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## Statement by Mr. John A. Bravaco, U.S. Representative, United Nations Disarmament Commission 2012 Session

*Mr. John A. Bravaco, U.S. Representative, United Nations Disarmament Commission*

New York, NY

April 4, 2012

AS DELIVERED

Thank you, Mr. Ambassador. Good afternoon everyone.

On behalf of the United States Delegation, let me congratulate Peru on its election to the Chairmanship of the 2012 session of the UN Disarmament Commission. It is my great pleasure to be working with you again, sir. You may count on the full support of the United States as you fulfill your important responsibilities.

We also congratulate the other members of the Commission's Bureau for their elections. And we warmly welcome the new High Representative for Disarmament, Ms. Angela Kane, and express our gratitude for the contributions of the previous High Representative, Sergio Duarte.

Mr. Chairman, as you know, the Disarmament Commission is meeting on the eve of the first Preparatory Committee meeting for the 2015 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference (NPT). Please allow me to touch on some of the activities, achievements, and commitments of the United States in the field of arms control, nonproliferation, and disarmament.

### The NPT is the Cornerstone

Mr. Chairman, in the forty-two years since the NPT entered into force it has become the most widely adhered to nonproliferation and disarmament agreement the world has ever known. As U.S. President Barack Obama said on April 5, 2009 in Prague: "The basic bargain is sound: Countries with nuclear weapons will move towards disarmament, countries without nuclear weapons will not acquire them, and all countries can access peaceful nuclear energy." Working together at the 2010 NPT Review Conference, States Party achieved agreement on an ambitious and forward-looking Action Plan across all three pillars of the NPT. As the 2015 Review Process begins, the United States looks forward to working with its NPT partners to strengthen implementation of all aspects of the Treaty and the international nuclear nonproliferation regime.

### New START and Beyond

Two agreements between the United States and the Russian Federation that came into force last year serve as essential evidence of the United States' commitment to seek the peace and security of a world without nuclear weapons. The U.S.-Russia Plutonium Management and Disposition Agreement will result in the disposal of enough weapons-grade plutonium for many thousands of nuclear weapons. And the New START Treaty, the implementation of which is now well underway, will, we anticipate, set the stage for the pursuit of a future agreement with Russia for broad reductions in all categories of nuclear weapons – strategic, non-strategic, deployed and non-deployed. As we consider next steps, close consultations with Russia, as well as our allies, will remain essential.

### P5 Transparency and Confidence Building on Nuclear Disarmament

Mr. Chairman, Action 5 of the 2010 NPT Review Conference Final Document Action Plan calls on the Nuclear Weapons States to engage on further reducing nuclear weapons and diminishing their role, reducing the risk of nuclear war, and enhancing transparency and mutual confidence. Building on the NPT RevCon and the engagement initiated at the 2009 London and 2011 Paris conferences, the P5 have continued discussions on these and other nonproliferation and disarmament issues, including reporting by the P5 to other NPT Parties on disarmament-related matters. This process continues. The United Kingdom hosted just today a P5 verification working group, as agreed at last year's Paris P5 Conference. And this summer, the United States is pleased to be hosting the next P5 verification, transparency, and confidence building conference in Washington, DC.

### Fissile Material Cutoff Treaty

Mr. Chairman, a Fissile Material Cutoff Treaty (FMCT) remains an absolutely essential step on the path to global nuclear disarmament, one repeatedly endorsed by the international community. The reality of the situation is simply this: the longer an effectively verifiable FMCT is delayed, or more accurately, denied, the longer a world free of nuclear weapons will remain out of reach.

For this reason, we regret that the Conference on Disarmament (CD) did not agree to the recent compromise Program of Work that would have advanced efforts toward an FMCT, along with serious work on other important issues. We are disappointed at this lost opportunity, but appreciate the vigorous efforts of Egypt and the other "P-6" CD Presidency countries to move this issue forward. We are currently consulting with our P5 partners and others on the most appropriate next steps for an FMCT.

### Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty

The United States also remains committed to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) as another critical element of the nuclear disarmament process. The Administration is continuing its engagement with the United States Senate and the American public on the merits of the Treaty. As we move forward with our efforts to promote ratification, we call on all governments to declare or reaffirm their commitments not to conduct nuclear explosive tests. We thank and congratulate Ghana, Guatemala, Guinea, and Indonesia for their recent ratifications of the Treaty. And we ask all the remaining States required for the Treaty's entry into force to join us in moving toward ratification.

### Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones

Mr. Chairman, over the last several years, the United States has reinvigorated its efforts to support nuclear-weapon-free zone treaties as an important part of the multilateral arms control and nonproliferation architecture. On May 2, 2011, the Administration transmitted the relevant Protocols of the African and South Pacific Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaties to the U.S. Senate for its advice and consent to ratification. Also last year, the Nuclear Weapon States and the states of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations resolved long standing differences related to the South East Asian Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone's Protocol language. Upon completion of some procedural steps, we hope to be able to sign the Protocol to the Southeast Asian zone treaty this year. Regarding the Treaty of Semipalatinsk in Central Asia, we have had preliminary discussions with Kazakhstan and our P5 partners to consider ways to address outstanding issues. And, along with the other NPT depositary states, we strongly support the efforts of Finnish Under Secretary Jaako Laajava, the facilitator for the Middle East Weapons of Mass Destruction Free Zone Conference.

### Outer Space

Mr. Chairman in an effort to strengthen the long-term sustainability, stability, safety, and security of space, the United States earlier this year announced its decision to formally work with the European Union and spacefaring nations to develop and advance an "International Code of Conduct for Outer Space Activities." The European Union's draft Code of Conduct is a good foundation for the development of a non-legally binding International Code of Conduct, which, if adopted, would establish guidelines for responsible behavior to reduce the hazards of debris-generating events and increase the transparency of operations in space to avoid the danger of collisions. We also look forward to practical work in the UN's Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) on outer space transparency and confidence-building measures that is scheduled to begin this summer.

### The UNDC'S Agenda

Mr. Chairman, as we work to finalize agreement on the Commission's agenda for the 2012-2014 issue cycle, please allow me to express my confidence in your ability to foster a compromise that takes account of the views of all delegations.

### Conclusion

Once our agenda is agreed, the United States looks forward to addressing the issues before the Commission in the coming years, and will do its part to facilitate a positive outcome.

Mr. Chairman, this statement will be made available on the website of the U.S. Mission to the United Nations.

Thank you for your attention.

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