

**STATEMENT BY MR. ARTAK ZAKARYAN, CHAIRMAN OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON
FOREIGN RELATIONS OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF THE REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA
AT THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON “BUILDING A NUCLEAR-WEAPON-FREE WORLD”
28-29 AUGUST 2016, ASTANA**

Mr. Chairman,

Ladies and gentlemen,

Let me thank the Parliament and the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan as well as the organization of Parliamentarians for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament for organizing this important event and for the tremendous hospitality, we are having these days. I am confident that this conference will contribute to the joint endeavors of the international community in combating the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

This year the Republic of Kazakhstan, as well as the Republic of Armenia is celebrating the 25th anniversary of their Independence. I am extending my heartfelt congratulations to the people of Kazakhstan and wish development and prosperity to the State of Kazakhstan, as well as peace on the way of building a nuclear - weapon - free world.

As a representative of a legislative body, I am fully aware of the responsibility of building the legislative and political framework necessary for the establishment of international mechanisms and security framework limiting the spread of the nuclear weapons under the effective international control. In this regard, I would like to emphasize the importance of engaging in dialogue and building networks with the parliaments of partner countries and international organizations in the pursuit of nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation, and peaceful uses of nuclear technology.

Dear colleagues,

Armenia attaches great importance to universal application and effective implementation of all treaties and regimes, dealing with non-proliferation of the weapons of mass destruction, regarding them as instrumental mechanisms to prevent the proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction. We urge our partners to combine joint actions in regional, sub-regional and international levels for their

comprehensive implementation. As a strong supporter of these mechanisms, we fully share the idea of the establishment of nuclear weapon free zones. In this regard, Armenia welcomed the establishment of the Nuclear Weapon Free Zone in Central Asia, which contains concrete provisions that strengthen regional and international non-proliferation efforts.

Today, the international community faces unprecedented global challenges and natural disasters, as well as continuing threats of various terrorist organizations; however, the proliferation and eventual use of nuclear weapons are one of the main challenges that countries are dealing with.

The Government of Armenia is taking necessary measures to strengthen relevant national and supranational legally and politically binding instruments with a view to tackle the threat posed by possible Weapons of Mass Destruction acquisition by terrorists or other criminal groups. Armenia is a party to main international conventions in combating terrorism, such as International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings, International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism, International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism. Commitment to the implementation compliance to these vital instruments lay a groundwork for countering terrorism, including the acquisition of dangerous materials by terrorist groups. In parallel, the Government of Armenia has implemented a broad set of legislative and administrative measures to strengthen nuclear security at national level. These include the Amendments to the Government decrees on approval of the licensing procedure for import and export of radioactive materials, on the physical protection rules for radioactive materials and on the concept of physical protection and security of Armenian Nuclear Power Plant and nuclear materials. These documents are designed to facilitate the implementation of the provisions of the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material and its Amendment, which was ratified by Armenian Parliament in 2013.

The Armenian Government attaches great importance to the implementation of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1540. With the assistance of experts of 1540 Committee and the OSCE Conflict Prevention Center, Armenia's National Action Plan for 2015-2020 was elaborated and eventually adopted on February 5, 2015 by the Government of Armenia. In March 2015, it was submitted to the 1540 Committee. This dyadic document takes stoke and outlines a series of concrete steps ranging from reviewing already implemented national measures to the coordination of ongoing

and anticipated activities. It underlines Armenia's activities and law regulations in nuclear, chemical and biological spheres as well as the export control and border security subjects. Particular attention is paid to multilateral and bilateral cooperation.

Armenia closely cooperates on a regular basis with the International organizations and partner countries with regard to all nuclear energy issues. Numerous on-site inspections and assessment missions have reaffirmed Armenia's commitment in implementing its international obligations and the highest level of openness and transparency. No any non-compliance or deviation from the requirements of international treaties has been recorded. The Armenian Government took the decision on extension of the life cycle of the Metsamor Nuclear Power Plant after thorough consultations with the International Atomic Energy Agency and its international partners, and all possible measures are taken to ensure its safety and security.

Dear colleagues,

No state is alone in its endeavors of building nuclear - weapon - free world. The highest goal called "Global Zero" can't be achieved without cooperation of all states.

The International community should unite the efforts for combating modern, more powerful and destructive nuclear weapons and join the efforts to prevent the further nuclear tests in favor of the peace of the world.

Once again, I am extending my gratitude to the organizers of the Conference.

Thank you for the attention.