
2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

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Held at Headquarters, New York, on Monday, 1 August 2022, at 3 p.m.

President: Mr. Zlauvinen (Argentina)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

General debate (*continued*)

1. **Mr. Szijjártó** (Hungary) said that the war in neighbouring Ukraine posed a serious security risk to his country, threatening the economy and the safe supply of energy. Hungary, which had already received 870,000 refugees from Ukraine, called on the international community to concentrate all efforts on creating peace in that country. An immediate ceasefire should be established and peace talks should be launched. The war in Ukraine increased the significance of avoiding the further spread of nuclear weapons worldwide; the danger of nuclear escalation and possible miscalculation increased every day the war continued.

2. Throughout history, whenever there had been a conflict between East and West, central Europeans had always lost. Therefore, his country had always argued in favour of maintaining a dialogue between the two regions, in particular on strategic issues like avoiding the spread and use of nuclear weapons. His delegation called on the five permanent members of the Security Council to re-engage in a dialogue on nuclear disarmament in order to avoid the risk of further tension and escalation. The United Nations must also take every opportunity to reinforce the norms against nuclear weapons and reject policies that threatened to use them. The nuclear-weapon States considered the war in Ukraine from a geopolitical perspective, while for neighbouring countries it was a vital issue. His delegation asked all relevant stakeholders not to play geopolitics at his country's expense. The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons must be respected by all, and the spread and use of nuclear weapons must be avoided.

3. The significance of the peaceful use of nuclear energy had increased as a result of the recent global energy crisis. Based on his country's experience using nuclear power over the previous 40 years, it was a cost-effective, climate-friendly, safe and stable means of generating energy that helped to reduce dependency on the turbulent global energy market. A new nuclear power plant was being built in Hungary that would significantly increase the country's nuclear capacity. Nuclear energy should not fall under any sanctions regimes, and international cooperation regarding nuclear energy should not fall under restrictions as that would also limit the sovereign rights of countries to create their own national energy mix.

4. The construction and operation of his country's nuclear power plants were fully in line with the security and safety regulations of the International Atomic

Energy Agency (IAEA). All nuclear power plants operating around the world should adopt the same approach.

5. **Ms. Linde** (Sweden) said that the present Review Conference was being held against the backdrop of a severely deteriorated security environment. Her delegation strongly condemned the brutal and unprovoked aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine and reaffirmed its unwavering support for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders. The threats made by the Russian Federation to use nuclear weapons, which risked lowering the threshold of such use, were flagrant violations of international law, including the Charter of the United Nations. Those actions stood in sharp contrast to the declaration of 3 January 2022 by the leaders of the five nuclear-weapon States reaffirming the principle that a nuclear war could not be won and must never be fought.

6. The actions of Russia, the continuing expansion and modernization of nuclear arsenals, challenges to well-established norms and principles and a lack of transparency and restraint all gave cause for great concern. Sweden was also deeply worried about regional proliferation challenges, in particular the proliferation-sensitive nuclear activities of Iran and its lack of cooperation with IAEA, and the nuclear and ballistic missiles programme of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

7. The Stockholm Initiative on Nuclear Disarmament contained 22 disarmament-related proposals, including steps to reduce nuclear arsenals; reduce the role of nuclear weapons in doctrines and policies; proceed with negotiations on a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices ; and support efforts to develop multilateral nuclear disarmament verification capacities and strengthen negative security assurances. Another crucial step would be the long overdue entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. In the present security context, efforts to reduce the risk of nuclear weapons use were more urgent than ever. While not a substitute for disarmament, risk reduction could decrease tensions, increase trust and dispel misconceptions. The nuclear risk reduction package presented by the Stockholm Initiative put forward concrete measures and a process for addressing risk reduction within the framework of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. A total of 24 State parties had aligned themselves with her delegation's working papers.

8. IAEA played an indispensable role in the service of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. The Agency should be

provided with the best possible inspection tools, including by universally applying the additional protocol, an integral part of the IAEA safeguards system under the Treaty. Sweden supported the Agency's broad technical cooperation with Member States, including through the Peaceful Uses Initiative.

9. Diversity was crucial for disarmament and non-proliferation to work. The full and effective participation of women and the further integration of gender perspectives in all aspects of disarmament and non-proliferation decision-making processes were key, as was engaging the younger generation.

10. **Mr. Rakhmetullin** (Kazakhstan), speaking on behalf of the States parties to the Treaty on a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Central Asia (Treaty of Semipalatinsk), said that the States parties to that Treaty had adopted a joint statement in 2021, in which they had reaffirmed the paramount importance of the Non-Proliferation Treaty as the cornerstone of international efforts to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons and achieve their complete elimination. Those States parties were committed to banning the production, acquisition and deployment of nuclear weapons and their components or other nuclear explosive devices on their territories.

11. The Treaty of Semipalatinsk had been signed in 2006 in Semipalatinsk, Kazakhstan, a region where one of the world's largest nuclear test sites had been closed in 1991. The Central Asian nuclear-weapon-free zone was the first to be located entirely in the Northern hemisphere and in a landlocked region between two nuclear Powers. Paradoxically, the Semipalatinsk test site used to be the only testing venue in the region, and nuclear weapons were actively tested and deployed there. Given the importance of ensuring the environmental rehabilitation of territories affected by radioactive waste, his delegation urged all Governments and international organizations with expertise in clean-up and disposal of radioactive contaminants to provide the Central Asian States with assistance in the area of radiological assessment and remediation of former test sites and uranium extraction plants.

12. The declaration of the Central Asian nuclear-weapon-free zone had significantly enhanced security and stability in that expansive geopolitical space. The States of the Central Asian region were committed to increasing partnerships with the existing nuclear-weapon-free-zones in order to strengthen the Non-Proliferation Treaty regime and unite international efforts to ensure peace and security. Kazakhstan and the Office for Disarmament Affairs had co-organized an international seminar on fostering cooperation and

enhancing consultation mechanisms among the existing nuclear-weapon-free zones, held in Nur-Sultan in August 2019. The seminar had gathered representatives of all nuclear-weapon-free zones and Mongolia, as well as experts from relevant international organizations.

13. The Protocol to the Treaty on a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Central Asia, which provided security assurances against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons to the Central Asian States, had been signed on 6 May 2014. To date, the Protocol had been ratified by four nuclear-weapon States and it was hoped that the United States would soon ratify it in order to finalize the institutionalization of the Central Asian nuclear-weapon-free zone. The establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones strongly contributed to preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons and bolstering the global disarmament process.

14. **Mr. Fota** (Romania) said that the present Review Conference was being held in a fundamentally altered security environment marked by increased tensions and new global challenges and threats. The previous year had offered a glimmer of hope, with the extension of the Treaty between the United States of America and the Russian Federation on Measures for the Further Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms (New START Treaty), the establishment of the United States-Russia Strategic Stability Dialogue and the issuance of a joint statement of the five permanent members of the Security Council in which they affirmed that a nuclear war could not be won and must never be fought. However, the illegal, unprovoked and unjustified military aggression by the Russia against Ukraine had reversed that progress.

15. The aggressive actions of Russia had undermined the very foundation of international relations and the rules-based international order and had had a significant impact on the three pillars of the Non-Proliferation Treaty regime. That country had violated its commitment to refrain from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or sovereignty of Ukraine under the Memorandum on Security Assurances in Connection with Ukraine's Accession to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (Budapest Memorandum) of 1994. The loss of credibility of a nuclear-weapon State that was not respecting its security assurances threatened to undermine the Non-Proliferation Treaty and the entire disarmament and non-proliferation architecture. In addition, the indiscriminate attacks of the Russian military at and around Ukrainian nuclear facilities had increased the risk of a nuclear accident, with potentially severe consequences for human health and the environment. Russian military and other personnel should

immediately withdraw from the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant so that Ukrainian authorities could resume their sovereign responsibilities and the legitimate operating staff could conduct their duties without pressure or interference.

16. His delegation fully supported the work of IAEA and its Director General in assisting Ukraine in the area of nuclear safety and security and ensuring safeguards implementation. Romania had facilitated the transit of and provided support for the Director General and inspectors of IAEA who had travelled to Ukraine during the disturbing events that had put nuclear facilities in the country at risk following the Russian invasion. Russia must stop its illegal war, cease its nuclear brinkmanship, uphold its international commitments, recommit to the principles enshrined in the joint statement of the five permanent members of the Security Council and engage constructively in genuine dialogue at the present Review Conference.

17. His country had made notable national contributions to the Review Conference and to the implementation of the Treaty. It had chaired the Disarmament and International Security Committee (First Committee) during the seventy-third session of the General Assembly in 2019 and had organized and hosted, in a virtual format, the Annual North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Conference on Weapons of Mass Destruction, Arms Control, Disarmament and Non-Proliferation in 2020. The efforts of Romania at the International Conference on Nuclear Security held in Vienna in 2020 had contributed to its success, including the adoption by consensus of a ministerial declaration.

18. Romania remained fully committed to a world without nuclear weapons, in accordance with the objectives of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, and advocated a gradual and pragmatic process of nuclear disarmament based on a step-by-step approach that ensured the undiminished security for all States parties. Advancing towards that ultimate goal must take into account the global security environment, which had been further aggravated by the invasion of Ukraine by Russia. The main objectives to be pursued in the field of nuclear disarmament remained the universality of the Treaty, the entry into force of the Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and the negotiation at the Conference on Disarmament of a fissile material cut-off treaty.

19. Romania had actively participated in the “Creating an Environment for Nuclear Disarmament” initiative launched by the United States of America. Although his delegation acknowledged the decline in nuclear arsenals since the end of the Cold War, it was necessary to preserve and further advance arms control, disarmament

and non-proliferation processes. His delegation called on China, whose nuclear arsenal was rapidly increasing, to uphold its international commitments under the Non-Proliferation Treaty and join negotiations with the United States and Russia on limitations on nuclear weapons and on measures to reduce risks and build confidence.

20. The States parties to the Treaty could not ignore or remain silent on current proliferation challenges, such as those from the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, Iran and Syria. Also of concern was the change in non-nuclear status of Belarus. It was essential to take stock of those challenges at the present Review Conference and for States to work together to render the non-proliferation regime resilient against future challenges of non-compliance with or withdrawal from the Treaty.

21. Developments and events over the previous several years had emphasized the importance of implementing the IAEA comprehensive safeguards agreements and additional protocols, which constituted the present verification standard under the Treaty. His delegation called for their universalization without delay.

22. Romania had developed a wide spectrum of activities in the field of the peaceful applications of nuclear science and technology, recognizing their major role in the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. As a country with a civilian nuclear programme, Romania remained committed to strengthening global nuclear safety and security and highlighted the importance of cooperation in the field of peaceful uses of nuclear energy, including his country’s cooperation with the United States to build a small modular reactor. By deploying such innovative green technology, Romania was taking a bold step in advancing climate action and ensuring access to clean energy.

23. **Mr. Bolbocean** (Republic of Moldova) said that the unprovoked military aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine was a tragedy for millions of people, affecting security and stability far beyond their region. His delegation strongly condemned the war and reaffirmed its full support for the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders. The military activities in and around nuclear sites in Ukraine, including the Chernobyl exclusion zone and Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant, had caused serious concern and continued to pose a significant risk to the entire continent.

24. In that context, his delegation reaffirmed the centrality of the Non-Proliferation Treaty in the global

nuclear non-proliferation regime and emphasized the importance of Treaty universalization with a view to pursuing nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament. His country undertook all necessary measures to prevent transfers through its territory of any components, materials and technology related to weapons of mass destruction. Active engagement and cooperation with other countries and relevant international and regional organizations provided the opportunity to use and apply the expertise and best practices in that field and effectively contributed to the prevention and combating of illicit trafficking in radiological and nuclear materials.

25. Since the 2015 Review Conference, States had not managed to agree on many issues essential for nuclear disarmament. However, their common objective remained the promotion of a strong commitment by all States parties to fully observe their obligations under the Treaty, which would create an international environment conducive to risk reduction. His Government therefore strongly supported the Stockholm Initiative and fully agreed that the current Review Conference should take practical steps towards reducing nuclear risks as part of broader disarmament efforts, notably calling for regular, in-depth, structured dialogues among nuclear-weapon States, as well as dialogues on specific risk reduction measures among all States parties.

26. **Mr. Ham Sang Wook** (Republic of Korea) said that the present Review Conference was being held at a critical juncture; the credibility and relevance of the Non-Proliferation Treaty were being questioned. States had witnessed dangerous and irresponsible nuclear rhetoric and threats to use nuclear weapons; concerns were growing as transparency was decreasing regarding nuclear stockpiles, posture and operations; and gaps had widened in assessing progress in nuclear disarmament. Persistent challenges remained with regard to non-proliferation. Nuclear safety and security had been seriously undermined by a dangerous attack on a nuclear power plant. The current Review Conference should focus on reaffirming joint commitments and identifying concrete actions to advance all three pillars of the Treaty.

27. The complicated security environment meant that genuine efforts by the nuclear-weapon States were required to reduce nuclear risks and achieve progress in nuclear disarmament. The five permanent members of the Security Council, in particular, should assume their due and special responsibilities under article VI of the Treaty. At the same time, bridge-building efforts, including the Stockholm Initiative and the “Creating an Environment for Nuclear Disarmament” initiative, could contribute to building trust and promoting real

progress towards the shared goal of a world without nuclear weapons. In addition, the IAEA-centred nuclear safeguards and verification regime should be strengthened. States parties to the Treaty that had not yet adopted IAEA comprehensive safeguards agreements and additional protocol should conclude them and bring them into force without delay. As a strong supporter of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, the Republic of Korea encouraged all relevant parties to return to genuine dialogue and find a path back to full compliance with that milestone agreement.

28. While relentlessly developing nuclear and missile programmes, the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea had been launching ballistic missiles at an unprecedented frequency in flagrant violation of Security Council resolutions and was considered to be technically ready to launch yet another nuclear test. It was the only country that had abused the Treaty regime and had openly developed nuclear weapons. How such challenges were addressed would not only send a message to the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea but would also be a litmus test on the viability of the Treaty regime itself. His delegation urged the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea to cease all kinds of provocations, comply with Security Council resolutions, fully comply with the Treaty and denuclearize in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner. At the same time, the door to dialogue remained open.

29. It was time to redouble efforts to expand and enhance cooperation regarding the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. As one of the major producers of nuclear energy, his country had actively contributed to expanding the benefits of peaceful uses of nuclear energy, was determined to continue its leading role in improving nuclear safeguards, safety and security and remained a staunch supporter of the central role of IAEA in that area.

30. **Mr. Rakhmetullin** (Kazakhstan) said that nuclear weapons were the deadliest threat to humanity. The United Nations had been founded in 1945 to avert such threats, but it had had limited success so far. There was a growing distrust between nuclear- and non-nuclear-weapon States with regard to the effectiveness and unconditional binding character of international agreements. However, the most dangerous factor of all was the lack of confidence between the nuclear powers themselves, which could lead to a new nuclear arms race. The Non-Proliferation Treaty had been adopted precisely to prevent such foreboding developments.

31. Dialogue and cooperation between nuclear-weapon States to reduce tensions and the risk of

escalation were more important than ever before. His delegation urged the five permanent members of the Security Council to positively consider the concrete measures proposed by the Stockholm Initiative to advance nuclear disarmament and ensure that nuclear weapons would never be used again.

32. The decision made by Kazakhstan on 29 August 1991 to close the Semipalatinsk nuclear test site had contributed to raising awareness of the need to eliminate nuclear weapons. Shortly thereafter, other nuclear test sites had followed its lead, paving the way for the adoption of the Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. While the voluntary moratorium on nuclear testing observed by the nuclear Powers was an important factor for nuclear security, it could not serve as an alternative to a legally binding document such as that Treaty. The early entry into force of the Treaty was essential for the effective implementation of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. His delegation therefore called on the remaining annex 2 States to ratify the Test-Ban Treaty.

33. His delegation welcomed the successful outcomes of the first Meeting of States Parties to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, held recently in Vienna, and hoped that the decisions adopted on that occasion would contribute to the goal of general and complete nuclear disarmament, which was essential for effectively implementing the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

34. The Universal Declaration on the Achievement of a Nuclear-Weapon-Free World, initiated by Kazakhstan, had been adopted by the General Assembly in 2015 and reconfirmed in December 2018 and 2021. A nuclear-weapon-free zone had been created in Central Asia through the Semipalatinsk Treaty in 2006. His delegation hoped that the United States would sign the protocol on negative security assurances to that Treaty as soon as possible, and firmly supported the further expansion of such zones in other geographical regions, including the Middle East, North-East Asia and Europe.

35. With regard to the peaceful use of nuclear energy, by establishing the IAEA low enriched uranium bank on its territory in 2017, Kazakhstan had made another significant contribution towards the common goal of safe and reliable use of uranium for peaceful purposes.

36. **Mr. Ayres** (Australia) said that the Non-Proliferation Treaty was a key success of the post-war multilateral project. It was the cornerstone of the global nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament regime. The Treaty continued to deliver tangible security benefits for all and must be preserved and strengthened. At the heart of the Treaty had always been the goal of a world without nuclear weapons, a goal to which Australia remained profoundly committed. At the

current Review Conference and beyond, each country must work to forestall the catastrophic humanitarian consequences that awaited the world in the absence of real steps towards the elimination of nuclear weapons.

37. The challenges to the Treaty had never been greater. As the international community undertook the important work of reviewing progress in implementing the Treaty since 2015, it was necessary to acknowledge that the global security environment had further deteriorated. International security was being undermined by those who sought to resolve disputes by power and size instead of by international rules and norms. The illegal invasion of Ukraine by Russia and its nuclear brinkmanship were a stark example. Australia condemned that senseless aggression and called on Russia to cease hostilities and withdraw immediately. North Korea had continued the development of its illegal and destabilizing nuclear and ballistic missile programmes. His delegation remained deeply concerned by the failure of Iran to comply, in a full and transparent manner, with its IAEA safeguards agreement. That situation could not persist indefinitely.

38. For Australia, those serious challenges only reinforced the need for countries to work constructively together, whatever their differences as sovereign nations, for a common purpose – to make the world safe from nuclear weapons. The Treaty provided vital architecture for States to come together, raise concerns, put forward ideas and find ways to move forward. At the current Review Conference, Australia would continue a proud tradition of advocating realistic and practical measures towards achieving common goals, and was committed to working constructively with all States parties to that end.

39. Australia strongly supported the crucial role of IAEA in supporting the Treaty. The international safeguards system was essential for global confidence in the nuclear non-proliferation regime. Furthermore, the benefits of the Treaty reached far beyond security. The peaceful uses of nuclear energy and technologies, including in human health, agriculture and the environment, had helped people around the world to thrive. Australia continued to support the Agency's excellent work in facilitating access to those peaceful benefits by all States.

40. In September 2021, Australia, the United States and the United Kingdom had announced the beginning of a trilateral effort towards the acquisition by Australia of nuclear-powered, conventionally armed submarines as was provided for in the Treaty, the IAEA statute and the comprehensive safeguards agreement of Australia. All three partners were committed not only to upholding

their legal obligations but also to strengthening the integrity of the non-proliferation regime. Australia was proceeding transparently, engaging closely with IAEA and providing updates to the international community as it moved through the 18-month consultation period. The IAEA Director General had confirmed that vital work on non-proliferation safeguards was well under way. He drew attention to his delegation's working paper on that matter.

41. In Australia, the Pacific and other parts of the world, the impact of nuclear testing had been borne disproportionately by indigenous peoples and their lands. His delegation welcomed the statement by the Prime Minister of Fiji on behalf of the States parties to the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone (Treaty of Rarotonga), and all members of the Pacific family, of which Australia was proud to be a part. The resolve to maintain a nuclear-weapon-free and independent Pacific and the dogged determination of the Pacific States would be a clarion call to the current Review Conference to rebuild momentum towards total disarmament.

42. Australia welcomed the increasing attention to diversity in the advocacy and technical work on disarmament, including efforts to increase the number of women engaged in such work. There should be more women at Review Conferences and all the associated forums.

43. Ultimately, the elimination of nuclear weapons was the only way to secure a safe and peaceful world. The new Government of Australia remained steadfastly committed to every collective effort to rebuild momentum towards that most noble of objectives.

44. **Mr. Sorreta** (Philippines) said that his country's commitment to the Non-Proliferation Treaty emanated from the aspiration of the Filipino people to achieve freedom from the threat of nuclear weapons and forge a path to sustainable development that included harnessing the potential of nuclear energy. That aspiration was enshrined in the Constitution, affirmed in many pieces of domestic legislation and had inspired the Philippines to accede to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

45. In recent years, however, serious obstacles to that aspiration had emerged. Widening geopolitical polarities and sharpening strategic competitions had put enormous strain on the rules-based international order, of which the Non-Proliferation Treaty was an important component. In the region where the Philippines was located, nuclear non-proliferation was facing challenges, the modernization of nuclear arsenals continued, functional strategic dialogue mechanisms

were lacking and the call of the international community for greater transparency in fulfilling nuclear disarmament commitments was not being heeded.

46. In the face of such challenges to credibility of the multilateral system, States parties to the Treaty must demonstrate that it remained relevant and was functioning, and that differences could be overcome. The current Review Conference must send a clear and resounding political message that affirmed the collective commitment to eliminating nuclear weapons and to implementing the Treaty across all its pillars in order for the global community to prosper in peace.

47. His delegation rejected the notion that nuclear weapons contributed to stability and security. Such weapons posed catastrophic humanitarian risks and their continued existence imperilled everyone. They were repugnant to the global public conscience and had been outlawed by the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. Nuclear disarmament obligations and commitments were not contingent upon any subjective assessment of the international security environment. The credibility and strength of the rules-based international order rested on predictability and stability, which left no room for subjectivity. All States parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty must uphold their commitments under the 13 practical steps agreed at the 2000 Review Conference and reaffirmed in the 64-point action plan contained in the Final Document of the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

48. The onus remained on the nuclear-weapon States to rid the world of nuclear weapons. They must make meaningful progress to reduce and eliminate all types of nuclear weapons in a transparent manner and to further diminish the role of such weapons in their military and security concepts, doctrines or policies. At the same time, his delegation supported efforts towards nuclear risk reduction as an intervening measure while work towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons continued. Nuclear risk reduction was not a means to legitimize the continued existence of nuclear weapons or a substitute for nuclear disarmament.

49. Nuclear safeguards were another essential component of the non-proliferation regime. His country continued to cooperate with IAEA on a comprehensive safeguards agreement and its additional protocol. The Philippines also championed reasonable strategic trade management, which benefited multilateral export control regimes.

50. The adherence of his country to the highest standards of non-proliferation should be matched by the same level of commitment by the nuclear-weapon States

to fulfilling their part of the “grand bargain”. They must, without delay, provide effective, universal, unconditional, non-discriminatory, irrevocable and legally binding negative security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States. The regrettable decision of some nuclear-weapon States to upgrade the role of nuclear forces in their security doctrines, the lack of transparency and functioning dialogue mechanisms among them, and the continued risks of instability in the geopolitical environment – including in the Asia Pacific region – demanded that the nuclear-weapon States issue such assurances without conditions. That matter required urgent discussion during the current Review Conference. The nuclear-weapon States should also accede, without delay, to all treaties on nuclear-weapon-free zones, including the Treaty on the Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone (Treaty of Bangkok) and its Protocol.

51. The global situation compelled Governments to situate their work in a broader context beyond international security. The world was just emerging from a pandemic that had caused an unprecedented economic and debt crisis and had reversed fragile development gains. The devastating effects of climate change now posed a serious and urgent threat to the future of humanity and its very existence. The peaceful uses of nuclear energy thus offered feasible solutions for addressing some of those challenges and would ensure progress towards achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

52. Along with other non-nuclear-weapon States, the Philippines asserted its inalienable right to benefit from the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, and that right could not be downgraded to a privilege. His Government recognized and was committed to its responsibilities and legal obligations in the exercise of that right.

53. States parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty were bound together by the mandate to give meaning to the current Review Conference. His delegation called on all States parties to engage constructively and sincerely in that regard. The Philippines had made great contributions to advancing the salience and strength of the Treaty in the past and would continue to do so.

54. His delegation intended to be actively engaged throughout the 2020 Review Conference to ensure that a common purpose led to a successful outcome. The path up to the present moment had been long and sometimes arduous, but one that must be taken in order for the Treaty to remain relevant. The Treaty was the bedrock upon which the global disarmament, non-proliferation and security regime had been built and currently stood.

55. **Ms. Naughton** (Ireland) said that she was pleased that the current review cycle was the first to substantively address gender perspectives and hoped that would be comprehensively reflected in the outcome. However, the current Review Conference was taking place at a dark moment. The world faced heightened nuclear danger as the Russian Federation, a nuclear-weapon State and a depository State of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, had made alarming nuclear threats and was engaged in a war of aggression against another State party to the Treaty. The invasion of Ukraine by Russia, its nuclear rhetoric and its reckless military actions near civilian nuclear facilities threatened all three pillars of the Treaty. Her delegation reiterated its strong support for the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders and recalled that, in January of 2022, the five nuclear-weapon States, including Russia, had declared that a nuclear war could not be won and must never be fought. It was deeply regrettable that the actions of Russia had called into question its ongoing commitment to that declaration.

56. At the current Review Conference, the State parties to the Treaty had a collective responsibility to agree on how to move forward together. To do that, it was important to acknowledge honestly the absence of concrete progress on nuclear disarmament since the 2015 Review Conference. Article VI of the Treaty, together with existing commitments, provided the framework to achieve a world without nuclear weapons. Those commitments must be honoured and implemented. Regrettably, since the 2015 Review Conference, some countries had moved towards a greater reliance on nuclear weapons in their security doctrines. Nuclear-weapon States were making qualitative improvements to their weapons systems, nuclear arsenals were increasing in number and diversity, and reductions in transparency increased the risk of escalation and miscalculation. Those trends, together with the current heightened nuclear risks, reinforced the urgent and unequivocal need for the nuclear-weapon States to totally eliminate their nuclear arsenals.

57. Despite the current difficult context, disarmament and effective arms control were more vital than ever. Ireland called for the current Review Conference to agree on immediate actions, including for nuclear risk reduction, and on practical measures to reduce the numbers of nuclear weapons. Specific recommendations were set out in the working papers put forward by Ireland during the review period.

58. In the current context, it was also important to bear in mind the devastating humanitarian consequences of

nuclear weapons. Any use of nuclear weapons would have immediate and long-term consequences, creating a devastating humanitarian emergency significantly beyond the response capacity of States or international organizations. Her delegation welcomed the adoption of the Vienna Declaration of the first Meeting of States Parties to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, which sent a clear message of alarm and dismay at threats to use nuclear weapons, and unequivocally condemned “any and all nuclear threats, whether they be explicit or implicit and irrespective of the circumstances” The outcome of the first Meeting had successfully demonstrated the value of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons for its States parties as a pathway to fulfilling obligations under article VI of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. Both instruments were fully compatible with each other and mutually complementary. Her delegation hoped to see the positive contribution of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons reflected in the outcome document of the 2020 Review Conference.

59. The Government of Ireland was deeply concerned by the growing proliferation challenges and had demonstrated the equal importance that Ireland attached to non-proliferation issues, including by chairing meetings of the Missile Technology Control Regime.

60. Since the 2015 Review Conference, the world had witnessed the successful conclusion and, for a time, implementation, of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action. It was deeply regrettable that the United States had left the agreement, and that Iran had begun taking steps that currently raised very serious proliferation concerns. Full implementation by Iran of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, including full cooperation with IAEA on monitoring and verification, together with resolving outstanding safeguards issues, was the only way for the international community to have confidence in the exclusively peaceful nature of the nuclear programme of Iran.

61. The nuclear-related activities of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea were a matter of the utmost concern. It was long past time for that country to take concrete steps towards complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula and to end its other weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missile programmes. The Democratic People’s Republic of Korea must return to compliance with the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

62. IAEA had a unique and indispensable role to play in the areas of nuclear energy, safety and security, and in the implementation of the Treaty. Ireland strongly supported universal adherence to the Agency’s

additional protocols and considered its comprehensive safeguards agreements and additional protocols to constitute the current verification standard under the Treaty. The opportunity must be seized at the current Review Conference to strengthen the safeguards system, which underpinned the effective implementation of the Treaty.

63. Ireland underscored the inalienable right of all parties to the Treaty to develop research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, and recognized that the IAEA seven pillars of nuclear safety and security were vital enablers of that right.

64. In the Cold War era, the world had regularly stood on the brink of nuclear catastrophe. With the adoption of the Treaty, the international community had taken a decisive step back from the abyss. She was proud of the role that Ireland had played in the development of the Treaty, which was a major contribution to international peace and security. The Treaty was a reminder to everyone that even in the most dangerous of times, progress was not only needed but was possible. All States parties had an obligation to work for a safer world that did not include the spectre of nuclear weapons.

65. **Mr. Darsalia** (Georgia) said that his Government considered the Non-Proliferation Treaty to be the cornerstone of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime and an important element in the further development of nuclear energy applications for peaceful purposes. His delegation fully supported the three pillars of the Treaty and recognized its historic achievements in limiting the proliferation of nuclear weapons, facilitating cooperation on nuclear energy for peaceful purposes and significantly reducing nuclear weapon stockpiles over the previous decades.

66. The Government of Georgia expressed its strongest condemnation of the unprovoked and unjustified aggression of a major nuclear-weapon State, the Russian Federation, against Ukraine. The invasion by Russia of a sovereign country was a gross violation of international law, including the Charter of the United Nations, and directly contradicted the spirit of the 1994 Budapest Memorandum. Furthermore, the illegal occupation by Russia of the largest nuclear power plant in Europe was a matter of grave concern. His delegation urged the Russian Federation to cease its illegal war against Ukraine and to immediately withdraw its military and other personnel from the whole territory of Ukraine, including the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant, so that the Ukrainian authorities could resume their sovereign responsibilities and the legitimate operating staff could conduct their duties without outside pressure or interference.

67. Georgia recognized the serious proliferation challenges which continued to be a threat to international security, and the need to find peaceful and diplomatic solutions to them. The international community needed to remain vigilant and be ready to face those challenges and address them in a resolute way. The IAEA safeguards system was a fundamental component of the nuclear non-proliferation regime and played an indispensable role in the implementation of the Treaty. Comprehensive safeguards agreements, together with additional protocols, constituted the current verification standard and his delegation continued to call for their universalization without delay. Attaching great importance to the universal and effective implementation of the Treaty, Georgia had been implementing a safeguards agreement with an additional protocol since 2003. The relevant national regime had been significantly improved, enshrining technical arrangements and a regulatory framework in full compliance with international commitments.

68. Prevention and response to nuclear and radioactive threats was one of the main elements of State security. Clearly, two regions of Georgia that were occupied by Russia remained a security challenge in many dimensions. In that context, his Government had documented attempts to smuggle nuclear and radioactive materials via the occupied regions of Abkhazia and Tskhinvali. As a result of effective measures carried out by Georgian law enforcement agencies, those illegal activities had been duly prevented. However, in the absence of an international presence or monitoring mechanism on those territories, it had become virtually impossible to conduct any type of verification activities on the ground. Specifically worth pointing out was the existence of so-called “grey zones” where internationally agreed security measures could not be implemented or verified. The lack of respective control mechanisms in the occupied territories of Georgia and in Ukraine created a fertile ground for all kinds of illegal activities, including the smuggling of weapons of mass destruction and related materials.

69. A multilateral and treaty-based approach provided the best way to maintain and reinforce international peace and security. In that regard, the universalization and early entry into force of the Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty should remain one of the key priorities for every State, and would significantly strengthen the global nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime and contribute to international peace and security.

70. The international community should take coordinated and holistic measures, especially in view of the current difficulties, to effectively address the

multidimensional peace and security challenges. He looked forward to constructive deliberations and a positive outcome at the current Review Conference.

71. **Mr. Ha** Kim Ngoc (Viet Nam) said that the international arms control and non-proliferation regime was facing unprecedented challenges with fewer restraints. The very existence of and threats to use nuclear weapons had eroded trust and stability, and the risk of miscalculation and arms build-ups leading to an irreversible downward spiral could not be underestimated. At a broader level, increased major Power competition, flagrant unilateralism and escalated tensions had all contributed to a volatile and uncertain international security climate. Against that backdrop, the 2020 Review Conference was a timely opportunity for States parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty to renew their political commitments and advance action on the three pillars of the Treaty in a balanced manner. In that regard, he wished to make three main points.

72. First, the world could never be truly free from the potential disasters wrought by nuclear weapons until such weapons were completely prohibited and eliminated. The international community was looking to the nuclear-weapon States for genuine efforts to make concrete and urgent progress on nuclear disarmament in line with the objectives of article VI of the Treaty. It was also counting on the nuclear-weapon States to advance legally-binding negative security assurances. They had the responsibility to ensure the maintenance of international peace and security without resorting to the threat or use of annihilistic force. The Treaty should be complemented by other crucial, legally-binding instruments, including the Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. His delegation welcomed the outcomes of the first Meeting of States Parties to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons recently held in Vienna and called on others to join that Treaty.

73. Second, the international non-proliferation regime needed to be strengthened through various mechanisms and instruments. His delegation looked forward to early positive results from the ongoing negotiations related to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action. Further efforts towards restraint and dialogue should be pursued by all parties with respect to the Korean Peninsula with a view to building on the achievements of the talks over the previous few years. Non-proliferation efforts should also include robust verification and the establishment and maintenance of nuclear-weapon-free zones. Viet Nam had fulfilled its national obligations, including in implementing the relevant Security Council resolutions and working closely with IAEA. Viet Nam continued to be committed to the Treaty of Bangkok. His delegation

looked forward to working closely with the nuclear-weapon States towards their early signature of its Protocol.

74. Third, Viet Nam reiterated the inalienable right of States to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. It was estimated that in 2021, over \$82 billion had been spent on nuclear weapons, four times as much as the total funding for United Nations development activities. Those resources could have been utilized to build schools, produce vaccines and improve sanitation around the world. Greater efforts should be made to facilitate access to, and the further development of, nuclear technology in order to address the challenges related to food and energy security, epidemics and climate change. Resources and assistance should be prioritized to help developing countries pursue a sustainable development path.

75. His delegation wished to underscore the importance of maintaining dialogue, cooperation and engagement on the basis of mutual respect and understanding. Delegations were attending the current Review Conference because they all shared a common objective: ending the dangers posed by nuclear weapons. The international community could not afford to hold another Review Conference without a stronger commitment to the Treaty. Viet Nam had an unwavering commitment to fulfilling its obligations under the Treaty and his delegation looked forward to cooperating closely with all others in that endeavour.

76. **Ms. Kemelova** (Kyrgyzstan) said that there was no doubt that arms control, disarmament and the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction had become more relevant than ever. While the Kyrgyz Republic continued to view the Non-Proliferation Treaty as the cornerstone of the nuclear non-proliferation regime, it recognized that the world had changed significantly in recent years. In order to protect and maintain peace, it was necessary to seek effective ways to suppress tendencies towards nuclear militarization. The nuclear-weapon-free zones embodied in article VII of the Treaty were universal instruments to reduce tension, prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons and maintain peace.

77. The Kyrgyz Republic, as a depositary of the Treaty of Semipalatinsk and the current Chair of the consultative meetings of its parties, was committed to broadening interzone cooperation. Welcoming the increasing pace of interaction between the parties to that Treaty and the members of the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean and the African Commission on Nuclear Energy, her country would make every effort towards

signing memorandums of understanding with both the Agency and the Commission. The Kyrgyz Republic was also committed to accelerating the entry into force of the Protocol to the Treaty on a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Central Asia. In that regard, she wished to highlight that the Kyrgyz Republic, on behalf of Central Asian States, had submitted a joint working document that called upon the nuclear-weapon States that had not ratified the Protocol to do so without delay in order to further the prompt entry into force of the Protocol.

78. The Heads of the Central Asian States had recently gathered in the Kyrgyz Republic at the fourth consultative meeting of the Heads of State of Central Asia to discuss possible ways to strengthen peace, stability and security in the region. The event had produced considerable results, such as the signing by the Presidents of Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan of a treaty on friendship, good-neighbourliness and cooperation for the development of Central Asia in the twenty-first century. The parties to the treaty had agreed, *inter alia*, to strengthen cooperation in the field of non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and the nuclear-weapon-free zone in Central Asia, actively promote nuclear disarmament processes and take measures to prevent the proliferation of all types of weapons of mass destruction. It had thus created a new domain for multilateral cooperation in Central Asia in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation.

79. The need for disarmament and non-proliferation education had never been greater, including raising awareness about the existing international disarmament and non-proliferation architecture and about the essential efforts of United Nations Member States, civil society and non-governmental organizations to create and maintain it. During the forthcoming session of the General Assembly, her country was planning to initiate a draft resolution on establishing an international day for the promotion of awareness of disarmament and non-proliferation, which would be a harmonious continuation of the efforts of the international community. It was also symbolic that the intended date of celebration of that day, 5 March, was also the date of entry into the force of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. Adopting the proposed draft resolution could provide the impetus to step up educational work and to include disarmament and non-proliferation issues in existing national general educational programmes at all levels. Calling on all States parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty to support and endorse that initiative, she said that her country would continue to promote disarmament and non-proliferation education initiatives if elected to serve

as a non-permanent member of the Security Council for the period 2027–2028.

80. **Ms. Moreno Bau** (Spain) said that the Non-Proliferation Treaty was facing major challenges that could have an impact on international peace and security. The unjustified aggression of Russia against Ukraine had produced enormous suffering around the globe. The Treaty had done notable work to reduce nuclear weapons stockpiles and it was worth appreciating the achievements that had been made to date. Her delegation called on all States to be honestly and decisively involved in implementing the commitments that had already been made. The next step would be to generate trust and move towards a world free of nuclear weapons. The people of the world were calling on Governments to reverse the trend of deterioration and it was important to do so without delay. Reducing the nuclear threat necessitated the resumption of a new framework for dialogue on arms control that covered all nuclear weapons and their means of delivery. It was also important to restore the credibility of providing negative security assurances, following the flagrant violation of the Budapest Memorandum.

81. States must ratify the Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty as soon as possible and provide their full support to the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization. They should also undertake early negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament to adopt a fissile material cut-off treaty.

82. Spain supported the safeguards mechanisms of the Non-Proliferation Treaty and recognized the authority of IAEA to combat nuclear proliferation. IAEA safeguards agreements and their additional protocols were the current global verification standard under the Treaty. Export control regimes were also of crucial importance.

83. Her delegation welcomed the holding of the first two sessions of the Conference on the Establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction and believed that all relevant stakeholders should participate in those discussions. The negotiations towards re-establishing the full validity of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action should bear fruit and Iran should cooperate fully with IAEA and comply with the legal obligations under its safeguards agreement.

84. North Korea must end its provocations immediately and engage honestly in a diplomatic process that would lead to complete, irreversible and verifiable nuclear disarmament. Until such time, the

international community should remain unified in rigorously applying the agreed sanctions.

85. Spain reaffirmed the inalienable right of States parties to the Treaty to benefit from the peaceful application of nuclear technology, subject to IAEA safeguards. Agreements on the development and transfer of such technology should include clauses reflecting the principles of the international non-proliferation regime. Spain welcomed IAEA efforts to ensure compliance with the seven pillars of nuclear safety and security and had made specific contributions to enable the continued implementation of those provisions in Ukraine following the invasion by Russia. It was also working towards the full participation of women and gender equality in nuclear-related fields, including by supporting relevant initiatives by IAEA, such as grants.

86. The current Review Conferences provided an opportunity to make progress in the effective implementation of the Treaty. The concrete proposals for nuclear disarmament contained in the Stockholm Initiative represented the correct path forward and her delegation hoped to see them reflected in the debates and outcome of the 2020 Review Conference.

87. **Mr. Tochytskyi** (Ukraine) said that, since 24 February 2022, a full-scale aggression had been unleashed by Russia, a nuclear-weapon State party to the Non-Proliferation Treaty, against his own country, Ukraine, a non-nuclear weapon State party to the Treaty. Since that time, Ukrainian critical infrastructure facilities, public and residential areas and even schools and hospitals had been attacked with missiles and bombs every day. Thousands of educational and medical institutions, and water and electricity networks, had been damaged and destroyed. The Russian leadership was openly threatening the world with its ability to use nuclear weapons, backed by clear calls to do so by the Russian media. That was the background for the current Review Conference.

88. Since 2014, the issue of the Treaty's efficacy and integrity had become much more complicated and even dramatic. Russian military aggression against Ukraine had provoked a dangerous imbalance in the existing international security system, undermining the effectiveness and reliability of weapons of mass destruction non-proliferation regimes. By occupying Crimea in a blatant violation of the Charter of the United Nations and other international agreements, including the Budapest Memorandum, Russia had demonstrated that the hollowness of the legal obligations of a nuclear Power to respect the independence and sovereignty of non-nuclear States and to refrain from the threat or use

of force against them. The international community should have stopped Russia back then, but did not. The outcome of such a lack of vigilance and decisiveness was now well known. It was not only the preamble to the Treaty, but all three pillars that were currently being brutally violated by a nuclear-weapon State.

89. Disarmament had been undermined as a result of the unjustified development by Russia of its nuclear strike capabilities. Such names as “Kinzhal”, “Sarmat” and “Poseidon” were in the air as Russia openly threatened the world with new weaponry. Non-proliferation had become an illusion as Russia expanded, de facto, the geographical area of its nuclear arms deployment after the occupation of Crimea. Moreover, Moscow had already launched missiles capable of delivering nuclear warheads over Ukrainian cities from the territory of Belarus, a non-nuclear-weapon State according to the Treaty.

90. For the first time in history, civilian nuclear facilities had been turned into military targets and springboards for the Russian army in breach of the Treaty provisions on the peaceful use of nuclear energy. The world had witnessed how nuclear terrorism, sponsored by a nuclear-weapon State, was becoming a reality. Robust joint actions were needed to prevent nuclear disaster at a global scale. His Government had asked to close the sky over the nuclear power plants in Ukraine, to provide air defence systems and to prove through deeds that the aggressor could not remain utterly safe and unpunished just because it possessed nuclear arms.

91. Given that Russia had breached every existing norm of international law by waging its war against Ukraine and by its clear intentions to locate its nuclear arsenal on the territory of non-nuclear-weapon States, could anyone predict the future of the Treaty?

92. Regrettably, the future of the Treaty was also challenged by the unresolved issue of the nuclear and missile programme of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea. The recent intercontinental ballistic missile launch conducted by that country in blatant violation of the relevant Security Council resolutions had only aggravated the situation. The issue of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action remained of international concern and still relied on compliance by Iran with its nuclear-related commitments.

93. Considering the current state of the world, providing non-nuclear States with effective negative security assurances should be considered a top priority. Establishing new nuclear-weapon-free zones, including in the region where Ukraine was located, and strengthening the IAEA safeguards system were

becoming ever more urgent tasks for the non-proliferation regime.

94. Every State would benefit from the transformation of the Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty into an international legal instrument. The other, long overdue task on the agenda was the immediate commencement of negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty, which was essential both to constrain nuclear proliferation and to advance the goal of nuclear disarmament. It was high time to make the right choice and undertake every effort to restore the integrity of the Non-Proliferation Treaty and save millions of lives.

95. **Mr. Stuart** (United Kingdom) said that the Non-Proliferation Treaty was the only route to the ultimate goal of a world without nuclear weapons and the United Kingdom was unequivocally committed to the total elimination, alongside the other nuclear-weapon States, of its nuclear arsenal. Since the Cold War, the United Kingdom had dramatically reduced the number of its nuclear weapons, while de-targeting and de-alerting those that remained. It was the only nuclear-weapon State to have decreased its deterrent capability to a single delivery system and it had the smallest stockpile of any recognized nuclear State. It would continue to play a leading role in disarmament by pioneering verification work, championing transparency and advancing risk reduction and it would continue calls for the entry into force of the Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and for negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty.

96. There were, however, growing challenges to international security and, in its recent report on security, defence, development and foreign policy, the United Kingdom had identified the presence of a deteriorating global security environment, increased competition, technological disruption and challenges to the international order. The world had since witnessed the horrific and unprovoked yet premeditated assault on Ukraine by the Russian Federation, the actions and irresponsible rhetoric of which raised questions about the latter country’s commitment to international law and the fulfilment of its obligations, particularly of those under the Non-Proliferation Treaty. The United Kingdom and the world community continued to stand with Ukraine. Meanwhile, it was deeply concerning that Iran and the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea continued to escalate their nuclear programmes despite calls to engage in diplomacy.

97. The United Kingdom would work with all States parties to reduce the risk of nuclear conflict and to enhance mutual trust. Much of the success of the Treaty in curtailing the nuclear arms race was due to the safeguards regime of IAEA, a body which the United

Kingdom would continue to support. His country was committed to nuclear-weapon-free zones and stood ready to sign the Protocol to the Treaty on the Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone as soon as possible. It remained committed to a zone free of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery in the Middle East, based on freely-made agreements by all the countries of that region.

98. The Non-Proliferation Treaty provided the framework for the safe, secure and safeguarded transfer of peaceful nuclear technologies. Those technologies had the potential to improve lives around the world, particularly in the least developed countries. Therefore, along with the United States, the United Kingdom had been consulting with States parties to the Treaty on improved access to the peaceful uses that those technologies offered. A new, sustained dialogue was needed that attracted fresh perspectives and identified new opportunities to support peaceful uses across a number of areas.

99. His delegation called on all States parties at the current Review Conference to work towards a meaningful outcome across all three pillars of the Treaty and to strengthen it as the cornerstone of efforts to achieve a world free of nuclear weapons.

100. **Mr. Petersson** (Norway) said that great Power rivalry was putting pressure on the multilateral disarmament architecture, new weapons systems were being developed and deployed, proliferation challenges were on the rise and new threats to international peace and security continued to emerge. It was therefore essential to reaffirm commitments to the Non-Proliferation Treaty, which had helped to safeguard global security for more than half a century, and to build on its achievements across all three pillars.

101. The unprovoked and ruthless attack on Ukraine by Russia had altered the security landscape in Europe and beyond. Its reckless rhetoric on nuclear weapons had global implications. The threshold for nuclear use must not be lowered.

102. He urged the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to take concrete steps to abandon its weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missile programmes in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner and he called on Iran to return to full compliance with the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action and to resume full cooperation with IAEA.

103. Efforts to prepare the ground for future binding arms control and disarmament agreements must continue and all nuclear-weapon States must work harder to fulfil their commitments under article VI of the

Treaty. States parties must reaffirm irreversibility as a basic principle in disarmament alongside transparency and verification and they were encouraged to support the Stockholm Initiative's 22 recommendations for advancing nuclear disarmament.

104. The 2010 Review Conference had recognized that any use of nuclear weapons would have catastrophic humanitarian consequences. Norway would work with States parties to build on that acknowledgement in seeking a path towards real nuclear disarmament.

105. Norway strongly advocated the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and the early negotiation and conclusion of a verifiable fissile material cut-off treaty. It called on all States to sign comprehensive safeguards agreements and additional protocols with the IAEA as the current global verification standard.

106. The achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals could be supported by peaceful nuclear applications and all countries should be able to benefit from advanced technologies. International cooperation, including on export controls, was crucial for preventing non-proliferation. Capacity-building and the promotion of broad-based participation, including of women and young people, were also crucial to the future of the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

107. States parties must work together at the current Review Conference to revitalize and strengthen the Treaty and their commitments.

108. **Mr. Aliyev** (Azerbaijan), speaking on behalf of the Group of Non-Aligned States Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, said that the full, non-discriminatory and balanced implementation of the three pillars of the Treaty was crucial to maintaining the Treaty's credibility, the realization of its objectives and the promotion of international peace and security. Nuclear disarmament was the Group's highest priority and it remained extremely concerned at the threat to humanity that was presented by the continued existence of nuclear weapons and their possible use or threat of use. Non-proliferation derived its legitimacy from the larger objective of nuclear disarmament and concerns about non-proliferation were best addressed through multilaterally negotiated, universal, comprehensive and non-discriminatory agreements.

109. The Group welcomed multilateral efforts towards the goal of total elimination of nuclear weapons and took note of the entry into force of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, which would hopefully contribute to the achievement of that goal. There was an

urgent necessity to negotiate and to conclude a comprehensive convention on nuclear weapons that contained a phased programme for their complete elimination within a specified time frame. The Group was deeply concerned by the threat to peace and security that was posed by the continued existence of nuclear weapons and of military doctrines that sought to modernize nuclear forces and to develop more effective nuclear warheads, including those of the United States and the United Kingdom. There must be an immediate end to that trend, which was a new nuclear arms race and a clear violation of article VI of the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

110. The indefinite extension of the Treaty did not imply the indefinite possession of nuclear arsenals. Article VI of the Treaty imposed a legal obligation on all parties and its implementation was neither optional nor conditional. Pending the total elimination of nuclear weapons, the Group called for early negotiations on effective, universal, unconditional, non-discriminatory, irrevocable and legally binding security assurances to all non-nuclear-weapon States by all the nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons under all circumstances.

111. Each State had an inalienable right to develop nuclear energy research, production and use, including the development of national nuclear fuel cycles, for peaceful purposes, and to participate fully in the exchange of equipment, material and scientific and technological information for the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. The Group had full confidence in the impartiality and professionalism of IAEA, which was the sole competent authority for verifying compliance by States in line with their obligations under safeguard agreements. Its work must not be politicized.

112. All States not parties to the Treaty must accede to it without delay or conditions and they must place all their nuclear facilities and activities under the full-scope safeguards of the Agency. In the absence of the strict adherence to the Agency's comprehensive safeguards, all States parties to the Treaty should refrain from the transfer of nuclear technology and materials to States that were not party to the Treaty.

113. The failure of the 2015 Review Conference to reach a consensus on a final outcome document was regrettable. Given the crucial role of the Treaty in international security, every effort must be made to ensure a successful outcome at the current Review Conference, which must also reaffirm the importance and continued validity of the commitments made at the 1995, 2000 and 2010 Review Conferences with respect

to nuclear disarmament, nuclear non-proliferation and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

114. Nuclear-weapon-free zones were important to fulfil the objectives of the Treaty and the Group supported the full operation of treaties to establish such zones, including through the ratification of relevant protocols and the removal of all reservations and interpretative declarations that were incompatible with their object and purpose. The resolution on the Middle East adopted at the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons had prime importance. Pending the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction, the Group demanded that Israel denounce any possession of nuclear weapons, accede to the Treaty without any preconditions or further delay and place its nuclear facilities under IAEA full-scope safeguards. The Group expressed its regret that, as a result of opposition from the United States, the United Kingdom and Canada, the 2015 Review Conference had been unable to reach a consensus on the implementation of new measures regarding the implementation of the 1995 resolution. In that regard, the Group welcomed decision 73/546 of the General Assembly and the convening of the first and second sessions of the Conference on the Establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction. However, the 1995 resolution and other decisions adopted in the context of the Review Conferences remained valid until their objectives were achieved and the implementation of decision 73/546 should not be construed as their replacement. The Group had submitted nine working papers, which represented its detailed positions on the various related issues.

115. **Ms. van Deelen** (Representative of the European Union, in its capacity as observer), speaking also on behalf of the candidate countries Albania, Montenegro, North Macedonia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine; the stabilization and association process country Bosnia and Herzegovina; and, in addition, Georgia, Monaco and San Marino, said that she condemned the unprovoked and unjustified aggression against Ukraine by the Russian Federation, which was a gross violation of international law and which severely undermined European and global security and stability. She also condemned Belarus for its involvement in the Russian aggression. The European Union resolutely supported the inherent right of Ukraine to self-defence and the efforts of its armed forces to defend the territorial integrity and population of Ukraine, in accordance with article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations. Russia must immediately cease its military

actions, withdraw all its troops from the territory of Ukraine and fully respect the territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders. The international community would hold Russia to account for its atrocities.

116. The blatant violation by Russia of the Budapest Memorandum, its reckless threats of using nuclear weapons and other irresponsible acts against nuclear safety and security in Ukraine, including the ongoing occupation of the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant, were detrimental to the Non-Proliferation Treaty and had a significant negative impact on the nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament architecture. It was, therefore, of the utmost importance for all States parties and for the European Union to reiterate unequivocal support for the Treaty as the cornerstone of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime, the essential foundation for the pursuit of nuclear disarmament and an important element in the development of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. A multilateral and treaty-based approach provided the best way to maintain and to reinforce international peace and security.

117. It remained important to universalize the Treaty and all States that had not yet acceded to it as non-nuclear-weapon States should do so and, pending accession, adhere to its terms. The Treaty had made historic achievements across all three pillars and its full implementation had never before been more necessary. The European Union would continue to promote the comprehensive, balanced, substantive and full implementation of the action plan of the 2010 Review Conference, of obligations under the Treaty and of commitments made during previous Review Conferences.

118. Given the current security environment, renewed efforts must be made to pursue disarmament, non-proliferation, arms control and the avoidance of a new nuclear arms race. Progress had been made prior to the Russian aggression against Ukraine, including the extension of the New START Treaty, which made a crucial contribution to international and European security. The two nuclear-weapon States with the largest arsenals held a special responsibility.

119. The entry into force of the Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, which was of crucial importance to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, was a top priority for the European Union and all States that had not yet signed and ratified it without preconditions must do so immediately. Furthermore, the immediate commencement and early conclusion was needed of

negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament of a fissile material cut-off treaty.

120. The European Union was committed to the implementation of the resolution on the Middle East adopted at the 1995 Review and Extension Conference and to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, which was a key element of the global nuclear non-proliferation architecture. It was a matter of serious concern that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea continued to develop illegal nuclear weapons and ballistic missile programmes.

121. Gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls were a high priority and it was important to integrate gender perspectives into discussions across the three pillars of the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

122. **Mr. Ke** (Cambodia), speaking on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), said that since the detonation of two atomic bombs in 1945, humanity had vowed that such devastation would never happen again, either by accident or on purpose. Such a detonation today would not only kill hundreds of thousands of people but would also cause a massive humanitarian and environmental disaster. The total elimination of nuclear weapons was the only way to guarantee against their use or threat of use and the Non-Proliferation Treaty was the cornerstone of nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

123. It was deplorable to carry out nuclear tests. The Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, which all ASEAN member States had ratified, must have universal adherence and, therefore, the remaining Annex 2 States must join that Treaty at the earliest opportunity. It was important that nuclear-weapon States adhered to legally binding negative security assurances and to a policy of no first use of nuclear weapons. They must also make an unequivocal commitment not to use or to threaten to use nuclear weapons, either against non-nuclear weapon States or in nuclear-weapon-free zones.

124. In all aspects of nuclear non-proliferation, ASEAN had always been at the vanguard of international efforts and it strongly supported the creation of nuclear-weapon-free zones globally and in the Middle East especially. It was committed to the preservation of Southeast Asia as a zone free of nuclear weapons and of all other weapons of mass destruction and it stressed the importance of the full and effective implementation of the Plan of Action to Strengthen the Implementation of the Treaty on the Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone. The Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons was a historic agreement that contributed to global

nuclear disarmament and complemented other nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation instruments.

125. The member States of ASEAN reaffirmed the inalienable right of States to the peaceful use of nuclear energy, in particular for their economic and social development. IAEA had a central role to play in that regard and, therefore, its capacity must be further strengthened. Cooperation between the Agency and ASEAN would continue to expand. Progress in the implementation of practical arrangements to promote cooperation in nuclear science, technology, safety and security between ASEAN and the Agency was welcome, as was the finalization of an ASEAN protocol for nuclear or radiological emergency preparedness and response, which could be a reference for other regions. ASEAN member States would continue to cooperate closely with international partners and in accordance with applicable Agency standards and regulations in the development of their respective nuclear infrastructures for the peaceful use of nuclear energy. The full implementation of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) and of “Securing Our Common Future: An Agenda for Disarmament” of the United Nations Secretary-General’s should be supported.

126. Nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy required the participation of all Member States through strengthened partnerships, including contributions from women and youth, to create and maintain an atmosphere of collective trust to promote concerted actions towards a world free of nuclear weapons. ASEAN member States aspired to see humanity thrive in a safe and secure environment that was free from the fear, animosity and devastation that was caused by nuclear weapons.

127. **Mr. Mahmoud** (Egypt), speaking on behalf of the New Agenda Coalition, said that it was troubling that nuclear-weapon States and States under extended nuclear security assurances had increased the salience of nuclear weapons in their security and nuclear doctrines, policies and postures, which was at odds with the achievement of the goal of a nuclear-weapon-free world. The Coalition was alarmed and dismayed by threats to use nuclear weapons and by increasingly strident nuclear rhetoric. Any use or threat of use of nuclear weapons was a violation of international law and the Coalition condemned all such threats, whether explicit or implicit, to use them irrespective of the circumstances.

128. The nuclear dimension of recent international tensions, including the conflict in Ukraine, was deeply concerning and, therefore, all States parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty must reinvigorate their efforts

to implement in full the obligations of article VI of the Treaty and the actions and commitments of previous Review Conferences. The Treaty must continue to be informed by the recognition of the global and devastating humanitarian, health and environmental consequences and the economic impact of any nuclear detonation and, as nuclear risks were increasing dramatically, the present Review Conference presented an opportunity to reduce those risks through practical measures that supported progress on nuclear disarmament, which was a legal obligation and moral and ethical imperative. In order to make progress and to promote the fulfilment of the obligations under article VI, it was necessary to be creative and to use existing commitments as starting points.

129. Support for commitments made at the Review Conferences of 1995, 2000 and 2010 must be reaffirmed at the present Review Conference. Their validity had not diminished since their adoption and their implementation had become even more urgent. It was deeply troubling that, since the 2015 Review Conference, the nuclear-weapon States had been reluctant to make progress on them and they had increased their reliance on nuclear deterrence in their security and military doctrines by enlarging their arsenals, reversing planned reductions and developing new types of nuclear weapons and their delivery systems. The result was a greatly increased risk of miscalculation and escalation. It was necessary to halt and to reverse the trends in strategic doctrines that emphasized nuclear deterrence. To base security policies on the perceived benefits of nuclear deterrence undermined arguments for greater non-proliferation measures and could encourage nuclear proliferation.

130. All States parties to the Treaty, including the nuclear-weapon States, had undertaken to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals leading to nuclear disarmament and, therefore, the nuclear-weapon States must deliver fully on their part of the “grand bargain” and use the Review Conference to reaffirm their past commitments and to agree on achievable steps that could be made during the next intersessional period. Although the nuclear-weapon States had said that a nuclear war could not be won and must never be fought, it was not clear whether they all stood by it. Words must be accompanied by concrete actions in the form of tangible and irreversible nuclear weapon reductions.

131. The Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons helped to address the imbalance in the global disarmament architecture and the disparity between the treatment of nuclear weapons and that of biological and chemical weapons. It incorporated a humanitarian approach to nuclear weapons in a way that reinforced

and complemented the Non-Proliferation Treaty. In that connection, the discussion on humanitarian consequences had not been exhausted at the 2010 Review Conference. It was a concept that should be underlined in all nuclear disarmament discussions and which must be included in the final document of the present Review Conference.

132. The Coalition had consistently promoted the accelerated implementation of States parties' nuclear disarmament obligations and commitments, including on de-alerting, the creation and entry into force of various legal instruments and the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones. It was important to fully implement the resolution on the Middle East adopted at the 1995 Review and Extension Conference. The Coalition was encouraged by the outcomes of the first and second sessions of the Conference on the Establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction.

133. The universality of the Non-Proliferation Treaty was of vital importance. The Coalition therefore urged India, Israel and Pakistan to join the Treaty promptly and without conditions as non-nuclear-weapon States and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to dismantle verifiably any nuclear weapons, to return to the Treaty without delay and to place all its facilities under comprehensive verification by IAEA.

134. Lastly, the imposition of conditions for the implementation of any Treaty obligations or commitments would undermine the credibility of the Treaty and the goal of its universalization.

Statements made in exercise of the right of reply

135. **Mr. Liddle** (United Kingdom), referring to the comments made by the representative of Argentina at the Review Conference's first meeting, regarding the Falklands Islands conflict of 1982 (see [NPT/CONF.2020/SR.1](#)), said that the issue referred to was not new and had been in the public domain for 20 years. As the Government of the United Kingdom had confirmed in 2003, the nuclear depth bombs referred to by the representative of Argentina had already been on-board ships in the British task force when they had sailed to the South Atlantic at short notice at the outbreak of the conflict. There had never been any intention to use the weapons during the conflict and their presence had not broken any disarmament treaties. No nuclear weapons had been taken into Falkland Islands waters during the conflict and all the depth bombs had been returned to the United Kingdom.

136. The United Kingdom had ratified the Additional Protocols to the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear

Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (Treaty of Tlatelolco) in 1969 and it fully respected its obligations under them. The United Kingdom had no doubt about its sovereignty over the Falkland Islands.

137. **Ms. Capra** (Argentina) said that Argentina rejected each and every one of the assertions that had been given in the reply by the representative of the United Kingdom and it reiterated all the statements and arguments made by the Argentine Minister for Foreign Affairs in his earlier statement. Argentina reaffirmed that the Malvinas Islands, South Georgia Islands and South Sandwich Islands and the surrounding maritime areas were an integral part of Argentine national territory and, being illegally occupied by the United Kingdom since 1833, were the subject of a sovereignty dispute recognized by the United Nations, which called the question of the Malvinas Islands a special and particular colonial situation.

138. Her delegation reiterated the request for Argentina and the international community to be given information urgently on what had happened to the 31 nuclear weapons that the United Kingdom had sent to South America in 1982 during the conflict in the South Atlantic, the exact number of kilotons it had transported and the precise risk there had been to the region.

The meeting rose at 5.55 p.m.