

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY



STATEMENT by

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REPUBLIC OF TURKEY**

at the

**United Nations General Assembly
High-Level Meeting on Nuclear Disarmament**

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Mr. President,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

At the outset, allow me to extend our thanks and appreciation to the NAM Group for this initiative. Equally, the active engagement and unwavering support of Secretary-General Ban is highly appreciated.

This High Level Meeting on nuclear disarmament is a very timely one. A political push is evidently needed. In this context, let me add my voice to the Statement delivered by Foreign Minister Timmermans of the Netherlands on behalf of the NPDI.

This meeting should be an occasion for reflection. What went wrong? What can we do to overcome the present stalemate? These are questions which require consensual answers.

It is not my intention to paint a bleak picture today. But I will be honest. There is an “existential malaise” in the entire system.

Our common aspiration remains a world without nuclear weapons. But the centerpiece mechanism towards this vision, namely the NPT, does not function as effectively as we would have wished.

We are past the half-mark of the current NPT Review Cycle. Next Review Conference is approaching fast. We are unable to put building blocs on the existing Treaty basis. Commitments are ignored and promises for the present review cycle are not kept.

We unanimously promised the world an International Conference for the establishment of a Middle East free from all weapons of mass destruction to be organized in 2012.

If convened, this Conference would be the very first tangible step in the implementation of the 1995 Middle East Resolution.

This would be a big non-proliferation and disarmament step; a significant building block; a valuable confidence building measure.

So far we could not deliver that promise.

Now, I do not have an answer to this question: How do we plan to persuade the world of the effectiveness of NPT if it cannot keep its promise?

But it is not time to despair. This postponement was indeed regrettable. But we still see it “a missed deadline”, not a “lost opportunity”.

The importance of this Conference is vividly in front of us, keeping in mind that the Syrian Regime brutally gassed its own population a month ago.

Turkey expects the Conference to be convened as soon as possible and urges all States of the region to participate in it in a spirit of cooperation and flexibility.

Whoever has an influence on whichever country slowing this process, they should use it. Such a noble goal should not be hijacked by shallow political calculations.

Mr. President,

Along with this main problem, we have vibrant challenges. They are mainly in the following areas:

How to create confidence between nuclear weapons states and non nuclear weapons states?

How to bring about conditions to allow for further nuclear disarmament?

What to do in possible cases of withdrawal and non-compliance?

How to strike a balance between non-proliferation, disarmament and the right to peaceful uses of nuclear energy?

The consensus Action Plan of the 2010 NPT Review Conference provides concrete steps to take us further towards our shared goals. Turkey is of the belief that implementation remains the key.

A second point we highly value is that the Non-Proliferation Treaty should be made universal and fully respected.

Entry into force of the CTBT as well as the commencement of FMCT negotiations will also be significant benchmarks in the field of non-proliferation and disarmament.

The extent the Nuclear Weapon States are able to fulfill their disarmament commitments will have an important impact. At the same time, all NPT states strictly adhere to their non-proliferation obligations will also determine the credibility of the regime.

Finally, the right to peaceful uses of nuclear energy should be carefully upheld. Naturally this right comes with relevant international obligations.

Along with many other countries, Turkey remains deeply concerned by the possible humanitarian catastrophes for humanity, should these lethal weapons be ever used, intentionally or accidentally. We, therefore, supported and actively participated in the Oslo Conference on the “Humanitarian Consequences of Nuclear Weapons”. We equally support the upcoming follow-up meeting in Mexico.

Mr. President,

It is time to terminate the dependency on nuclear weapons and military doctrines based on nuclear deterrence.

It is time to reduce the stockpiles towards a complete disarmament.

It is time to move ahead in a spirit of mutual understanding and cooperation.

We all have duties and responsibilities for the next generations.

My generation grew up with the dreadful doctrines of the Cold War and the “balance of terror” set by nuclear deterrence.

But we all know that the synonym of “balance of terror” was “mutually assured destruction”.

Our children shouldn't go through this.

Thank you.