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UN Secretary-General calls for nuclear disarmament through a Nuclear Weapons Convention

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New York, October 24, United Nations Day

United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon today called on governments to start negotiations on a nuclear weapons convention as part of a five point plan to eliminate the risks from nuclear weapons.

In an address to a conference organised in the United Nations by the East-West Institute, Ban Ki-moon called for 'the nuclear-weapon States, to fulfil their obligation under the [nuclear Non-Proliferation] Treaty' by pursuing 'a framework of separate, mutually reinforcing instruments. Or they could consider negotiating a nuclear-weapons convention, backed by a strong system of verification, as has long been proposed at the United Nations." Ban Ki-Moon informed the conference that "Upon the request of Costa Rica and Malaysia, I have circulated to all United Nations Member States a draft of such a convention, which offers a good point of departure."

Ban Ki-moon also:

· Called on the Security Council to initiate discussions on 'issues in the nuclear disarmament process' including the provision of unambiguous assurances 'to non-nuclear-weapon States that they will not be the subject of the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons.';

· Encouraged the negotiation, entry-into-force and implementation of a number of nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament treaties including the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, regional nuclear-weapon-free zone treaties and a treaty to control fissile materials;

· Proposed that the Nuclear Weapon States become more transparent about the size of their arsenals, stocks of fissile material and specific disarmament achievements. He noted that "the lack of an authoritative estimate of the total number of nuclear weapons testifies to the need for greater transparency."

· Supported complementary measures for the elimination of other types of WMD; new efforts against WMD terrorism; limits on the production and trade in conventional arms; and new weapons bans, including of missiles and space weapons. He noted that "the General Assembly could also take up the recommendation of the Blix Commission for a World Summit on disarmament, non-proliferation and terrorist use of weapons of mass destruction.

The conference included other high-level speakers Mohammed El Baradei (Secretary-General of the International Atomic Energy Agency), Henry Kissinger (former US Secretary of State) and leaders from the E.U., China, India, Japan and Pakistan.

For the UN Secretary-General's full speech see

For more information on the conference see

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