Statement by

H.E. Mr. Rachmat Budiman

Permanent Representative,
Head of Delegation of the Republic of Indonesia

At the Third Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons

Vienna, 9 December 2014
Mr. Chairperson,

At the outset, let me express our sincere thanks and appreciation to the Government of Austria for hosting and organizing this Third Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons, as well as for the warm hospitality extended to us.

Indonesia welcomes the participation of the United States and the United Kingdom in this important meeting. It shows the growing universalization of this issue, and Indonesia believes that wider participation in this Conference, especially by those nuclear weapon states, would contribute positively to mobilizing a sense of global urgency to build a collective commitment in creating a world free of nuclear weapons.

Indonesia associates itself with the statements circulated by the Non-Aligned Movement and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations.

Mr. Chairperson,

Indonesia has repeatedly expressed its strong conviction that the integration of humanitarian and disarmament imperatives will be effective in moving forward nuclear disarmament. In our view, the humanitarian perspective must be bolstered by a paradigm-shift in terms of a strategic view of nuclear weapons’ actual role in and contribution to the maintenance of global peace.

The possession of nuclear weapons gives a false guarantee of security, or perhaps even a false sense of supremacy, both to the possessing country and to those under its nuclear umbrella. In reality, the presence of nuclear weapons in their arsenal escalates their threat factor exponentially. The possession of nuclear weapons -or even just the ambition to acquire one- has also stood out as one of the few factors behind anomalies of behavior demonstrated by state actors in defying international norms. It also has the potential to divert valuable resources from otherwise productive sectors into building weapons of mass destruction.

The existence of mankind shall remain threatened for as long as nuclear weapons continue to exist. Nuclear weapon detonations have resulted in unparalleled human suffering, and continue to pose health risks long afterwards. Such adverse impacts recognize no geographical boundaries, nor generational borders. It should be noted that such nuclear weapon explosions may no longer necessitate conscious action on the part of a nuclear-weapon State. Other factors, such as human error, negligence, miscommunication, cyber risks and access to nuclear weapons by non-State actors have become clear and present threats. Mindful of the devastating consequences of nuclear weapons, it is our dream to have a world free of nuclear weapons.

Mr. Chairperson,

The traditional security doctrine of nuclear deterrence is an obsolete means to address the current debate on nuclear disarmament. It has clearly held us back from moving towards the total and complete elimination of nuclear weapons. Indonesia supports the humanitarian approach to help reformulate the debate, and believes that this Conference, together with the
previous two Conferences in Oslo and Nayarit, will lead to the creation of a road map, plan of action, blueprint, and concrete steps towards the ultimate goal of nuclear disarmament, within the framework of the Conference on Disarmament. Those Conferences serve as an impetus to catalyze the existing stagnant political processes on nuclear disarmament as follows:

- First, the Conference on Disarmament and the urgency to start its substantive work on a comprehensive convention on nuclear weapons to prohibit their possession, development, production, acquisition, testing, stockpiling, transfer, use or threat of use and to provide for their destruction. This is in line with the 2014 UNGA Resolution entitled “Follow-up to the 2013 High Level Meeting of the General Assembly on Nuclear Disarmament”.

- Second, the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) and the need to push for its entry into force, with an end goal of achieving a world free of nuclear weapons. In this regard, Indonesia has the privilege to serve as Co-President of the Article XIV Conference, which is aimed at promoting the entry into force and universalization of the CTBT. Indonesia calls on the eight remaining Annex II countries to ratify the Treaty without delay for the Treaty to come into force.

- Third, the forthcoming 2015 Nuclear Non Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conference and the importance of producing an outcome document containing concrete measures to abolish nuclear weapons.

Indonesia supports the fact based and scientific approaches this Conference has been embracing to shed light on the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons. Indonesia urges that such an approach be strengthened with the formulation of scientific instruments to deconstruct the strategic role of nuclear weapons in the relevant academic fields. Indonesia further urges that the collective findings of this Vienna Conference be mainstreamed into public education and disseminated to relevant constituencies, to challenge and refute pro-nuclear weapon policies.

Mr. Chairperson,

It is timely for us to think of what we will do after the Vienna Conference. There are several questions we need to answer:

- How do we maintain the momentum of global awareness on the destructive impact of the use of nuclear weapons in solidifying efforts for the elimination of nuclear weapons through the existing processes?

- How can we establish a road map to ban the production, testing, stockpiling, transport and use of nuclear weapons if the impasse in the existing processes continues?

- How do we incorporate a specific agenda item on “the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons” in the discussions at the Conference on Disarmament and NPT?

- How do we maintain the importance of this issue in the Third Conference of States Parties and Signatories to Establish Nuclear Weapon Free Zones and Mongolia in 2015?
• How will the United Nations system respond in an integrated manner in terms of preparedness and response measures to nuclear emergencies?

Mr. Chairperson,

To conclude, let me recall that the international community has been successful in banning the use of other weapons that, individually, can generate only a small percentage of a nuclear weapon’s overall destructive force. The international community succeeded because of the belief that those weapons are, to borrow a phrase from the preambles of another WMD Convention that is already in force: “repugnant to the conscience of mankind”. Based on such precedence, there is therefore absolutely no comprehensible reason why a worse predicate cannot be attributed to nuclear weapons, and why today, such instruments of death continue to exist with impunity.

I thank you.