



**Statement by H.E. Mr. Nurul Islam Nahid, MP, Hon'ble Member of the
Parliamentary Standing Committee on Ministry of Foreign Affairs under
General Debate of the First Committee of the 74th Session of the UN General
Assembly**

14 October 2019, CR-4

Mr. Chair,

I congratulate you on your assumption of Chair of the First Committee. We assure you and members of the Bureau of my delegation's fullest support in discharging your responsibilities.

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

Bangladesh's commitment to general and complete disarmament is anchored in our Constitution and the dream of our Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman to work towards “relaxation of tension, limitation of armaments and the promotion of peaceful coexistence in every part of the world.” Guided by this fundamental principle of our foreign policy, Bangladesh had always remained at the forefront in assuming higher obligations under all major multilateral disarmament treaties including NPT, CTBT, TPNW, CWC, BWC etc.

Mr. Chair,

Last year, we welcomed the Secretary General's Agenda for Disarmament for its people-centered approach, futuristic overtone, and specific action points to address various disarmament challenges comprehensively. We appreciate the efforts of the UN Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA) to implement the action points and track the progress. We see merit in having informed consultations among member states about the ways and means towards mainstreaming the Agenda into the work of First Committee. We are also keen to advance certain aspects of the Agenda

pursuant to our national priorities including in the area of Disarmament for Future Generation.

We urge all parties in different flashpoints of the world to return to the time-tested peace track of dialogues and diplomacy transcending their narrow divides and brinkmanship concerning escalatory political rhetoric and possible threat of military actions and use of nuclear weapons. We urge all concerned to forge ahead with their ongoing efforts towards lasting peace and security in the Korean Peninsula.

Mr. Chair,

We remain convinced that the ultimate guarantee of international peace and security can be ensured only by the total elimination of nuclear weapons. To attain that overarching objective, we signed the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) in 2017 and ratified it last month. We are encouraged to see the steady progress in its ratification and look forward to further strengthening its architecture. We are constructively engaged with all to make the 2020 NPT Review Conference, marking 50th anniversary of the Treaty's entry into force, a success. We hope that the Conference would be able to produce an outcome further strengthening the NPT regime.

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.

We must redouble our efforts for the entry into force of the CTBT and for commencing negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament (CD) on Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty (FMCT). We thank the High-Level FMCT Expert Preparatory Group and the Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) on Nuclear Disarmament Verification for their substantive works in advancing nuclear disarmament.

There should not be any impediment to pursue the inalienable rights of all States to develop, research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes including in medical science. Yet that right comes with certain responsibilities. In constructing Rooppur Nuclear Power Plant, the first in the country, we are following the highest IAEA standards.

We remain committed to upholding internationally agreed disarmament norms and strengthening the UN Disarmament Machinery. We reiterate the importance of convening the Fourth Special Session of the General Assembly devoted to

Disarmament (SSOD-IV) for giving further impetus to the disarmament machinery in an evolving and complex global context.

We reiterate our abiding support to the Chemical Weapons Convention and underscore the importance of upholding the credibility and integrity of the Organization for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (OPCW). As an elected member of the Executive Council of the OPCW, we are playing our part towards global efforts for chemical disarmament. We have recently contributed \$15,000 to support the project to upgrade the current OPCW Laboratory and Equipment Store for construction of a new facility called the OPCW Centre for Chemistry and Technology.

Mr. Chair,

With rapid progress in new technologies, including in the realms of artificial intelligence and biotechnology, the threats of terrorists and other non-state actors obtaining weapons of mass destruction are more real than ever before. We should, therefore, consider to further mainstream these issues into our discussions in the First Committee and other relevant fora. We thank Secretary General for putting adequate focus on this issue in his Agenda for Disarmament.

Bangladesh takes great interest in coming up with internationally agreed solutions to the pressing challenges in the cyber security field such as responsible state behavior, threats management, attribution, the balance between rights and responsibilities, and capacity building. No Government can tackle these challenges alone. We, therefore, stress the need for the UN to continue its norm-setting role in cyber-space. We welcome the opportunities for developing countries to voice their concerns and priorities through the current works of the OEWG. We also value the works of the previous and the current GGEs.

Mr. Chair,

With the launch of the Bangabandhu-1 satellite, Bangladesh now has an enhanced stake in preventing an arms race in the outer space. We appreciate the works of the Group of Governmental Experts under resolution 72/250 in this regard although it fell short of coming up with a substantive outcome. While trust and confidence building measures can be useful for preventing weaponization of the outer space, there is no denying the importance of concluding an international legally binding instrument for this.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

As a nation in development transition, Bangladesh advocates for channeling the massive resources deployed for arms build up to deserving priorities of sustainable development. Unfortunately, we have so far failed to do that. We must work towards reversing this trend. We must also redouble our efforts to further strengthen all the disarmament and arms control regimes to ensure a safer and better world for our future generations.

I thank you.