



## Bangladesh

### General Exchange of Views at the 2016 Substantive Session of the UN Disarmament Commission, Monday, 03 April 2017

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Madam Chairperson,

My delegation joins others in congratulating you on your election as the Chair of the 2017 substantive session of the Disarmament Commission. We also put on record our appreciation for the work done by your predecessor and the Chairs of the two Working Groups as part of the current triennial cycle.

Bangladesh hopes that our collective work in the current session would help break the impasse that made tangible results from the Commission's work rather elusive over the last many years.

Bangladesh aligns itself with the statement made by Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement. We thank the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs for sharing his insights and for his dedicated service to the UN Disarmament Machinery.

Bangladesh reaffirms that the UN Disarmament Commission remains the sole, specialized deliberative body with universal membership to build and foster consensus on critical issues concerning general and complete disarmament, including nuclear disarmament.

The forward-looking pronouncements made at the High-Level Meeting on Nuclear Disarmament in 2013 make us believe that there is sufficient political will to take forward the nuclear disarmament agenda, in parallel with the pursuit of nuclear non-proliferation and peaceful use of nuclear energy. But, what is perhaps missing is the leadership and courage to translate the political will into demonstrable results and action. It remains to be seen if the increasingly volatile security situation around the world can prove to be enough motivation for reinvigorating the entire disarmament machinery, including the Disarmament Commission.

**Madam Chairperson,**

Bangladesh subscribes to the notion that nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation need to be pursued with matching priority to have a world free of nuclear weapons. The retention, deployment, modernisation and proliferation of nuclear arsenals continue to pose grave threats to the entire humanity and to the maintenance of international peace and security. The line drawn between nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation may serve the purpose of *realpolitik*, but would continue to drive a wedge in our collective efforts to achieve total elimination of nuclear weapons in a complete, transparent, irreversible and verifiable manner.

Bangladesh, therefore, sees merit in the work on developing appropriate legal measures, provisions and norms through multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations. Accordingly, we reaffirm our support for initiating negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament on a Comprehensive Convention on Nuclear Weapons, as envisaged by the General Assembly.

Bangladesh is of the view that the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons should also inform the deliberations of the Disarmament Commission. The growing sensitization of the international community to the humanitarian consequences of the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons culminated in the adoption of GA Resolution 71/258 last year. The landmark Resolution, which our delegation voted in favour of, set the ground for convening the Conference to negotiate an international legally-binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons, towards their total elimination. The general exchange of views in the first session of the Conference last week should inform the first draft of the legally-binding instrument, which, following inter-governmental negotiations, should pave the way for a Treaty that would further strengthen and reinforce the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), including its Article VI.

Pending the total elimination of nuclear weapons, non-nuclear weapon states deserve legally binding assurance from nuclear weapon states on refraining from the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons against them. This remains a priority consideration for Bangladesh in the context of the draft Programme of Work of the Conference on Disarmament, and the overall multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations.

We acknowledge the crucial role played by Nuclear Weapons Free Zones in advancing the negative security assurance agenda as well as the twin objectives of global nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. We underscore the importance of adhering to the bold vision set out in this regard in the Programme of Action adopted by SSOD-I, and

of pursuing and implementing the agreement reached in the 2010 NPT Review Conference in particular.

Bangladesh supports commencing negotiations on a Treaty banning the production of fissile material (FMCT) for nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosive devices in the Conference on Disarmament (CD) pursuant to the mandate contained in document CD/1299. We participated in the informal consultations convened by the Chair of the Experts Preparatory Group in February 2017, and would look forward to the outcome of the Group's work.

Bangladesh strongly believes in compliance with the essential safety, safeguard and security measures in promoting the peaceful use of nuclear energy, including for accelerated development in developing and least developed countries. In our national capacity, we shall continue to further deepen our cooperation with IAEA and other relevant international partners in building our capacity for such compliance.

**Madam Chairperson,**

With regard to conventional weapons, Bangladesh closely follows and participates in the work concerning the Arms Trade Treaty. Our political leadership remains positively disposed towards our possible ratification of the Treaty following our signature in 2013. We are currently looking into possible means to enhance our capacity for compliance with the Treaty provisions, including under the UN Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons. Bangladesh will continue to participate in the existing confidence-building and transparency measures in the field of conventional weapons.

We appreciate the international community's enhanced attention to preventing illicit transfer of arms, and its interface with terrorism and other transnational organised crimes. We remain concerned over the growing use of IEDs, targeting civilians and UN peacekeepers, among others, and recognise the priority attached to addressing threats posed by IEDs on the occasion of the International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action this year. We underscore the need for increased support for developing and least developed countries, including troop contributing countries among them, to build capacity of their concerned agencies or units to countenance threats posed by IEDs.

Bangladesh remains generally supportive of considering a possible third agenda, particularly concerning an emerging issue of concern for the maintenance of international peace and security. Such consideration should not, however, deflect the

focus from the priority attached to the objectives of nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation.

To conclude, **Madam Chairperson**, Bangladesh remains committed to the potentials of the UN Disarmament Commission, and looks forward to supporting your efforts in upholding the Commission's relevance by further enhancing the breadth and quality of its substantive outcomes.

I thank you.