**BAN ALL NUKES GENERATION**

Topic VII: Roles and Responsibilities for Nuclear Disarmament

Reflections

Delivered by Christian N. Ciobanu, Nuclear Age Peace Foundation and Ban All Nukes Generation

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

I would to thank you the moderator and the panelists for discussing this important subject. I would like to share the reflections from several students from Australia, Germany, Japan, Republic of Korea, and Romania, who have been following the deliberations of the OEWG very closely.

We agree that a review of the roles and responsibilities of States for nuclear disarmament is an important issue. Indeed, for much too long the Non-Nuclear Weapon States have waited – in vain – for meaningful progress on nuclear disarmament.

While the Non-Nuclear Weapon States’ end of the bargain is subject to strict timelines and close monitoring, the Nuclear Weapon States have too often seen Article VI of the NPT as something that can be fulfilled at an undefined later date. While the total number of nuclear warheads has decreased over the past three decades, this gain has been all but extinguished by the modernization of nuclear arsenals, delivery vehicles and facilities of the nuclear industrial complex aimed at the conservation of these last weapons of mass destruction well into the second half of the 21st century. Moderate reductions by some Nuclear Weapon States are insufficient to fulfill Article VI obligations. The longer Nuclear Weapon States cling to nuclear weapons, the greater the possibility of increased horizontal proliferation.

For this untenable, discriminatory situation to stop, Non-Nuclear Weapon States must step up to the plate and take on greater responsibility. Responsibility is indeed the correct term: all governments of the world have a vital responsibility to protect their citizens from the horrors of atomic detonations – horrors which do not halt at national borders.

Mr. Moderator and Distinguished Delegates,

The responsibility to avert this looming humanitarian catastrophe grows with the potential humanitarian suffering it would unleash. The security of no nation – no matter how ill defined – can override the interest of the vast majority of States to ensure this threat never materializes.

Nuclear Weapon States have thus far let the opportunity pass to make good on their promises and demonstrate their good faith in the 43 years since the NPT entered into force. In such a situation, Non-Nuclear Weapon States must rise to their responsibility to do anything and everything they can to maximize the pressure on the possessors of nuclear weapons.

An international treaty banning nuclear weapons should thus be negotiated as soon as possible. While spelling out an emergent international norm prohibiting the use, production, transfer, sharing and stockpiling of nuclear weapons, it would delegitimize nuclear weapons and stigmatize them for what they are. No State may hold civilization hostage for the sake of its security, nor expect fellow states not to follow this path in perpetual proliferation.

Threatening total destruction is thus not sustainable as proliferation, human and technical failure and asymmetric threats as well as failing States grow to an intolerable threat. Security can only be achieved through the total elimination of these weapons.

Nuclear Umbrella states must choose to renounce nuclear weapons and stand on the right side of history. The time has come for Non-Nuclear Weapon States to take the initiative and force Nuclear Weapon States to fulfill their existing Article VI commitments.

Ban nuclear weapons now!

As with other outlawed weapon systems, elimination will follow prohibition. It is not a question of technical difficulties, but merely one of political will.