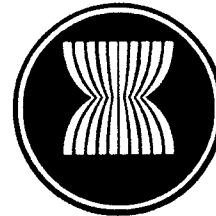




Socialist Republic of Viet Nam



Association of Southeast Asian Nations

STATEMENT

**by H.E Mr. Pham Binh Minh, First Deputy-Minister for Foreign Affairs
of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam on behalf of the Association of Southeast
Asian Nations at the 2010 Review Conference
of the Treaty of Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
(New York, 4 May 2010)**

Mr. President,

1. I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Member States of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN): Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and my own country Viet Nam.
2. At the outset, I wish to extend our warmest congratulations to you, a fellow member of ASEAN, on your unanimous election as President of the 2010 NPT Review Conference. Our equally warm congratulations go to the members of the Bureau. On behalf of ASEAN, I assure you, Mr. President, of our fullest cooperation and support.

Mr. President,

3. ASEAN attaches great importance to the Review Conference, which aims to reinvigorate the collective effort to abolish nuclear weapons and support nuclear non-proliferation. Over the past year, in the run-up to the Review Conference, we have witnessed a more positive atmosphere towards nuclear disarmament.
 - (a) At the United Nations, the Secretary General placed the issue of disarmament as a leading priority through his "five point action plan" proposed in September 2008.
 - (b) In the signing of New START on 8 April 2010, between the holders of the world's two largest nuclear weapons arsenals, the Russian Federation and the United States, the world saw an agreement between the two to further reduce the number of their respective nuclear warheads.

- (c) While continuing to strive for the goal of total elimination of nuclear weapons, we are encouraged by the US's bolder approach to diminish the role of nuclear weapons in its nuclear doctrine in the recently concluded Nuclear Posture Review.
4. We know that these are all small steps individually, nevertheless, they are positive and taken in the right direction. We should and we do welcome these, and encourage further measures by the Nuclear Weapon States, to discharge their commitments on complete nuclear disarmament, in accordance with their multilaterally agreed commitments.
 5. It is only logical that all States Parties at this NPT Review Conference should take stock of the situation with respect to their commitments under the NPT, and propose actions with timelines that will advance their implementation of the Treaty in an effective manner. In this regard, we support any efforts and proposals to identify elements that could help achieve this goal.
 6. While we have mentioned some positive developments, Mr. President, the fact remains that since the entry into force of the NPT 40 years ago and the end of the Cold War, we continue to struggle to make progress. Today, the world still has over 20,000 nuclear warheads while the proliferation of nuclear materials remains a matter of global concern. Nuclear energy for peaceful purposes remains an untapped potential and technology that can be used by developing countries for the betterment of their peoples. But to reach our NPT goals, both Nuclear Weapon States and Non-Nuclear Weapon States must reach out to find common ground. All States Party to the Treaty have "rights" that come with real "obligations". Both Nuclear Weapon States and Non-Nuclear Weapon States must equally commit to observe these "obligations" as stipulated in the provisions of the Treaty, in order for the NPT to be successful. This Review Conference is a critical opportunity to shore up the Treaty.
 7. As enshrined in the ASEAN Charter which entered into force on 15 December 2008, ASEAN fully supports nuclear disarmament, nuclear non-proliferation and the abolishment of all weapons of mass destruction. ASEAN strongly supports and commits itself to the purposes and objectives set forth in the NPT, which is the cornerstone of nuclear disarmament, nuclear non-proliferation and peaceful uses of nuclear energy. ASEAN holds that these "three pillars" of the NPT should be treated in a balanced, comprehensive and non-discriminating manner. We share the determination to work towards preventing the spread of nuclear weapons and to achieve the goal of their total elimination.

Mr. President,

8. In this context, ASEAN member states, inter alia,
 - (a) Urge all States Party to the Treaty to strictly adhere to their obligations as stipulated in the provisions of the NPT.
 - (b) Urge all Nuclear Weapon States to carry out the 13 practical steps for systematic and progressive implementation of Article VI in a transparent, verifiable and irreversible manner. In that regard, we call on all Nuclear Weapon States to immediately commit to concrete, verifiable and time-bound steps to reduce their nuclear stockpiles, as well as to immediately pledge to cease the qualitative improvement, development, production and stockpiling of their nuclear warheads and delivery systems. In the interim to achieving full nuclear disarmament, we urge all Nuclear Weapon States to declare a moratorium on nuclear testing as an initial first step, and to de-alert the operational status of their nuclear-weapon systems. We also urge all Nuclear Weapon States to adopt a “no first use” policy and to provide legally binding “negative security assurances” to all Non- Nuclear Weapon States.
 - (c) Urge both Nuclear Weapon States and Non- Nuclear Weapon States to consolidate efforts to prevent the spread and proliferation of nuclear materials, and support the strengthening of the role of the IAEA in fulfilling its mission of Safety and Security, Science and Technology, and Safeguards and Verification.
 - (d) We attach great importance to the objective of the universalization of the NPT and call upon all States outside the NPT to accede to the Treaty as Non- Nuclear Weapon States.

Mr. President,

9. ASEAN member states are all signatories to the Southeast Asian Nuclear Weapon Free Zone Treaty (SEANWFZ Treaty), or the Bangkok Treaty. This Treaty entered into force in 1997 and we continue to work with the Nuclear Weapon States toward their early signing of the SEANWFZ Protocol and expand cooperation with the IAEA. Recently, our commitment towards realizing the goals of the Bangkok Treaty was reiterated by our Heads of State and Government at the 16th ASEAN Summit in Hanoi, Viet Nam, in April 2010, where we pledged to intensify the Bangkok Treaty’s “Plan of Action” to achieve our goals of a Nuclear Weapon Free Zone. In this regard, ASEAN has submitted to the Review Conference a Memorandum on Activities highlighting our efforts undertaken through the Bangkok Treaty.

10. ASEAN believes that Nuclear Weapon-Free Zones constitute an important measure to strengthen nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament. In this regard, we welcome the entry into force of the Central Asian Nuclear Weapon Free Zone Treaty on 21 March 2009 which we believe helps further strengthen regional and global peace and security. We also express support for the establishment of a Middle East Nuclear Weapon Free Zone in accordance with relevant Security Council and General Assembly resolutions.

Mr. President,

11. In my national capacity as Representative of Viet Nam, I would like to make additional remarks. Recalling the positions of the Non-Aligned Movement on issues under discussion at this Conference, we reiterate the call for the prohibition of the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons and their total elimination. Along this line, Viet Nam has acceded to all major multilateral treaties on the prohibition of weapons of mass destruction and has always been seriously implementing its obligations under these treaties, including the Safeguards Agreement of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). Since the last Review Conference, Viet Nam has ratified the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty and signed the Additional Protocol with IAEA. Recently, the Vietnamese Government has decided to accede to the Convention on Nuclear Safety and endorse the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism.
12. Viet Nam realizes both the benefits and essential requirements of safety and security in the peaceful use of nuclear energy. Viet Nam supports efforts to promote nuclear safety and security, including the measures put forth by the Nuclear Security Summit held in Washington D.C last month. At the same time, we attach great importance to the expansion of assistance to developing countries in the use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. In this regard, Viet Nam looks forward to working together with international partners in organizing an international conference on the use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes as noted in Resolution 1887 of the UN Security Council Summit on Disarmament and Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons held in September 2009.

I thank you, Mr. President.