



BANGLADESH

Statement by Hon'ble Foreign Minister of Bangladesh

Dr. Dipu Moni, MP

**At the General Debate of
2010 NPT Review Conference**

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**Permanent Mission of Bangladesh to the United Nations
New York**

Mr. President,

May I begin by congratulating you on your election as the President of the 2010 NPT Review Conference. I am confident that your dynamic leadership and unrivalled wisdom will lead us to a fruitful conclusion of the review conference. Allow me to extend to you the fullest assurance of all possible cooperation for a successful outcome of the conference.

I would like to associate myself with the statement of the Foreign Minister of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement. In addition, I would like to dwell on certain core elements from our national perspective.

Mr. President,

Although we are not convinced that enough is being done for achieving a nuclear-weapons-free world, the overriding goal of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, we feel encouraged by some recent developments. There appears to be a renewed political will after years of sluggishness in disarmament talks, particularly after the dismal failure of the 2005 NPT Review Conference. We remain committed to the decisions of the 1995 and 2000 NPT Review Conferences, and continue to call for implementation of those consensus-based decisions, particularly the thirteen practical steps for the systematic and progressive implementation of Article VI of the NPT.

There has been some discernible forward movement in the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva as well as in the arms reduction talks between the United States of America and the Russian Federation. These are steps in the right direction; but are decidedly insufficient for freeing this planet from the curse of nuclear weapons. We hope that States Parties would seize the moment at the 2010 NPT Review Conference, and it would provide guidance to all of us, including the States which are yet to become Parties, for achieving the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

Mr. President,

I come from Bangladesh, a democratic, secular and inclusive society. My country, with her impeccable disarmament and non-proliferation record, is committed to the pursuit of universal adherence to the NPT; and also to the CTBT. Bangladesh has unconditionally opted to remain non-nuclear by choice. It is the first Annex-2 country from South Asia to ratify the CTBT. We have also concluded the safeguards agreement with the IAEA including the Additional Protocols.

Bangladesh is constitutionally committed to achieving general and complete disarmament. As a demonstration of this commitment, the Parliament of Bangladesh has recently adopted a resolution supporting the 2010 NPT Review Conference. The resolution, *inter alia*, emphasised on the need to implement all the three pillars of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT)—nuclear disarmament, nuclear non-proliferation and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. It has also reiterated its support for Article IV of the NPT that guarantees the inalienable rights of all States Parties to the NPT to develop research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, without discrimination, and in conformity with Articles I and II of the Treaty, under the IAEA safeguards and verification mechanism.

The resolution has also expressed concern about risks posed by the continued possession of nuclear weapons, their proliferation—both horizontal and vertical, the expansive role given to nuclear weapons in security doctrines, and the possibility of acquisition and use of such weapons by non-State actors. The Bangladesh Parliament, in its unanimous opinion, has expressed the belief that any use of nuclear weapons would constitute an international crime, including crime against humanity, crime against peace, war crime and genocide. It has also opined that nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation can be viewed as being mutually reinforcing processes to the extent that the best way to prevent proliferation of nuclear weapons lies in their total elimination. They have also referred to the obligations and undertakings in Article VI of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) to end the nuclear arms race and achieve general and complete nuclear disarmament, and the unequivocal commitment made by nuclear weapon States at the 2000 NPT Review Conference to achieve complete elimination of their nuclear arsenals. The Government of Bangladesh fully supports this Parliamentary resolution.

Mr. President,

Bangladesh steadfastly supports a multilateral approach to nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament. We are convinced that armaments, nuclear or conventional, are not part of the solution we seek for attaining a secure and peaceful world.

We believe that weapons of mass destruction pose the gravest threat to mankind. We continue to hold that only a total elimination of nuclear weapons can provide the guarantee against the use or threat of use of such weapons; also against the danger of these weapons falling into the hands of terrorists. For almost four decades, the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty has remained the cornerstone of the nuclear non-proliferation regime and the essential foundation for the pursuit of nuclear disarmament. As we deliberate in the Review Conference, Bangladesh looks forward to an outcome that will adequately address all three pillars of the treaty.

Bangladesh is convinced that peaceful uses of nuclear technology with IAEA safeguards and verification regime in place would effectively contribute to our common endeavour to achieve sustainable development. In addition to electricity generation, nuclear technology may help tackle some old as well as contemporary development challenges that we confront, including hunger, disease, natural resource management, environmental pollution and climate change. Article IV of the NPT obliges States Parties to cooperate among themselves in the matter of exchange of equipments, materials and scientific and technological knowledge as well as information on peaceful uses of nuclear technology. This is on condition that the provisions of Articles I and II are complied with by the nuclear and non-nuclear weapon States respectively.

It is disconcerting to note that undue restrictions on exports of material, equipment and technology for peaceful purposes to developing non-nuclear-weapon countries continue to persist through measures incompatible with the provisions of the Treaty. These barriers must be removed. We wish to underscore the need for the IAEA, under

its statutory obligations, to continue to pursue the goals of technical cooperation in peaceful applications of nuclear energy as one of the three pillars of its activities.

We wish to recall that the IAEA is entrusted with putting in place necessary safeguards and verification regimes, and monitoring their compliance in conformity with the obligations of the States Parties to the NPT. We are disappointed that extraneous reasons are being employed to deny the rights of non-nuclear-weapon States to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and technology. This unfortunately is true, even in their pursuit of sustainable development. There must be no attempt to use the IAEA technical cooperation programme as a tool for political purposes. Bangladesh calls upon all concerned to engage in constructive dialogue in order to implement the provisions of Articles I, II and IV in an environment of trust and confidence.

We stress that non-nuclear states parties to the NPT have a legitimate right to receive unconditional assurances from the Nuclear Weapons States that the latter will not use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against them. It is a matter of concern that the nuclear weapon States are not only adding more precision capability to the existing stockpiles of nuclear weapons, but are also developing new types of weaponry. These are in contravention of the assurances provided by the nuclear weapon States at the time of concluding the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. We urge the Review Conference to undertake renewed and vigorous efforts to develop a legally binding framework for providing such assurances to Non-Nuclear Weapon States.

Mr. President,

Bangladesh also views the disarmament and non-proliferation agenda from a development perspective. Our conscience can not justify about one and a half trillion dollar expenditure a year on armament when the developing countries, particularly LDCs like Bangladesh, are struggling to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. We feel ashamed that the number of hungry mouths crosses one billion at the height of contemporary technological advancement and opulence. We must do our best to let our peoples live in peace, prosperity and dignity. Full implementation of the disarmament and non-proliferation agenda, including nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, is critical to achieve this goal.

Mr. President,

Let me reiterate that all this notwithstanding, we have not lost faith in ourselves. We know there are some who cannot dream that disarmament objectives can be realised. While we acknowledge that our journey towards a nuclear-weapon-free world would not be easy, we do not believe that difficulties should deter us from beginning our quest for a nuclear-weapon-free world – for ourselves and for our children. We must leave behind a planet habitable for our future generations. Posterity will not forgive us if we fail. Let us resolve to make a difference; let us make a difference today.

Thank you Mr. President.