



## **BANGLADESH**

**Statement by Mr. Tareq Md. Ariful Islam, Deputy Permanent Representative  
under Thematic Discussion on Nuclear Weapons in the First Committee of the  
74<sup>th</sup> Session of the UN General Assembly CR-4**

**22 October 2019**

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**Mr. Chairman,**

On this thematic issue, Bangladesh aligns itself with the Statement delivered by Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM).

Nuclear weapons pose the greatest threat to humankind. The humanitarian and environmental consequences of nuclear weapons are boundless. Yet, the risks of the use of nuclear weapons whether by intent, accidents or miscalculation are on the rise. Also, the threats of nuclear weapons and related materials falling in the hands of terrorists and other unauthorized actors today are more real than ever before.

**Mr. Chairman,**

We share a firm commitment along with all responsible Member States to work together towards a world free of nuclear weapons. Obviously, there are divergences of views on the ways, means and pace of achieving that objective. Yet, we have substantive convergence on the point that the ultimate guarantee of international peace and security can be ensured only by the total elimination of

nuclear weapons. We need to put all our wisdom and acts together to build on that broad consensus.

We remain concerned over lack of progress, stalemates, reluctance, and backtracking on important nuclear arms control and reduction treaties and painstakingly slow progress of works at various multilateral disarmament machineries. We are also concerned over the sustained and enhanced investments in further improvement, planning and research on nuclear weapons and related facilities. We reiterate the urgent need for systematic, progressive, verifiable, irreversible, and time-bound nuclear disarmament in line with the spirit of Article VI of the NPT.

**Mr. Chairman,**

We support the effective implementation of all three pillars of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), and hope that the 2020 NPT Review Conference would be able to overcome the setback suffered in the preceding one. We appreciate the spirit of engagement witnessed during the last Preparatory Committee Meeting in New York.

We see the adoption of the Treaty on Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons to be a significant development. As a ratifying state of the treaty, we encourage other member states to join us as one of the first 50 ratifying states in the road towards the treaty's entry into force. We see success of TPNW as a critical building block towards an international legally binding instrument for total elimination of nuclear weapons. We see merit in including the TPNW as part of the First Committee agenda.

We reiterate our support for commencing negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament (CD) on an effective, non-discriminatory, legally binding and internationally and effectively verifiable FMCT. We also continue to align with other State Parties in advocating the early entry into force of the CTBT. We also strongly support a legally binding instrument providing assurances to non-nuclear weapon states against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons by the nuclear weapons states.

We welcome the convening of the first session of the conference on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in New York next month. We hope that it will have a positive impact on the 2020 NPT Review Conference.

**Mr. Chairman,**

Nuclear energy has, no doubt, great potentials to bring tremendous benefits to the humankind. This can solve the energy needs of a vast majority of the population on earth, contribute greatly to the medicinal science and research, water management, food security etc. As a nation in development transition, Bangladesh has legitimate interests in peaceful uses of nuclear energy for achieving its sustainable development goals. We have already started constructing our first nuclear power plant which is in conformity with IAEA safeguards and verification regime.

We hope that, through its various related Resolutions, the First Committee this year would be able to convey a cohesive and forward-looking message on nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation, peaceful uses of nuclear energy, and the correlation between disarmament and development. I would conclude by recalling the words of our Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at the High-level Meeting on Nuclear Disarmament in September 2013 and I quote: “There is no doubt that a price has to be paid for the promotion and the maintenance of peace. But we are convinced that it is much less than that of making nuclear weapons and fighting a war with these, and then going for peace.”

I thank you.