

**To the participants of the Civil Society Forum held parallel to the
Second Conference of nuclear-weapon-free zones and Mongolia**

New York

29 April 2010

Esteemed participants of the Civil Society Forum,

It gives me a great pleasure on behalf of the Blue Banner, Mongolian non-governmental organization dedicated to promoting the goals of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation in Mongolia and beyond, to greet the participants of this important civil society event held in just prior to the Second Conference of nuclear-weapon-free zones and Mongolia.

This Civil Society Forum is a testimony to the increasingly important role that civil societies are playing in contributing to an enhanced cooperation among NWFZs and Mongolia in strengthening the regime of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

The Second Conference of NWFZs and Mongolia as well as this Civil Society Forum are being held on the eve of a very important international forum – the 2010 NPT Review Conference. These three mutually linked fora are taking place in a new international context that holds the promise of a substantial progress in the areas of nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation. In the past five years since the first Civil Society Forum was held in Mexico, the international community has seen important developments in promoting the goals of disarmament and non-proliferation, including the signing of US-Russian agreement to reduce further the deployed nuclear warheads. We welcome that substantial progress has been registered in establishing additional NWFZs. Thus the Bangkok, Pelindaba and Semipalatinsk treaties have entered into force broadening considerably the network of NWFZs and developing further the norms of international law and behavior in this field.

The Blue Banner was established in 2005 inspired by the spirit and the outcome of the Civil Society Forum and of the Mexico Conference itself. Since its establishment it has been working tirelessly to promote the noble goals and concrete measures of disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation both at the national, regional and international level. It was established pursuant to Article 6.4 of the Mongolian law on the country's nuclear-weapon-free status that criminalizes any act that would violate that status. The Article stipulates that "non-governmental organizations or individuals may ... exercise public oversight of the implementation of the legislation on the nuclear-weapon-free status and submit proposals thereon to the relevant State authority". Thus in 2006 the Blue Banner has proposed to the Government to review implementation of the law. It was included in the working group that carried out the review and produced a 7 point recommendation to the Government. In the same spirit the Blue Banner has been working with international and national NGO to promote common disarmament goals.

Though the Blue Banner is not able to send its representative to the Civil Society Forum it wishes its participants a very fruitful meeting aimed at raising the voice and increasing the role of the civil society in addressing the issues that affect the security and well-being of all peoples as well as contribute to the fruitful outcome of the Second Conference of NWFZs and Mongolia, and of the 2010 NPT Review Conference. The Blue Banner stands ready to work with the participants of the Civil Society Forum and other like-minded organizations in promoting the goals of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

Wishing you all a very successful meeting,

P. Ochirbat
President of the Blue Banner,
Former President of Mongolia