Statement by H.E. Amrit Bahadur Rai, Ambassador/ Permanent Representative of Nepal to the United Nations, at the 3rd session of the preparatory committee for the 2020 Review Conference of the Treaty on Non-Proliferation on Nuclear Weapons.

New York, 30 April 2019

General Debate

5 minutes

Mr. Chair,

Allow me to begin by congratulating you on your election to chair the third session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2020 Review Conference. Nepal expresses its full support to you and commits its active participation in the deliberations under your able leadership.

Nepal aligns itself with the statement made by the Permanent Representative of Venezuela on behalf of the members of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) that are parties to the NPT.

Mr. Chair,

The current status of multilateral disarmament heralds a bleak future. Last week, the UN Disarmament Commission concluded its annual session without being able to adopt its agenda, let alone a substantive report. The Conference on Disarmament needs revitalization for taking forward multilateral disarmament negotiations. The very existence of humanity will be at stake if we fail to provide new impetus to the nuclear disarmament.

The Non-Proliferation Treaty is a cornerstone of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime as well as an essential foundation for the pursuit of nuclear disarmament. The current session of the PreCom is very critical as we deliberate to prepare necessary grounds for the success of the 2020 review conference. The success of the 2020 review conference will be an appropriate tribute to mark the 50th anniversary of this treaty.
Mr. Chair,

The three pillars of the NPT—disarmament, nonproliferation and peaceful use of nuclear technology—are interrelated and mutually reinforcing. Their balanced, comprehensive and non-discriminatory implementation can only ensure the fulfillment of the objectives of the NPT. Equally important is the effective implementation of 13 practical steps of the 2000 NPT Review Conference and 64-point action plan of the 2010 Review Conference.

The nuclear-weapon-states should respect the importance of principles of transparency, irreversibility, and verifiability of nuclear weapons for their total elimination. Nuclear weapons should find no place in their security doctrine. The reliance on nuclear deterrence defeats the purpose of nuclear disarmament by creating a cycle of mistrusts among nuclear possessing states. The modernization and up-gradation of nuclear weapons and their delivery system should be halted as these activities are antithetical to the spirit of the NPT.

The adoption of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) in 2017 keeps our hope alive for 'a world free of nuclear weapons'. We urge all countries to sign and ratify this treaty for its early entry into force as it complements the NPT by prohibiting nuclear weapons.

Mr. Chair,

Nepal strongly supports the general and complete disarmament of all weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear weapons, in a time-bound manner. *These weapons provide no effective guarantee to security in an interconnected and interdependent world where the definition of security transcends the boundary of the traditional notion of military security.*

Humanity has already witnessed the catastrophic consequences of nuclear detonations. Nepal continues to emphasize that the total elimination of nuclear weapons is the only guarantee against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. We believe that the elimination of nuclear weapons begins with the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) as it bars further
development, modernization, and proliferation of nuclear weapons. We also stand for an early conclusion of the Fissile Materials Cut-Off Treaty (FMCT).

Nepal underlines the importance of unconditional, non-discriminatory and legally binding security assurances by the Nuclear Weapon States to the Non-nuclear Weapon States against the use or threats of use of nuclear weapons under any circumstances. Similarly, the inalienable rights of the States to acquire and use nuclear technology for peaceful purposes under Article IV of the NPT should be honoured. Technical cooperation to the least developed countries in this regard must be ensured. The peaceful uses of nuclear technology can contribute to achieving Sustainable Development Goals.

Mr. Chair,

Nepal reaffirms its belief that the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones in all regions is a stepping stone for the complete disarmament as envisioned by NPT. In this regard, Nepal expresses its concern over the lack of progress towards the implementation of the resolution on the Middle East adopted at the 1995 Conference. The nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East should be taken as a building block for the success of the NPT review conference, not as a stumbling block for its another failure in 2020.

In conclusion, Mr. Chair, Nepal wishes to reiterate its firm belief that the development and disarmament are interconnected and interdependent. Human aspiration for development can only be achieved by reducing irrational expenses on armament. Effective implementation of NPT in letter and spirit can ensure a peaceful world where the global community can comfortably meet its developmental aspirations.

I thank you.