Statement by Ms. Sewa Lamsal  
Joint Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Leader of Nepali Delegation at  
the First Meeting of States Parties to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear  
Weapons (TPNW) Vienna, 21-23 June 2021

Mr. President,  
Excellencies,  
Distinguished Participants,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. It is my distinct honor and privilege to address this historic First Meeting of States Parties of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in this beautiful city of Vienna. On behalf of my delegation, I congratulate you and your team Mr. President and wish for the successful conclusion of this Meeting. Rest assured of my delegation’s full support to discharge your important responsibility. I also thank the Secretariat for the excellent arrangements for the Meeting.

Mr. President,

2. Nuclear disarmament has been a much-deliberated subject ever since the establishment of the United Nations. The very first resolution passed by the UN in 1946 aimed to achieve global nuclear disarmament. We have adopted a series of other resolutions and treaties since then. However, the modernization of nuclear arsenals and undue importance of nuclear weapons in security doctrines continue unabated and expenditures on nuclear weapons and armaments are continuously rising.

3. Nepal attaches high importance to disarmament. It has ratified Partial Test Ban Treaty, Outer Space Treaty, The 1925 Geneva Protocol, NPT, Seabed Treaty, CWC, and BWC and signed the CTBT in 1996 and TPNW in 2017 with its firm conviction on nuclear disarmament for world peace. Nepal was among the 122 States that voted in favour of the adoption of TPNW. Nepal is committed to ratifying them at the earliest possible.

4. Nepal is the host to the UN Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific (UNRCPD) and has been organizing regional meetings and dialogue under the “Kathmandu Process” to increase awareness on disarmament in partnership with UNRCPD.
5. Moreover, Nepal promulgated a law governing the Utilization and Regulation of Radioactive Materials in 2020. This legislation further confirms our commitment towards the non-proliferation regime.

6. Nepal’s unwavering commitment to disarmament and international peace and security is enshrined in the Constitution as a basis of the country’s foreign policy. We believe that only strengthened norms of world peace can ensure timebound, general and complete disarmament and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, including the biological, chemical, nuclear, and radiological weapons. Nepal believes that the use or threat of use of weapons of mass destruction is against the principles of the UN Charter and international humanitarian, human rights, and environmental laws.

7. Nepal underlines that the States possessing nuclear weapons should respect the importance of principles of transparency, irreversibility, and verifiability of the nuclear weapons for their total elimination. We do not believe that nuclear weapons are useful deterrents. Instead, they are the cause of security dilemma among the nuclear States. Therefore, the modernization of the nuclear arsenals, ongoing research on new nuclear warheads and the development of new delivery vehicles needs to be halted.

Mr. President,

8. As a signatory of TPNW and CTBT and a State party to NPT, Nepal urges all Member States to demonstrate their strong political will and exercise utmost flexibility to achieve a world free of nuclear weapons. Nepal stands for complete prohibition of the development, testing, production, acquisition, possession, stockpiling, transfer, use and threat of use of nuclear weapons. We also respect the inalienable right of all States to research, produce and use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes in conformity with the safeguard mechanism of IAEA.

9. In this regard, international cooperation, and technical assistance for peaceful uses should be promoted with a particular focus on the LDCs. Likewise, we must ensure to protect the rights of victims and survivors of nuclear activities.

10. Nepal strongly believes that successful implementation of this treaty requires cooperative and consensual participation of the States possessing nuclear weapons, including the participation of researchers, academia, civil society, and NGOs.

11. In conclusion, my delegation underlines that we should redouble our diplomatic efforts with strong political will to create an environment of mutual trust and
confidence and divert precious resources used for armament towards achieving our common development aspirations, including the SDGs. A small fraction of the costs of armament could save millions of people from hunger and disease.

I thank you!