



REPUBLIC OF ALBANIA
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

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CONFERENCE ON HUMANITARIAN IMPACT OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS

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Mr. Chair,

In the outset I would like to extend our delegation's appreciation and thanks to the Government of Norway for convening and hosting this timely and much needed international conference on the humanitarian consequences of nuclear-weapons. We trust that the delegations will commit for an open debate for a successful outcome.

The NPT, based in its three main pillars, disarmament, non-proliferation and peaceful use of the nuclear energy, remains a cornerstone and an irreplaceable framework of world's peace and security. Albania is truly committed to this fundamental mechanism and to its further strengthening.

Mr. Chair,

Nuclear weapons, by definition are the most destructive, indiscriminate and inhumane instruments of mass murder ever created. Their use goes against every principle of international humanitarian law. Some even believe that it is likely that humanity could not survive a nuclear war using even a fraction of the arsenals in existence today.

Humanitarian consequences caused by the voluntary or even accidental use of these weapons, as we have witnessed during the 20th century have catastrophic long lasting humanitarian consequences. Nuclear explosions, even when they come as result of an accident or mismanagement, the disaster they cause could be compared only to major natural events as massive earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, and similar disasters that result in thousands of casualties and cause catastrophic environmental damage. It's a well known fact that the consequences of nuclear weapons use cause extensive harm to health and the environment even if they are not used in war. The front end of the nuclear chain—the mining and processing of uranium that provides the fuel for nuclear weapons—has devastating health consequences for those who work in the mines and mills and for their families. There is also an enormous diversion of resources into the research and development, production, and deployment of warheads and their delivery systems, at the expense of real human and social needs that are inexcusably underfunded.

Nuclear weapons explosions have extreme and long-lasting environmental consequences, including disruption of the Earth's climate and agricultural productivity, thus causing serious humanitarian crisis not only in terms of health and safety but also in terms of food security.

In November 2011, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement also referred to catastrophic humanitarian consequences when it adopted a new resolution condemning nuclear weapons and calling for international agreements to prevent their use and to ensure their elimination. The resolution cited the 1996 advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice, which concluded that "The destructive power of

nuclear weapons cannot be contained in either space or time. They have the potential to destroy all civilization and the entire ecosystem of the planet.”

In 2012, Albania has welcomed the initiative of the 35 states group which presented to General Assembly First Committee the issue of the threat to humanity that nuclear weapons pose as long as they continue to exist in an effort to encourage non-proliferation.

Recognizing the importance of achieving the ultimate goal of a World free of nuclear weapons, we take note of the growing momentum of the intermediate steps toward this goal, taken by nuclear weapons States, Albania welcomes the latest achievements in the field of disarmament such as:

- The signature of the new START Agreement between the United States and the Russian Federation on a further significant reduction of the strategic weapons;
- The commitment of the US administration to work for the ratification of the CTBT(The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty);
- The release of the USA Nuclear Posture Review with the commitment to further reduce the role of the nuclear weapons.

The entry into force of the CTBT would be a major contribution toward the world peace and security. We call upon all states that have not yet signed the CTBT, or have not yet ratified it, to do so as soon as possible.

The IAEA safeguards system is fundamental for the nonproliferation regime. The verification instrument of the IAEA need to be strictly observed and further strengthened. The Comprehensive Safeguards Agreements and the Additional Protocol are very important tools for the preservations of the worlds peace and stability and the fight against nuclear terrorism. Since 1988, Albania has a Comprehensive Safeguard Agreement with the IAEA and has signed the Additional Protocol, which ratifications in the very final stage.

Albania has taken practical steps towards strengthened the fight against illegal trafficking of nuclear and radioactive material. We have upgraded and improved our legal framework in the field of export controls of arms and dual use materials; we have upgraded border check points infrastructure with the necessary modern detection equipment.

Mr. Chair,

We all know that time to act is now. We cannot afford to miss another opportunity and sincerely hope for a successful outcome of this Conference, it is only by joining forces for the safer and better world that we can achieve it.

Thank you.