



# PHILIPPINES

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**COLLECTIVE ACTION: REGIONAL  
RESPONSIBILITY  
AND GLOBAL ACCOUNTABILITY TOWARDS A  
WORLD FREE OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS**

**STATEMENT**

*by*

**H.E. DR. ALBERTO G. ROMULO  
SECRETARY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS  
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES**

*at the*

**GENERAL DEBATE OF THE 2005 REVIEW CONFERENCE  
OF THE  
NUCLEAR NON-PROLIFERATION TREATY  
NEW YORK, 11 MAY 2005**

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ACCOUNTABILITY TOWARDS A WORLD FREE OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS**

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Secretary of Foreign Affairs, Republic of the Philippines

General Debate, 2005 Review Conference of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty

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Mr. President,

I join the previous speakers in expressing confidence on your able leadership in guiding this conference to a fruitful conclusion. The extensive consultation you undertook even before you officially assumed the presidency demonstrates your zeal and skill as a diplomat par excellence. May I also congratulate the chairmen of the three main committees for their well-deserved election. My delegation will extend its full cooperation with the bureau in its stewardship of the conference

**Changed New World, Same Old Fears**

Mr. President, the Cold War has long ended, but its tragic legacy of fear and death lingers. A wave of democracy and hope have since swept the world. But nuclear weapons continue to pose grave threats to our lives. Advances in technology and communication have brought nations closer. Yet mistrust and weapons of mass destruction have kept nations apart.

The world has changed, but our fears and the threat to our future remain the same. The deadly momentum of superpower confrontation and deterrence had sustained nuclear perils and propelled them into today's world. Nuclear weapons have stepped beyond the confines of the nuclear powers and into the arsenals of countries in real or potential conflict. Non-state actors have shown a ruthlessness and blatant disregard for life which becomes even more frightening with the thought that they might obtain nuclear weapons.

During the Cold War, the NPT helped to limit proliferation to the obstinate few. The NPT has, for the most part of its existence, prevented John F. Kennedy's nightmare vision of a world with fifteen to twenty nuclear powers. But today there are ten, and if left unchecked, that nightmare can become a tragic reality. Today we must turn to the NPT once again.

In our changed world, a danger to one is a danger to all. No nation can remain unaffected by the events in another country or another region.

**Our Resolution on the Middle East**

For the Philippines, over one-tenth of our population is spread across the globe. In the Middle East alone, we have over 1.5 million Filipinos.

Ten years ago, we adopted the resolution on the Middle East, specifically addressing the nuclear dangers in that region. It is my hope that there will be progress on this resolution.

Oil prices today are volatile enough. The rising price of oil holds the tragic promise of halting economic expansion. All of us will suffer from higher costs of food, energy and transportation. We can help prevent that by making sure that the threat of nuclear weapons does not have a destabilizing effect on the Middle East. In the context of the call of President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo for global unity for stronger collective action toward preventing a full-blown economic crisis that could be triggered by an unsustainable level of crude oil prices, I urge us to revisit and find progress on our Middle East resolution.

### **Threats to Humanity**

The NPT now stands at its most critical crossroad since it entered into force over three decades ago. Today's nuclear challenges are far more pronounced and the following have to be addressed:

- One. the horizontal proliferation by non-nuclear weapon States;
- Two. the increasing pronouncements of vertical proliferation by nuclear weapon States through modernization and plans for a new generation of nuclear weapons;
- Three. the continued absence of de facto nuclear weapon states from the ambit of the NPT;
- Four. the restiveness resulting from developing states' access to nuclear technology under Article IV;
- Five. the paralysis of the multilateral disarmament machinery, and,
- Six, the unprecedented case of withdrawal by DPRK.

All these developments and challenges contribute to the erosion of the effectiveness and credibility of the treaty and could change the destiny of humanity.

The bedrock on which the NPT was built was the understanding that non-nuclear states will not acquire nuclear weapons as long as the five nuclear powers work towards nuclear disarmament. Plans to develop new nuclear weapons technology and failure to bring the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) into force seriously erode the historic foundations of the NPT.

### **signs of Hope**

But there are signs of hope. Several states have foresworn nuclear weapons. The latest of which is Libya and we applaud them all. We also acknowledge the critical role that regional organizations and the active involvement of members of the global community played in bringing this about.

This momentum must be sustained. States that have not yet concluded safeguards agreement must do so. Increasing the network of safeguard agreements is

an important element in building trust and in removing any hint of a nuclear element in potential conflicts.

The four nuclear weapon-free zones around the world are also holding the line. The linking of current and future zones came one more step towards reality when the 108 signatories and parties to the nuclear weapon-free zone treaties met for the first time in Tlalcala, Mexico, on the eve of our conference.

Another positive development is the growing adherence to the NPT and the CTBT. The Security Council's resolution 1540 on non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction is also very encouraging. The adoption by the General Assembly last month of the text of the Nuclear Terrorism Treaty is another step in the right direction.

### **Deterrence, Diplomacy, Dialogue**

But all these agreements and understandings cannot sustain our efforts towards disarmament unless there are fundamental changes in our perceptions of our own security and until nations begin to rely more on the warmth of their relations than on the cold steel of their weapons.

Finding great comfort in deterrence has been the greatest hindrance to nuclear disarmament. Many states still live under the protection of a nuclear umbrella. We must replace deterrence with diplomacy and dialogue. We must find a way to wean nations away from their reliance on deterrence. I call on the nuclear weapons states to commit themselves to irreversible cuts in their nuclear arsenals and to do so in a transparent manner. Cold War adversaries should now be disarmament disciples. Collective security and the rule of law should decrease reliance on deterrence.

It is also in this context that I also strongly support the measures endorsed by the High-Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change that all nuclear-weapons states de-alert their weapons and give negative security assurances to non-nuclear weapons states.

To prevent proliferation, again diplomacy and dialogue are key. Regional adversaries and conflicts should be prevented and managed. This is where regional organizations will play a crucial role. No matter what the conflict, there should never be a reason to use these terrible weapons.

On this point we call on the DPRK to adhere to the letter and spirit of the NPT. I would also like to express our support for the six-party talks and call on the DPRK to return to these talks. We support the efforts of Iran to reach an agreement on the objective guarantees that their nuclear programs are exclusively for peaceful purposes. We also call on India, Pakistan and Israel to accede to the NPT as non-nuclear weapons states.

Regional action will be the key. By reducing regional tensions and building regional trust and by being answerable and globally accountable, the threat or danger of nuclear weapons being used in conflict situations will be severely reduced.

Regional action should also take the form of specific mechanisms to address other aspects of possible proliferation. In 1996, the Philippines proposed the creation of the ASIATOM, patterned after the Euratom. The need to establish ASIATOM now is even more pressing. We are in the midst of building an East Asian Community. We must ensure that the growth and progress we hope to achieve will not be burdened by nuclear issues. Particularly since East Asia is a fast growing region and it is anticipated that peaceful nuclear energy would be fueling that growth.

### **Strengthening NPT's Framework**

There is no dearth of ideas in addressing the challenges confronting the NPT. Although the preparatory process leading to our conference failed to yield agreements, many creative formulas were presented. They deserve serious consideration during this seventh review conference.

The strengthening of NPT's institutional framework to handle violations will bolster its effectiveness and credibility. My delegation recommends serious consideration of the proposal for the universal adoption of the Model Additional Protocol on Safeguards to strengthen the verification authority of the IAEA.

We must also find a way to prevent states that are in breach of the NPT from trying to escape its valid obligations simply by withdrawing from the treaty.

The destruction that nuclear weapons can cause is so unthinkable that the mere possibility of its possession becomes cause for valid concern. Claims to inalienable and unqualified rights to nuclear technology, without adequate checks and safeguards, are dangerous and do not contribute to the cause of non-proliferation. The dangers from nuclear weapons require that international commitments on the treatment of nuclear material be strictly observed.

Because of this and the potential devastation that can be wrought by non-state actors, we need to strengthen the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material. Cooperation on the security of medical and industrial radiation sources should be strengthened. The IAEA reported that there were 210 cases of trafficking in medical and industrial radioactive materials since 1993. The legitimate demands for medical and industrial radiation sources are increasing. We must prevent these from becoming "dirty bombs".

While progress has been lacking in the negotiations for a fissile material cut-off agreement, arrangements could be entered into whereby we can establish a five-year moratorium on additional facilities for uranium enrichment and plutonium separation. I agree with the assertion that there is no compelling reason to build more of these facilities.

More importantly, our conference should register progress in addressing the 13 practical steps for the systematic and progressive efforts in implementing Article VI and the Decision on "Principles and Objectives for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and

Disarmament," to which all NPT parties agreed and committed themselves in their review conferences of 2000 and 1995, respectively.

It is also in this context that my delegation appeals to the nuclear weapon States to seriously consider adhering soon to the Protocol of the Southeast Asian Nations Nuclear Weapon Free Zone Treaty to deliver the much needed negative security assurance to the non-nuclear weapon States Parties to the zone treaty.

Collective action will be necessary for us to succeed. And with this in mind, I would like to associate myself with the views of the Non-aligned Movement, as contained in its statements and working papers.

### **Much That Has To Be Done**

We all have a collective responsibility to perpetuate human life. The job begins by ensuring a credible and effective NPT, which is the centerpiece of the entire multilateral disarmament machinery.

Our positive action here will inspire other multilateral disarmament forums from small arms to chemical and other weapons to bolster their efforts.

In the midst of all these efforts and at the same time that we continue to face the potential of nuclear destruction, we also face the sad, tragic and stark reality of resources being misspent.

It takes over a billion dollars a year to maintain a submarine carrying nuclear weapons. For a fraction of that cost, the World Food Program could have made up its shortfall last year in providing food to the starving.

Billions more are going to nuclear weapons research and arsenal maintenance, as much as 30 billion a year, by some estimates. How much of that money could have gone to preventing disease, alleviating hunger and giving millions the chance to have a future, we can only imagine.

But when a country chooses to spend lavishly on weapons, mortgaging its children's future and letting its people die of hunger, then clearly there is still much that we must do towards making the world free from nuclear weapons.

We have come here to seek a global approach to prevent nuclear proliferation and promote disarmament. Global accountability is important. But specific cases of proliferation must also be addressed at the regional level: trust must be built, misunderstandings must be prevented, and mechanisms to address potential conflict must be in place so that so that potential proliferators will find it more desirable to try dialogue rather than deadly bombs.

Thank you.