

Keynote Address  
**H.E. DR. ALBERTO G. ROMULO**  
Secretary of Foreign Affairs of the Philippines  
**122<sup>nd</sup> Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU)**  
28 March 2010, Bangkok, Thailand

Excellencies,  
Parliamentarians,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am deeply honored to be here today to address the issue of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. It has been nearly 65 years since the fateful day when the world first saw the terrible and indiscriminate power of an atomic bomb.

The bombs that fell on Japan pale in comparison to today's nuclear arsenals that can destroy not only cities but the entire planet.

The world's parliamentarians have a crucial role to play to ensure humankind's survival and that nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction would one day be consigned to history as a dark era in our collective past.

It will not be quick and it will certainly not be easy. But the task is not insurmountable. It took almost a quarter of a century after the bombing of Hiroshima before the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons or NPT came into force. Today, adherence to the NPT is nearly universal and it remains a cornerstone of the entire nuclear non-proliferation regime. The Treaty was designed to further the goal of nuclear disarmament and to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons and weapons technology, while promoting cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

The vast majority of States without nuclear weapons have lived by the Treaty's principles. However, the extremely slow pace at which the Nuclear Weapons States have been reducing their nuclear arsenals has left Non-Nuclear Weapons States increasingly frustrated.

If we are serious about a nuclear zero, the Nuclear Weapons States must take meaningful strides towards nuclear disarmament.

The first of UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's 5-point plan urges Nuclear Weapon States to fulfill their obligation under Article VI of the NPT to undertake negotiations in good faith on effective measures leading to nuclear disarmament.

The world looks upon the United States and the Russian Federation, which together possess over 90 percent of the world's nuclear weapons, to take the lead in disarming. We eagerly await a follow-on agreement to the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty and for this agreement to eventually be ratified by both sides before the May 2010 NPT Review Conference.

In the meantime, Non-Nuclear Weapons states are establishing Nuclear Weapons Free Zones as a way to contribute to international peace and security.

There is no doubt that nuclear disarmament reinforces the nuclear non-proliferation regime while at the same time, it is also important to note that nuclear non-proliferation is fundamental to nuclear disarmament as it creates the environment necessary for disarmament.

I am proud to say that in early February of this year, the Philippine Senate concurred with the ratification of the IAEA Additional Protocol. This has enabled the Protocol to enter into force on 26 February 2010, after we have notified the IAEA that we have complied with our domestic procedures for ratification.

The Additional Protocol allows the IAEA to have more information on nuclear and nuclear-related activities as it provides increased access rights to nuclear facilities. This enables the IAEA to better verify the non-diversion of declared nuclear material and to provide assurances as to the absence of undeclared nuclear material and activities. Essentially, the IAEA could verify that the State continues to live up to its international commitments not to use nuclear programs for nuclear weapons purposes.

As there can be no peace without trust, greater transparency in the use of nuclear energy and greater trust among nations will result from the universal acceptance of the IAEA Additional Protocol.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The NPT faces many challenges, but it should not be overlooked that among its successes has been to firmly establish nuclear non-proliferation as the global standard.

As the President-elect of the NPT Review Conference in May 2010, the Philippines believes that while the achievement of the ultimate objective of the NPT has remained elusive so far, there are encouraging signs last year that have generated an atmosphere of hope for and optimism on what can be achieved at the 2010 NPT Review Conference.

Since the Review Conference is held every five years, we therefore call on parliamentarians to help build the political momentum needed for the Review Conference to achieve the best possible outcome. Ensuring that nuclear weapons would one day be eradicated is a continuing task that requires sustained political will and vigilance.

I cannot emphasize enough the critical role that parliamentarians play in this task as the conscience and mouthpiece of their constituencies. As parliamentarians, you decide how your citizens' taxes would be spent. Logically, your choice is a disarmament dividend in which scarce resources are best channeled to more urgent social and economic priorities of the citizens.

You hold your governments accountable to your people; your debates will draw attention to the importance of nuclear issues to the public.

Last but not least, parliamentarians pass the enabling domestic legislations that allow all disarmament and non-proliferation agreements to become a reality on the ground.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The NPT cannot by itself eliminate nuclear weapons. It needs such instruments as the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) as a complementary force.

With the CTBT in force, a country with nuclear ambitions will be constrained to develop them while countries with arsenals will be constrained from improving them.

In 2000, the NPT Review Conference agreed that the first practical step for the implementation of the disarmament commitments in Article VI would be the early entry into force of the CTBT to close the door once and for all on testing and make legally binding the de facto testing moratorium that has been in effect since the CTBT opened for signature in 1996.

Whatever steps we can take at this very important time to provide impetus to the CTBT will affirm our commitment to the pursuit of a nuclear weapons free world.

The world community is calling on those States that have not yet signed the CTBT to do so without any further delay. We are urging those States that have signed but have not yet ratified the CTBT to take this critical step forward.

We are particularly awaiting positive action from the parliamentarians of the remaining nine (9) Annex 2 States whose ratification will bring about the entry into force of the CTBT. They are China, Egypt, DPRK, India, Indonesia, Iran, Israel, Pakistan and the United States.

Although particular States have pledged voluntary testing moratoriums, these are not enough. These pledges must be enshrined into permanent and legally-binding commitments in order to send a clear message that the international community does not condone the acquisition or development of nuclear weapons.

The world is at a pivotal crossroad in history that calls for a renewed sense of urgency and concrete action. The moment has come to aim for the early entry into force of the CTBT.

Substantive progress in bringing the CTBT closer to its entry into force, along with the start of negotiations on a Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty which prevents the future production of fissile material for nuclear weapons, would undoubtedly be a most welcome prelude to the forthcoming NPT Review Conference in May 2010.

The groundwork is set. I urge all of you here to add to the political momentum and a renewed spirit of openness and willingness to bring us closer to our goal of achieving a safer world.

Creating a world free from the threat of destruction from nuclear weapons would be our enduring legacy to future generations.

Thank you.

