Philippine Statement

by

H.E. MR. LIBRAN N. CABACTULAN
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary
Permanent Representative of the Philippines
to the United Nations

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Mr. Chairman,

The Philippines congratulates you for your well-deserved election to and assumption of the Chairmanship of the First Committee, felicitations as well go to the other members of the bureau.

The Philippines associates itself with the statement delivered by Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and the statement delivered by Myanmar on behalf of the Association of South East Asian Nations.

This current session of the First Committee takes place at a crucial time in the field of disarmament. As many of you are aware, next year we will have negotiations on some of the most pressing issues. There will be a Review Conference of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat, and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in all its aspects and its Preparatory Committee meeting, the first Preparatory Committee Meeting for the 2015 NPT Review Conference, the negotiation of a truly novel arms regulation treaty in the form of the Arms Trade Treaty, and a Conference on the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East, just to name a few.

For the Philippines, the results of this session will dictate or at the very least set the tone for these upcoming negotiations. That is why it is crucial for all delegations to work together toward our common goal of promoting international peace and security through disarmament.

Mr. Chairman,

The Philippines maintains that nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation remain the highest priority. The 2010 NPT Review Conference Final Document gives States Parties a road map on how to reach that desired destination of a world free of nuclear weapons.

If the world is serious about making progress in terms of nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation as well as the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, all 64 action points must be implemented including the 1995 Resolution on the Middle East.

Among the actions in the Final Document that the Philippines gives particular importance to are the following:

1. Negotiation of a Nuclear Weapons Convention as mentioned in the UN Secretary General’s 5-point action plan;
2. Nuclear Weapon States need to fulfill the commitments they made, in particular actions 3, 5 and 21;
3. Implementation of the 1995 Resolution on the Middle East, by having the International Conference in 2012 as well as the appointment of a facilitator in consultation with the States in the region;
4. Entry into force of the CTBT;
5. Revitalization of the CD;
6. Conclusion of a legally binding instrument on Security Assurances to non-nuclear weapon States;
7. Universal subscription to the IAEA Additional Protocol;
8. NPT States Parties that have not yet done so must bring into force the Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement;
9. Cases of non-compliance must be dealt with appropriately;
10. Nuclear materiel must be secured at all times; and
11. Access to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy must not be denied as this is guaranteed by the NPT.

On nuclear weapon free zones (NWFZs), the Philippines considers such zones important to the achievement of the goal of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. The Philippines recognizes the contributions made with the establishment of the NWFZs by the Treaties of Tlatelolco, Rarotonga, Bangkok, Pelindaba, Central Asia, and Mongolia’s nuclear weapon free status.

On the Bangkok Treaty, the Philippines is very pleased with the cooperation that is being extended by the P-5 as far their possible accession to the Additional Protocol of the treaty. There were positive discussions in Geneva last August and there are on-going discussions right now. The Philippines only hopes that the current direct consultations will have positive results.

The Philippines also gives importance to the creation of a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East and hopes that all States of the region will participate in the planned 2012 International Conference and use the meeting as a genuine opportunity to resolve one of the most intractable issues of our time instead of one to name, blame, or shame. The Philippines sees Arab Spring as an opportunity that must be seized and these changes in the region could very well lead to progress on the establishment of the zone.

To date it is unfortunate that neither a venue nor a facilitator have been decided upon. The Philippines hopes that these issues are resolved soon so that preparations for the conference may begin. In this regard the three depository States as well as the Secretary-General have a special responsibility as set forth
in the Final Document of the 2010 NPT Review Conference, the Philippines calls on them to take the necessary actions.

On the CD, the Philippines recognizes its importance and the need to break the deadlock that has plagued it for the past decade and a half. In this regard, the Philippines commends the Secretary-General for organizing the High Level Meeting (HLM) in September 2010 and the President of the General Assembly for organizing the follow-up meeting in July 2011. It is most unfortunate though that in spite of these meetings and the numerous calls to break the impasse there is still no progress.

The Philippines together with several other delegations that form the International Group of Observer States (IGOS) sees an urgent need for CD's expansion of its membership and views this as a possible solution to the impasse. In the interest of promoting greater inclusivity and dynamism in the CD, the Philippines calls for the review of the membership of the Conference as stipulated in its rules of procedure, and to allow for the expansion of its membership. Numerous countries, presently observers in the CD, possess the legitimate aspiration to full membership in the Conference. To facilitate this review, the Philippines calls for the appointment by the CD of a Special Rapporteur/Coordinator on Enlargement.

The Philippines hopes that once the impasse in the CD is broken negotiations can immediately commence on a treaty banning the production of fissile materials for nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosive devices. If not, then alternative means may have to be agreed upon in order to have a modicum of progress.

On the upcoming 2015 NPT Review Conference Cycle, the Philippines commends Australia for taking on the role of chair for the First Preparatory Committee meeting next year and wishes Amb. Peter Woolcott every success. In this regard the Philippines will be tabling a procedural resolution as is the practice regarding the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and its Preparatory Committee and hopes that delegations will support the resolution.

On other developments within the purview of the First Committee, the Philippines remains concerned with the following issues:

1. The proliferation and the uncontrolled spread of small arms and light weapons (SALWs). Thus, the Philippines emphasizes the importance of the early and full implementation of the 2001 Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. The Philippines looks forward to
actively participating in the PrepCom and RevCon scheduled for next year.

2. The Philippines commends Amb. Roberto Garcia Moritan of Argentina for his work on the ATT and views the future treaty as one that is necessary in order to regulate and rationalize the trade in conventional arms. It is crucial though that any future ATT, recognize the right of a State to self-defense and territorial integrity.

3. The Philippines recognizes the adverse humanitarian impact caused by landmines and cluster munitions upon innocent civilians and therefore supports the full implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Landmines and on their Destruction. The Philippines is also a signatory to the Cluster Munitions Convention, which entered into force on 1 August 2010.

4. The Philippines looks forward to the convening of the Seventh Review Conference of the States Parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, and Stockpiling of Bacteriological and Toxin Weapons and on their Destruction and hopes that States that have not yet joined this Treaty to do so at the soonest possible time.

5. The Philippines recognizes the significance of the Chemical Weapons Convention and calls on States to meet the deadlines, as extended by the Conference of State Parties, on their destruction. The Philippines also calls on those few remaining States not party to the CWC to sign and ratify the Convention without delay.

I would like to conclude by again stressing the importance of our current session and the need for positive outcomes to continue the success in disarmament. No difficulty is insurmountable as long as we are all guided by good faith and sincerity to cooperate and readiness to be flexible not only for our national interest, but for our collective survival and security.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.