
Preparatory Committee for the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

12 March 2013

Original: English

Second session

Geneva, 22 April-3 May 2013

Implementation of the 2010 Review Conference conclusions and recommendations for follow-on actions

Report submitted by Austria

1. In follow-up to Austrian reports to the Review Conferences of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, Austrian specialized working papers and general oral reports presented during meetings of the Preparatory Committee, as well as with reference to relevant working papers of the European Union and the Vienna Group of Ten, Austria submits the following complementary summary report on national activities pursuant to action 20 of the action plan adopted by the 2010 Review Conference.

I. Nuclear disarmament

2. Austria underscores its firm commitment to the principles and objectives of nuclear disarmament agreed to in 2010. This includes, in particular, the resolve to seek a world without nuclear weapons and the continued validity of the practical steps agreed to in the Final Document of the 2000 Review Conference as well as the importance of the universality of the Treaty.

3. Moreover, Austria underscores the importance of the recognition contained in the 2010 Final Document of the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of any use of nuclear weapons and the need to comply at all times with international law and international humanitarian law. Austria has worked with a group of like-minded States on joint statements on the humanitarian dimension of nuclear disarmament. Together with the Austrian Red Cross, the Austrian Ministry for European and International Affairs organized a seminar on this issue in November 2012. Austria is committed to developing this approach further with interested States and civil society.

Action 1

4. Austria has been pursuing policies fully compatible with the Treaty and the objective of achieving a world without nuclear weapons for a long time. The pursuit of such policies is supported by national legislation, since 1999 at the constitutional



level with the law on a nuclear-free Austria. Article 1 of that law (149/1999) stipulates that “It is prohibited to produce, stockpile, transfer, test or use a nuclear weapon in Austria. It is further prohibited to establish installations for the stockpiling of nuclear weapons in Austria”. More recently, on the occasion of the September 2009 Security Council summit on nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament, Austria’s Federal President stated that “The prospect of a world without nuclear weapons must become a goal shared by all States. Austria supports the idea of a nuclear weapons convention”. In March 2010, the Austrian Parliament adopted a decision supported by all parties calling on the Government to work for a world without nuclear weapons and support the five-point plan of the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

Actions 6, 7, 9 and 15

5. Concerning multilateral processes for nuclear disarmament, Austria has been supporting efforts to facilitate substantive work in the Conference of Disarmament since becoming a member in 1996. Austria is seriously concerned about the lack of progress in that forum, which also has a significant negative impact on the Treaty and the implementation of agreed disarmament commitments. Austria holds the view — and supports efforts to this end — that the Conference of Disarmament, in accordance with its mandate, should immediately deal with nuclear disarmament and with effective international arrangements to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons, and also immediately begin the negotiation of a treaty banning the production of fissile material for use in nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. Austria also fully supported, and the Federal Minister for European and International Affairs, Michael Spindelegger, participated in, the high-level meeting convened in that regard by the Secretary-General of the United Nations in New York on 24 September 2010. Austria firmly supports nuclear-weapon-free zones, including the establishment of further zones.

6. In order to give additional impetus to the nuclear disarmament agenda, Austria, together with Mexico and Norway, initiated a resolution at the General Assembly on taking forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations, which was adopted as resolution 67/56. By the resolution, the Assembly established an open-ended working group with the mandate to develop proposals to take forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations for the achievement and maintenance of a world without nuclear weapons and decided that it should submit a report on its work, reflecting discussions held and all proposals made, to the Assembly.

7. In parallel, Austria supports the discussion process launched, on the occasion of the Preparatory Committee for the 2012 Review Conference of the parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, held in Vienna, by the Middle Powers Initiative, the so-called Framework Forum. In Berlin on 21 and 22 February 2013, the Forum debated the creation of the conditions and the building of a framework for a nuclear-weapon-free world in the hope of being able to feed ideas and concepts into the regular intergovernmental processes.

Actions 12-14

8. Austria considers the promotion of the entry into force and implementation of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty to be of the utmost urgency as a key non-proliferation and disarmament measure. The crucial role of that Treaty and the

importance of its entry into force are raised on a regular basis in bilateral, regional and global meetings by the Austrian Minister for European and International Affairs, as well as by other high-level Austrian officials, including parliamentarians. Corresponding reports are submitted to article XIV conferences of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. While Austria raises the issue with all States that have not yet ratified the Treaty, the ratification of annex II States is particularly important. In this context, the absence of ratification on the part of States members of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons listed in annex II to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty is of the utmost concern. Austria supports the build-up of the verification regime of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, which has reached a very mature and impressive level. Austria has provided voluntary financial contributions to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty for a variety of activities.

Actions 19 and 22

9. The main area of activity undertaken by Austria, as a non-nuclear-weapon State, in the field of nuclear disarmament relates to various supportive measures. The initiatives announced at the 2010 Review Conference have since been implemented with substantial Austrian contributions: the Vienna Centre for Disarmament and Non-Proliferation has been established as an independent think tank, and the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs has opened a Vienna office in order to improve collaboration among the Vienna-based organizations in the field of disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control. In addition, disarmament and non-proliferation education has repeatedly been supported by Austrian contributions to civil society events both for specialized audiences and for youth and the general public. Creating awareness about both the complexity and the urgency of dealing with nuclear disarmament against the backdrop of the risk of devastating humanitarian consequences of nuclear-weapon explosions is an aspect on which Austrian support has increasingly been focusing.

10. Together with Japan, Austria submitted a working paper on bridging the generation divide for peace and a sustainable future through disarmament and non-proliferation education (NPT/CONF.2015/PC.I/WP.11). It was triggered by the Critical Issues Forum for high-school students, and focused on nuclear safety and security. It was organized by the James Martin Centre for Non-Proliferation Studies, together with the Vienna Centre for Disarmament and Non-Proliferation. The Critical Issues Forum demonstrated the comprehensive approach required in order to take on critical issues such as the nuclear question: the nuclear genie is out of its bottle, and nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation as well as the safety and security of nuclear energy in its peaceful applications have to be considered together. Transparent discussions need to take place, and not only among the “nuclear elites”. This is a question of public concern and of mutual trust. It is a question of peace and a sustainable future.

II. Nuclear non-proliferation

Action 23

11. Austria has always supported efforts to promote the universalization of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. The status of Austria as a

non-nuclear-weapon State party to the Treaty is also firmly embedded in the progressively comprehensive system of International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards that has been assuring the international community of Austria's compliance with its Treaty obligations. Compliance is a vital ingredient for enhancing trust and confidence in the Treaty and thus for promoting its universalization. It also facilitates robust and complete nuclear disarmament measures.

Actions 24-29 and 32-34

12. Regarding the IAEA safeguards system, Austria has traditionally been actively involved in its further development and strengthening, including through the timely and full payment of its assessed contributions and through European Union contributions. Comprehensive safeguards agreements together with the Additional Protocol constitute the current IAEA verification standard and allow for the application of integrated safeguards. This standard needs to be universally applied. Austria is among the countries for which IAEA has already been able to draw a broader safeguards conclusion and thus has provided credible assurance about the absence of undeclared nuclear material and activities. Austria has repeatedly urged countries of proliferation concern to accept the current IAEA verification standard and to enable IAEA to draw a broader safeguards conclusion in order to re-establish mutual trust and confidence.

Actions 35-39

13. In fulfilling the responsibility to ensure that nuclear-related exports do not directly or indirectly assist the development of nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices and are in full conformity with the objectives and purposes of the Treaty, Austria has been applying the understandings of the Zangger Committee as well as the guidelines developed by the Nuclear Suppliers Group. Austria welcomes the increasing adherence to export controls and is in the process of examining opportunities offered by this development with a view to strengthening the global nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime.

Actions 40-46

14. Austria has adhered to all legal instruments regarding physical protection and the suppression of acts of nuclear terrorism. The stipulations and principles enshrined in these instruments have been effectively transformed into national legislation and action. Austria also supports the relevant IAEA programmes, primarily through European Union contributions. In support of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004), Austria co-organized and hosted, in Vienna from 8 to 10 January 2013, the first Civil Society Forum in Support of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) on opportunities for engagement.

III. Peaceful uses of nuclear energy

Action 47

15. Like other States, Austria exercises the inalienable right under article IV to develop research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes in conformity with articles I, II and III of the Treaty, while respecting the

corresponding rights of other States. This right also entails the option not to use nuclear power — without, however, the outright renunciation of the right recognized in the Treaty to do so. As past accidents have shown, nuclear power can never be 100 per cent safe. Furthermore, given the long-term effects and responsibilities connected to the nuclear fuel cycle, nuclear power does not contribute to sustainable development. Indeed, it poses an additional risk in times of natural or human-made crises. Finally, given the combination of safety, security and proliferation concerns, nuclear power is not a viable avenue to confront other global challenges, such as climate change. As a consequence, the 1999 constitutional law on a nuclear-free Austria also prohibits the use of nuclear fission for the generation of power in Austria. In July 2010, the Austrian Parliament reiterated the need for corresponding policy actions by the Government.

Actions 48-58

16. Austria, as part of the European Union as well as in its national capacity, has made efforts in accordance with its Constitution to support and to diligently implement these actions. Austria sees IAEA as the major player in guaranteeing that countries choosing to develop their capacities in the peaceful applications of nuclear energy do so under the best safety, security and non-proliferation conditions. Thus Austria is a strong supporter of IAEA and a traditional partner in various training activities to this end. Austria also fully supports the principle enshrined in article IV, paragraph 2. Even at times of economic and budgetary constraint, Austria has made extra efforts to pay its assessed contributions to the IAEA regular budget and the Technical Cooperation Fund in full and on time. In addition to the regular assessed contributions, Austria is making further contributions towards the construction and maintenance of IAEA office infrastructure.

17. Austria also supports the ideal of the full multilateralization of the complete nuclear fuel cycle. The corresponding working paper from the previous review cycle (NPT/CONF.2010/PC.III/WP.34) remains valid. It remains an ideal that would also offer advantages in specific regional contexts.

Actions 59-64

18. Austria reaffirms the importance of ongoing international efforts to improve the global nuclear safety regime, including the robust implementation of the IAEA Action Plan on Nuclear Safety, and notes the central role of IAEA in the sharing and application of the lessons learned from the accident at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power station. Furthermore, Austria emphasizes the importance for all States, in particular those with nuclear fuel cycle activities, to become parties to all conventions and agreements relevant to safety and security and to support the further development, as necessary, of legally binding instruments to ensure a better global safety and security framework. Austria is party to all relevant conventions and an active participant in corresponding review processes, and has a strong civil nuclear liability regime in place.

19. Austria is also eliminating highly enriched uranium in national civilian stocks and use. Together with Norway, Austria conducted the second International Symposium on the Minimization of Highly Enriched Uranium in Vienna in 2012 and reported on it in working paper NPT/CONF.2015/PC.I/WP.1. There were a number of policy ideas and recommendations that the symposium co-hosts, Austria,

Norway and the Nuclear Threat Initiative, identified as a possible policy agenda for the future. They are aimed at promoting tangible progress, as well as a culture of transparency, trust and cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy that also ensures the highest level of safety, security and non-proliferation. They concern the minimization of highly enriched uranium, civilian naval propulsion reactors and transparency, and a few of them concern the expansion of efforts in these fields.

IV. The Middle East, in particular, the implementation of the 1995 resolution on the Middle East

Part IV of the action plan

20. Furthermore, as part of the European Union, Austria strongly supports the mechanism for implementing the 1995 resolution on the Middle East, which includes, in particular, the holding of a conference in Helsinki on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. Austria has always been ready to provide meeting venues, has offered substantive input for the efforts to create confidence and trust and is ready to continue this support for any future actions.
