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Statement

By

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At the

**2010 REVIEW CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES
TO THE TREATY ON THE NON-PROLIFERATION
OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS**

New York,
Thursday, May 6, 2010

Mr. President,

Permit me to congratulate you, as well as other members of the Bureau, on your election to the Presidency of this all important 8th Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). My delegation wishes to assure you of its fullest cooperation as you undertake the important task of steering the deliberations of this conference to a successful conclusion.

Mr. President,

We wish to associate ourselves with the statement delivered so ably by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Indonesia on behalf of the G-77.

Mr. President,

The timing of the holding of the 2010 Review Conference of the States Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), which has been the foundation of the international disarmament agenda over the last forty (40) years, could not have been at a more opportune time for the international community.

The new spirit of cooperation that we have witnessed in the past few months among the nuclear weapons states can be translated into concrete political action at this conference. The three pillars of the NPT, namely nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy can, despite any reservations that may be expressed, be pursued simultaneously.

While we concur with the position that each and every NPT signatory country has a sovereign right to determine its own security agenda, it is the position of my delegation that such determination must be made within the context of the provisions of the NPT regime, which despite any arguments to the contrary, has bolstered the international disarmament agenda over the past 40 years. The NPT clearly spells out the rights, responsibilities and obligations of all states parties; it is, therefore, imperative for states parties to strictly adhere to all its provisions. Consequently, we urge all delegations to this Review Conference to be flexible during discussions in the coming weeks as we seek common grounds. We must all endeavour to maintain the sanctity of the non-proliferation regime.

Mr. President,

Ghana remains committed to the global effort to achieve a world free of nuclear weapons. It is in this regard that we particularly welcomed the coming into force of the African Nuclear Weapons Free Zone (the Pelindaba Treaty), and we urge both the United States and Russia to take the necessary steps to sign and ratify the respective protocols of the Pelindaba Treaty and work with other signatory countries to ensure that the region remains a nuclear weapons free zone.

Mr. President,

As a developing country, Ghana attaches immense importance to the third pillar of the NPT regime, peaceful uses of nuclear energy. In this connection, allow me to re-emphasise the indispensable role of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in promoting the development and welfare of millions of people in the developing world. With assistance from the IAEA, Ghana has, since the establishment of the Ghana Atomic Energy Commission (GAEC) in 1963, committed itself to the promotion, development and utilization of the peaceful applications of nuclear and biotechnological techniques for increased agricultural output and the overall socio-economic development of the country.

Our research objectives have over the years included the operation of facilities such as the Ghana Research Reactor-1 facility, which has been deployed for multi-elemental analysis of industrial, geological and agricultural samples, as well as research into the exploitation of nuclear energy for power generation; the Gamma Irradiation Facility for medical and food sterilization; Radiotherapy and Nuclear Medicine facilities for medical research and cancer treatment for patients from the entire West African sub-region. Our Radiation Protection Board has become an important training Centre for African fellows, whilst our Biotechnology and Nuclear Research Institute is actively promoting the development of new tissues and variants of plant and food samples.

Mr. President,

As a demonstration of our long-standing commitment to the NPT regime, Ghana will continue to ensure that the doors of the Ghana Atomic Energy Commission remain open to inspection at all times now and in the future.

Mr. President,

As several speakers before me have noted, this Review Conference is taking place against the backdrop of several recent developments relating to nuclear security, non-proliferation, and the threat of nuclear terrorism; namely the signing of the new Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) between Russia and the United States in Prague on 8th April, 2010, the hosting of a Nuclear Security Summit by the Obama Administration in Washington from 12th to 13th April, 2010, and the release of the Nuclear Posture Review policy for the United States on 6th April, 2010. We commend the Governments of Russia and the United States for their commitment to reduce their arsenals of nuclear weapons, as well as the commitments made by the countries that attended the Nuclear Security Summit in Washington.

It is the hope of my delegation that these and other recent positive developments in the area of global disarmament, many of which may not have attracted as much international media attention, will provide us with an impetus to engage in free, frank, and equitable negotiations during this review conference.

Mr. President,

I wish to conclude by pointing out that Ghana is of the view that in order to give effective meaning to global efforts aimed at eliminating all weapons of mass destruction, it is necessary for all states, whether powerful or weak, rich or poor, to sign and ratify the Comprehensive Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), the Nuclear Non Proliferation Treaty (NPT), as well as all other related treaties concluded to facilitate and accelerate the process of nuclear disarmament. It is only through the universal adherence to the international nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regimes that the spread of nuclear weapons can be curbed and the preservation of mankind can be guaranteed.

By the end of this review conference, we should be in the position to reaffirm our collective commitment to preserving the destiny of mankind.

We owe it to successive generations.

I thank you.