



General Exchange of Views
2025 Session of the UN Disarmament Commission
Delivered by Ambassador Teburoro Tito, Permanent Representative of Kiribati
7 April 2025

Chair and Distinguished Excellences,

At the outset, Kiribati congratulates you on your election as Chair of the 2025 UN Disarmament Commission and the elections of the chairs of the working groups. Kiribati is looking forward to robust discussions in both working groups and key progressive recommendations in subsequent sessions of the UN Disarmament Commission to help save the world.

This year, the UN Disarmament Commission meets amid a challenging security environment. Nuclear risks are at an all-time high due to the increased salience of and emphasis on nuclear weapons in military postures and doctrines coupled with the modernization and maintenance of nuclear weapons.

The continued existence of nuclear weapons and the lack of meaningful advances in the disarmament machinery undermine the security of all States and increase the risk of a nuclear catastrophe.

We are highly concerned that the Bulletin of Atomic Scientists has set the Doomsday Clock to 89 seconds to midnight. In setting the Clock one second closer to midnight, the Bulletin of Atomic Scientists sends a stark signal: "Because the world is already perilously close to the precipice, a move of even a single second should be taken as an indication of extreme danger and an unmistakable warning that every second of delay in reversing course increases the probability of global disaster."

As a state that continues to suffer from the humanitarian and environmental impacts of nuclear tests, we find it unacceptable that a particular Nuclear Weapon State is considering the possibility of resuming nuclear testing. A return to nuclear testing will weaken established international norms and set an uncertain course that would bring the world closer to the catastrophic use of these weapons.

Chair and Excellences,

We must remain hopeful that the international community will make progress towards a world free of nuclear weapons. In this regard, we wish to highlight that at the 2024 Session of the UN General Assembly's First Committee, Kiribati and Kazakhstan presented their updated resolution on addressing the legacy of nuclear weapons.

As part of this updated resolution, we requested the Secretary-General to convene a one-day international meeting on victim assistance and environmental remediation, "at an appropriate time in 2026, with the participation of Member States, observers and civil society representatives from organizations accredited with the Economic and Social Council and invites Member States to share their relevant experience."

The resolution also encourages "participants to produce a series of recommendations, based on the discussions, and further requests the Secretary-General to report on those recommendations to Member States."

We appreciate the overwhelming number of Member States who voted in favor of the resolution.

Recognizing the need to help victims of the use and testing of nuclear weapons, we strongly believe that the report of UNDC's Working Group 1 should make references to affected States and victims of the use and testing of nuclear weapons. The report should also acknowledge the urgent need to remediate contaminated environments.

Chair and Excellences,

One month ago, Kiribati served as one of the vice chairs of the 3rd meeting of States Parties to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons that our good friend, Kazakhstan, chaired.

At the 3MSP, States Parties engaged in an interactive debate and adopted a package of key decisions that strengthened the implementation of the Treaty, including provisions to advance the establishment of an international trust fund for victims.

Moreover, Kiribati accredited a delegation of young women from Kiritimati (Christmas), Kiribati to share their stories about the impact of nuclear tests and refute claims that adequate cleanup has occurred. They delivered statements on the humanitarian provisions of the TPNW and the relationship between gender and nuclear weapons.

As a vocal advocate for the TPNW, Kiribati calls for States to recognize that the TPNW complements key multilateral treaties and helps victims in the Working Group 1 discussions.

Chair and Excellences,

We contend that all States Parties to the NPT, but especially the Nuclear Weapon States, must adhere to their NPT obligations, including their Article VI commitments. The Nuclear Weapon States must halt the maintenance and modernization of their nuclear weapons, which violate the NPT.

To conclude, as we approach the 80th anniversary of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, we must regain our collective sanity and eliminate nuclear weapons. We must safeguard the world and provide a brighter future for our children and future generations.

Thank you.