Intervention by Thailand

Panel II on transparency measure related to the risks associated with existing nuclear weapons

First of all, I would like to thank Ambassador Piet de Klerk for his presentation on a very important issue of transparency measures related to the risks associated with existing nuclear weapons.

From the deliberations in this very forum, it is well understood that the principle of transparency, along with the principles of irreversibility and verifiability, are underscored and are indispensable elements in the process of nuclear disarmament. Many delegations already proposed various transparency measures, including reference to the 13-step action plan adopted at the 2010 NPT Review Conference which called for the nuclear-weapon states to report on their nuclear arsenals using a standardized format. These transparency measures would serve as an important confidence building measure since it will help provide necessary baseline information to assess any progress towards reductions of nuclear weapons.

There are calls for States possessing nuclear weapons to providing standardized information and call for the establishment of a reporting mechanism within the framework of the United Nations with a view to enhance accountability of the nuclear-weapons States and to contribute to facilitating nuclear disarmament by other States possessing nuclear weapons. In this regard, we welcome the suggestions made in supporting the transparency and verification.

For my delegation, we believe that this is not enough and more has to be done. As we all know that there are also nuclear weapons stationed in the territories of some non-nuclear weapon states. These states should also be called upon to do their part on transparency measures by providing relevant information on the number and status of nuclear weapons, as well as security and risk reduction measures that are put in place, to ensure that the weapons they are hosting for NWS are safe and secured against all kinds of risks that we discussed yesterday.

All these information should be made available to the general public to the extent that sensitive information is well protected, as it is responsibility of each state to protect their citizen, while the people have rights to know if they are in any potential dangers or if there are any risk reduction and prevention measures to ensure their safety. Their neighbouring countries also have the right to know if there are such emanating threats with disastrous consequences next door as their safety and security are also at stake. It is this popular opinion and support that can influence policy makers to make decision for the common good of the country.

Apart from that, information on the past nuclear incidents from human or technical errors, as well as sabotage or insider threats, should also be reported to serve as a prevention measure through sharing of experiences and lessons learned among nuclear weapons possessing and hosting states, as well as other states along the transit routes of nuclear weapons.

When these measures are fully implemented by states in question, all countries stand to benefit, both from the perspective of national security and collective human security. The question to you, Ambassador De Klek, is when and how these calls could be realized, how the immediate steps could be taken to enhance the transparency?
And lastly, I’m looking forward to hearing your answer to the questions raised by the distinguished delegate of Ireland regarding the roles of verification technology in connection to the issue of liability.