

**Statement by H.E ALA Azeez
Ambassador & Permanent Representative of Sri Lanka, Vienna**

**2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear
Weapons (NPT)**

Main Committee I –Disarmament, 7th May 2015

Mr. Chairman,

First of all, let me congratulate you, Mr. Chairman, on behalf of my delegation on your well-deserved election to this high office. Under your able leadership, we are confident that we will achieve a productive outcome.

In line with action no, 7 & 8 of the Action Plan adopted in 2010, we would like to urge expeditious and meaningful follow up on disarmament, including on security assurances to non-nuclear weapon states.

It is a sad commentary that despite some progress made in nuclear non-proliferation in a few regions, still there is lack of progress in nuclear disarmament, which is a continuing cause for concern.

We call for the total elimination of nuclear weapons. We consider total elimination as the only absolute guarantee against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. There is a legitimate right for countries which have given up the nuclear-weapon option under NPT to receive legally binding security assurances against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons under any circumstances.

It is timely that countries which possess nuclear arsenals rethink their approach towards national security in such a manner that the use of nuclear weapons is not envisaged in their national security doctrines. This will help create a positive ambience for advancing the goals of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. Such a course of action, combined with negative security assurances, will contribute to strengthening the nuclear disarmament and proliferation regime and its credibility.

It needs to be stressed that, as stated before, while our collective goal should remain the total elimination of nuclear arsenal, the process of realization of such a goal may be complemented effectively and meaningfully with a legally binding framework for negative security assurances. We support the call for such an approach.

We also take this opportunity to emphasize the relevance of nuclear weapon-free zones, and their role in mutually assuring security and encourage further work, in consultation with all parties concerned, on convening the Conference on Middle East as a zone free of nuclear weapons.

Last but not least, Mr. Chairman, a word on the 'Austrian Pledge' regarding humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons. Sri Lanka endorses that call, and considers the humanitarian dimension to nuclear disarmament as unequivocal assurance of security to all humanity.

In conclusion, Mr. Chairman, Sri Lanka associates itself with the statement made by the Islamic Republic of Iran on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.
