

Regional pathways to global disarmament

(brief statement by Dr. Enkhsaikhan
of Blue Banner at TPNW side event)

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Brief introduction

- Role of non-nuclear-weapon states (NNWSs) is increasing as a result of the studies undertaken on the effects of nuclear weapons which had led to the conclusion of the TPNW. The commitments by the NNWSs undertaken by the NPT, NWFZ treaties and the TPNW in principle coincide, enrich and support each other.
- Regional role of NNWSs lead or linkup to the global role through the five NWFZs and the TPNW.
- At present there are talks underway on establishing, what I call ***second generation*** zones, i.e. in regions where interests of the P5 are somehow involved or where de facto nuclear weapons already exist. I mean the Middle East, Northeast Asia and lately the Arctic, the latter due to the climate change and related technical developments.
- With your permission I would like to speak very briefly about ***Mongolia's experience*** that leads to regional and even broader implications.
- As is well known in 1992 Mongolia had declared itself a single-State NWFZ and since 1998 UNGA biennially has been adopting resolutions in support of its nuclear-weapon-free status policy.
- In 2012 the P5 have adopted a joint declaration regarding Mongolia's status by which they have pledged to respect the status and not to contribute to any act that would violate it. After long and extensive talks with the P5 an understanding was reached that the P5 might be prepared to look at the issue of single-State NWFZs when it is broadly recognized by the international community.
- As of today 14 UNGA resolutions have been adopted without a vote, to some of which even the P5 became co-sponsors. So the time has come to look at the issue again.

From a national initiative to a broader concept of NWFZs

- Blue Banner, Mongolian NGO, which I represent at this side event, had undertaken a study on the strengths and weaknesses of the NWFZ regime and had concluded that there are at least two dozen *non-committed NNWSs* (i.e. land-locked, neutral states, NNWSs that are not parties to nuclear military alliances or parties to the current NWFZs that due to current definition and concept of NWFZs cannot be part of the NWFZ regime since they would not be established “based on the arrangements arrived at among the states of the region concerned”). The reasons given by the P5 for their reluctance to accept single-State zones was that doing so might detract from establishing group-state zones, set unfavorable for them precedents and that as a principle the P5 do not provide security assurances to individual states.
- These are not valid reasons to exclude these non-committed NNWSs from the NWFZ regime and allow for blind spots and grey areas and knowingly establish the Achilles’ heels in the NWFZ regime.
- Fifty years have passed since the first NWFZ was established. In the meantime space, time and technology have become critical geopolitical factor affecting international security and stability. In the meantime nuclear arms race has intensified while the number of nuclear weapon states has increased to nine.
- Today it is universally accepted that nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought. However, NNWSs should be mindful of latin adage *lupus non mordet lupum* (a wolf does not bite a wolf) and make sure that the non-committed NNWSs are not drawn in great power rivalry, including in the western Pacific.
- In the rapidly changing security environment the nuclear threat is not limited to actual possession or hosting of such weapons by some NNWSs as part of nuclear alliances. There is also at emerging risk of making use of the technical facilities in NNWSs as tools for targeting or in any other way optimizing the use of such weapons. This risk of involving NNWSs must be recognized and effective international verification measures need to be devised with the participation of the IAEA or agreed on regional basis.
- Coverage of NWFZs should geographically be as broad as possible, including the almost 70% of the Earth’s surface that cover vast spaces of seas and oceans where the arms race is increasing. According to the 1982 Law of the Sea Convention nearly 15% of that surface constitutes Exclusive

Economic Zones (EEZs) of coastal states that have jurisdiction over the rich living and non-living resources therein. When exercising the jurisdiction these coastal states are expected to be mindful of the interests of other states. For the sake of common security and stability this spirit of cooperation reflected in the convention needs to be actively promoted. Thus 23 Pacific Island States, though with small population, are in fact large ocean states with jurisdiction over vast EEZ resources covering nearly ten mln. mi². Some of them are located on or near strategic trade and military sea lanes. Hence geopolitical and geo-economic importance of such areas are increasing. No wonder great power rivalry in this area, especially between the U.S. and China in the western Pacific is increasing with many coastal states being showered with great attention and pressures. This rivalry needs to be put to benefit these states as well as regional peace, stability and common prosperity.

- The question arises as to what needs to be done in this case. One of the practical answers is to make the NWFZ regime inclusive.
- Unlike during the past cold war period the commitments regarding individual state cases should not necessarily be mechanical reproduction of hard commitments but be “smarter” or “softer” commitments. Thus the non-committed NNWSs could adopt national legislation or make separate or joint statements regarding their non-nuclear-weapon commitments beyond the NPT. In their turn the P5 could agree on a *code of conduct* among themselves as well as with the non-committed NNWSs and make a joint declaration regarding coastal states’ laws and declarations of NNWSs and provide assurances that they would respect them and would not contribute to any act that would violate them. To make the commitments on both sides credible, an international safeguards and verification mechanism with the support of the IAEA or a separate regional arrangements need to be established.
- UNGA resolution 79/241 adopted last December to undertake a second comprehensive study of NWFZs is a timely one in which the issue of the role of individual states and their interests should be seriously considered as practical contributions to security, stability and the goal of the NFWF. This opportunity should not be missed.