UN General Assembly on Tuesday, 25 October 2016 in Conference Room 4

Mr. Chairman,

Bangladesh aligns itself with the Statement delivered by Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM).

Bangladesh acknowledges the critical importance of regional disarmament and security in the maintenance of international peace and security. The notion of ‘strategic stability’ based on nuclear deterrence that tends to hold sway in the security doctrines of the nuclear weapon states in our region remains an area of particular concern.

Bangladesh encourages relevant civil society actors and others concerned to continue remain engaged with discussions on the possibility of establishing a nuclear weapon-free zone in South Asia at an opportune stage. We attach priority to unconditional and legally binding assurances to non-nuclear weapon states against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons by nuclear weapons states.

We add our voice to the need for establishing a nuclear weapon-free zone in the Middle East in the interest of sustainable peace, security and stability in the region.

We subscribe to the notion that peaceful dialogue and diplomacy remain the best options for building a sound regional security architecture. Enhanced regional cooperation, including for transparency and confidence building measures, remain critical for creating conditions conducive to sustained and meaningful dialogues on disarmament and security issues.

Bangladesh recognizes the useful role played by the UN Regional Centre for Peace and Development (UNRCPD) in convening relevant experts and policy makers from the region to share views on issues of shared concern. In the recent past, UNRCPD has facilitated the process of identifying common elements of interest and concern among countries in the region during negotiations on certain disarmament treaties.

In our national context, we have particularly benefited from UNRCPD’s customized support in promoting the implementation of the UN Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons as well as the International Tracing Instrument. The Centre’s technical assistance in this area has also enabled us to identify the existing gaps and challenges in our legal, policy and institutional arrangements in ensuring compliance with the relevant Arms Trade Treaty provisions. We cannot but reaffirm the critical

importance of regional cooperation in effectively addressing the challenges posed by illicit trade in small arms and ammunition.

We look forward to further expanding our partnership with UNRCPD to support our ongoing work on developing a comprehensive National Control List in fulfilment of, *inter alia*, the obligations under UN Security Council Resolution 1540. Bangladesh remains open to opportunities for further learning from the good practices in other regional countries in preventing proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their possible acquisition by terrorists and other unauthorised non-state entities.

We have already establishing well-functioning institutional arrangements to enhance our national capacity for nuclear safety and security in the context of our pursuit of peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

We thank the Government of Nepal for hosting UNRCPD, and also the Government of Thailand for making interim arrangements for the Centre's effective functioning. We look forward to the Regional Centre moving back to Kathmandu at the earliest to resume its full-fledged activities. We are happy to co-sponsor the Resolution on the Regional Centre as in previous years.

We request UNRCPD to further strengthen its efforts to promote and disseminate disarmament education and research in the region drawing on the useful resources at its disposal.

I thank you.