

Opening Remarks by Ambassador Shin Dong-ik
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The 14th ROK-UN Joint Conference on Disarmament and Non-proliferation
7-8 December 2015, Shilla Hotel Seoul

Excellencies,

Distinguished Speakers, Ambassadors of Diplomatic Corps,

Ladies and Gentleman,

I am delighted to welcome you all to *the 14th ROK-UN Joint Conference on Disarmament and Non-proliferation Issues*. I would like to begin by expressing my gratitude to Mr. Kim Won-soo, Acting UN High Representative for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA) for his leadership, and the UN Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament (UNRCPD) in Asia and the Pacific for their devoted efforts in organizing this Conference. And although he is not with us here today, I would like to convey our deepest gratitude to Secretary-General H.E. Ban Ki-moon for his special video message, which contains his unwavering commitment to disarmament and non-proliferation issues.

(Overview)

The overarching theme for the Fourteenth Meeting, taking place at the 70th anniversary of the UN, is ‘Unfinished Business of Making the World a More Secure World.’ The title could be slightly tricky, as any progress in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation takes time, sometimes at glacier pace. In a different vein, we hope that ongoing Paris COP21 should be successful to conclude new climate convention to slow global warming and melting glacier.

Now we are looking at the situation that new issues being piled up on top of the old ones.

Looking back the year 2015, I believe the most notable success in this field was the Joint Comprehensive Program of Action (JCPOA) agreed between P5+1 and Iran last July. It was a great moment for diplomacy, and we are moving in relatively smooth way to the Implementation Day, most likely in early 2016.

But other than the JCPOA, the overall “scorecard” in this field is far from impressive. We could not adopt the Final Document at the 2015 NPT Review Conference. There was no result from the diplomatic meeting to discuss an International Code of Conduct (ICoC) for outer space activities. And at the UN General Assembly First Committee, we have witnessed further division among the member states, most importantly over the issues such as humanitarian aspect of nuclear weapons and nuclear disarmament.

If we turn our eyes to the year 2016, we have scores of “unfinished” business at all levels. The DPRK is now left as the sole case of nuclear proliferation after the JCPOA, but there is no sign that indicates North Korea’s return to the Six-Party Talks. The Fourth Nuclear Security Summit to be held in next spring in Washington D.C. will face a task of fully establishing enduring nuclear security architecture. A Comprehensive Review for UN Security Council resolution 1540 is scheduled in 2016, and the BWC Review Conference will be another important meeting to take place next year.

And all of these issues are now being discussed in a new global security environment emerged after the terrorist attack in Paris last month. Personally I

had the chance to visit Bataclan theatre and feel real terrorism threat in Europe. We are becoming increasingly concerned over the possibility of new breed of terrorists operating in mobile internet gaining access to CBRN materials, on top of small arms and explosive materials.

(The Theme of the Conference)

Against such backdrop, we have chosen three topics for this year's Conference. In Session 1, we will focus on comparing the two cases of nuclear proliferation – DPRK and Iran – to find out how better the diplomacy could work. More directly, we are interested how the lessons from the P5+1 negotiation with Iran can be applied to solve the DPRK nuclear issue. In 2015, the DPRK has continued to make provocations with its landmines and by other means, and added another headache to the international community by conducting an SLBM launch test in May, then attempting another just one week ago, which was also violation of existing Security Council resolutions.

At this juncture, I believe that a careful analysis would be helpful in checking the applicability of the Iranian case to the DPRK. What were the key success factors? Where should we start to rekindle the negotiation?

In Session 2, we will discuss space security. Nowadays, outer space and cyberspace are being called “new frontlines,” both in security and economic sense. While the basic fabric of strategic stability has not changed much, outer space is getting increasingly congested, contested and competitive. Now an individual can launch a CubeSat in less than 10,000 US dollars. However, we have yet to come up with a new set of rules and guidelines fit to the new environment.

In Session 3, we will discuss Nuclear Security. The international community has successfully minimized the use of HEU in civilian sector, and nuclear security measures were strengthened worldwide. But we still have a long way to go in order to establish comprehensive, coherent and enduring global nuclear security architecture.

I believe here is an important cross-cutting theme over the three topics: the importance of civilian sector and a need to engage with them. For example, economic sanctions cannot prevent proliferation activities unless they are faithfully implemented by all parties including the business. The growing civilian space programs are now the movers of the entire scene, and this trend is unlikely to be reversed. And the implementation of the existing nuclear security obligations and commitments cannot be achieved without full participation of the nuclear industry. By the end of the three sessions, I hope we could get a clearer picture on the evolving policy environment we are facing today.

(Closing)

The ROK is facing a new and challenging year in the 2016. As the host of 2nd Nuclear Security Summit in 2012, Korea will be the chair of the IAEA International Conference on Nuclear Security to be held in Vienna December 2016. Foreign Minister Yun Byung Se himself is directly involved in this process. And we will also work as the Chair of the NSG and MTCR between 2016 and 2017. We are not doing this because we are workaholics, but we volunteered to do the job from a sense of urgency that for our own national security and international peace, non-proliferation and disarmament should remain at the top of our national agenda.

In addition, Korea Ministry of Foreign Affairs has just established a new bureau, although modest in size, called the Bureau of Non-proliferation and Nuclear Affairs last month, after the successful conclusion of the ROK-US Agreement concerning Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy. If you are interested in this subject, please join us for the special session on the new ROK-US nuclear cooperation agreement which is going to take place tomorrow afternoon.

Before concluding my opening remarks, I would like to once again express my sincere appreciation to all the participants here today. I have every confidence that through your expertise and enthusiasm, this Conference will be a great success. And in that way, I am sure that we can make a progress in the “unfinished business.”

Finally, let me once again emphasize the importance of frank and open exchange of views. An important mission of intellectuals and diplomats is to discover new facts and meanings through dialogue, and build credibility and collegiality that can further open doors to new possibilities. I firmly believe that is actually the best way to make this world more secure, which is our continued homework.

Thank you for your attention. // End //