
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 Tuesday, 2 August 2022, at 3 p.m.

President: Mr. Zlauvinen (Argentina)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

General debate (*continued*)

1. **The President** said that requests had been received from the representatives of the African Commission on Nuclear Energy, the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean, the Brazilian-Argentine Agency for Accounting and Control of Nuclear Materials, the International Committee of the Red Cross, the League of Arab States, the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization to deliver statements at the general debate and that those requests had been supported by the members of the General Committee at its meeting on 2 August 2022.

2. He took it that the Review Conference, in accordance with the recommendation from the Preparatory Committee for the 2020 Review Conference, invited the representatives of those organizations to deliver their statements at the end of the general debate.

3. *It was so decided.*

4. **Mr. Fu Cong** (China) said that having withstood the vicissitudes of the international landscape over the previous 50-plus years, the Treaty on the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons had become the cornerstone of the international nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime and a vital component of the post-war international security system. The world was currently undergoing profound changes and the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. The spectre of a cold war mentality and an outdated approach to security based on military alliances had resurfaced. With so-called major Power strategic competition, the global strategic security environment continued to deteriorate and the risks of an arms race and conflict were growing. As a result, the international non-proliferation regime represented by the Treaty was significantly strained and faced the most serious challenges since the end of the cold war.

5. It was incumbent on all to take the 2020 Review Conference as an opportunity to uphold the authority and effectiveness of the Treaty and promote its three pillars in a balanced manner so as to breathe new life into the Treaty in the service of world peace and development. To that end, China proposed upholding the concept of common security in advancing the work of nuclear disarmament. China was firmly committed to the path of peaceful development and a nuclear strategy of self-defence and undertook not to be the first to use

nuclear weapons at any time and under any circumstances. China always kept its nuclear capability at the minimum level required for safeguarding its national sovereignty, security and territorial integrity. It never competed with any other country on the input, quantity or scale of its nuclear capabilities, and it did not participate in any form of nuclear arms race with any other country. With a high level of stability, consistency and predictability, the nuclear policy of China was an important contribution to the international nuclear disarmament endeavour.

6. The principles of maintaining global strategic stability and undiminished security for all should be followed in the practices of nuclear disarmament. The countries with the largest nuclear arsenals should assume a special responsibility and, as a priority, further conduct significant and substantive reduction in their nuclear arsenals in a verifiable, irreversible and legally binding manner. Doing so would create conditions for the other nuclear-weapon States to join the nuclear disarmament process. The nuclear-weapon States needed to work together to reduce nuclear risks. On 3 January 2022, the leaders of China, Russia, the United States, the United Kingdom and France had issued a joint statement on preventing nuclear war and avoiding arms races, in which they had stressed that a nuclear war could not be won and must never be fought and had reaffirmed that none of their nuclear weapons were targeted at each other or at any other State. That historic statement was helpful in enhancing mutual trust among major countries.

7. In the same vein, the nuclear-weapon States needed to further strengthen communication on strategic stability and conduct in-depth dialogue on reducing the role of nuclear weapons in their national security doctrines and on a broad range of issues, including missile defence, outer space, cyberspace and artificial intelligence. The nuclear-weapon States should also strengthen dialogue with non-nuclear-weapon States to enhance mutual understanding and support.

8. Political settlements were needed to address the challenges of nuclear proliferation. Accordingly, all parties to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action should stay committed to bringing it back on track at an early date through diplomatic negotiations and reject the practice of imposing pressuring through sanctions and the threat of force. The United States should completely lift its relevant illegal sanctions on Iran and long-arm jurisdiction measures on third parties. On that basis, Iran should return to full compliance with its nuclear commitments.

9. The international community should reject double standards in non-proliferation. The nuclear-powered submarine cooperation among Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States posed severe nuclear proliferation risks in contravention of the objectives and purposes of the Treaty. The 2020 Review Conference should conduct in-depth discussions on the implications of that cooperation in all aspects, including its challenges to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards system, in order to firmly uphold the international non-proliferation regime.

10. The security situation on the Korean Peninsula remained complex and severe. It was necessary to follow the dual-track approach and the principle of phased and synchronized actions in advancing the process towards the establishment of a peace mechanism and denuclearization on the Korean Peninsula. Nuclear sharing arrangements ran counter to the provisions of the Treaty and increased the risks of nuclear proliferation and nuclear conflict. The United States should withdraw all of its nuclear weapons from Europe and refrain from deploying nuclear weapons in any other region. Non-nuclear-weapon States parties should earnestly fulfil their obligations under the Treaty and stop instigating nuclear sharing and other forms of nuclear deterrence arrangements. Any attempt to replicate the NATO nuclear sharing model in the Asia-Pacific region would undermine regional strategic stability and be firmly opposed by the countries in the region and, when necessary, face severe countermeasures.

11. The establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones was conducive to attaining the goal of nuclear non-proliferation. The international community should make every effort to support the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction. The nuclear-weapon States should sign all the relevant protocols to the nuclear-weapon-free zone treaties as soon as possible, including the Treaty on a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Central Asia (Treaty of Semipalatinsk). China was willing to take the lead in signing the Protocol to the Treaty on the Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone (Treaty of Bangkok).

12. A commitment was also needed to the fundamental goal of common development and to the promotion of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. To that end, the international community should support IAEA in its central role, increase funding and technological support for developing countries, fully unleash the potential of nuclear energy and nuclear technology in addressing climate change and promoting green development, and contribute to faster implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. All States parties to the

Non-Proliferation Treaty should see the 2020 Review Conference as an opportunity to jointly map out a new blueprint for promoting international cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

13. The international community must take a balanced approach towards non-proliferation and peaceful uses. Some countries sought to create divisions along ideological lines, stretch the concept of national security, abuse the multilateral export control regime and even attempt to create a new version of the Coordinating Committee for Multilateral Export Controls, all in the name of non-proliferation. Such practices must be resolutely rejected as they went against the trend of the times, disrupted normal international cooperation and harmed the legitimate rights and interests of developing countries.

14. Nuclear safety and security was the lifeline of the development and application of nuclear energy. The peaceful uses of nuclear energy should not come at the expense of the natural environment and human health. Japan should earnestly respond to the legitimate concerns of its neighbouring countries and the international community regarding the disposal of nuclear-contaminated water from the Fukushima nuclear accident and fully consult with the stakeholders and the relevant international agencies in order to find an appropriate solution to dispose of the water.

15. A cold war mentality would only undermine the global peace framework, hegemonism and power politics would only endanger world peace and bloc confrontation would only exacerbate security challenges. In April 2022, Chinese President Xi Jinping had proposed a Global Security Initiative at the opening ceremony of the Annual Conference of the Boao Forum for Asia. The Global Security Initiative highlighted the necessity of staying committed to the vision of common, comprehensive, cooperative and sustainable security, giving due regard to the legitimate security concerns of all countries, upholding the principle of indivisible security and building a balanced, effective and sustainable security architecture. Guided by that vision, China was ready to join all countries to continuously strengthen the universality, authority and effectiveness of the Treaty, increase stability and certainty in the current era of turbulence and transformation, and make new contributions to world peace, stability and prosperity.

16. **Mr. Oskarsson** (Iceland) said that Iceland was strongly committed to working towards the objective of eliminating nuclear weapons and that the Non-Proliferation Treaty was the cornerstone of its policy on nuclear disarmament. In the challenging

security environment that the world was currently facing, with heightening tensions and an increasing threat of nuclear proliferation, any weakening of the Treaty was unacceptable and greater efforts were required to strengthen it.

17. It was tragic that the Russian Federation had undertaken a totally unprovoked and unjustifiable military action against Ukraine, another State party to the Treaty. Such action, which undermined international peace and security, constituted a gross violation of international law and the Charter of the United Nations. Iceland stood in absolute solidarity with Ukraine in its fight to defend its people and territorial integrity. As a matter of urgency, States parties to the Treaty must reconfirm their commitment to the Treaty and match their words with deeds when it came to fulfilling obligations under article VI on nuclear disarmament, which was a special responsibility for the nuclear-weapon States. That urgency was seriously amplified by the rhetoric of the Russian Federation to resort to nuclear weapons in the senseless war against Ukraine. It was an understatement to say that the Review Conference was taking place at a critical juncture, at a moment when some of the key agreements that had underpinned decades of global disarmament efforts were being seriously tested and undermined by non-compliance and rapidly growing security challenges. That situation must change. The message that nuclear war could not be won and must never be fought was as valid as ever.

18. The most imminent, and regrettably, growing, threat to the non-proliferation regime and global security was the rogue behaviour of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. That threat could only be resolved by the return of that country to compliance with its international obligations, particularly the Treaty and IAEA safeguards. Iceland supported the efforts towards reviving the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action with the return of the United States. That important contribution to the rules-based non-proliferation regime was at risk and the failure by Iran to fully cooperate with IAEA on its safeguards obligations was unacceptable.

19. Iceland welcomed the extension of the Treaty between the Russian Federation and the United States of America on Measures for the Further Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms (New START Treaty), which was an important contribution to global security. Although distrust reigned and future prospects of nuclear disarmament were bleak, recent statements by the leaders of the United States and Russia offered a slight glimmer of hope for progress.

20. The present deterioration in nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation should not discourage the world from strengthening critical supporting instruments, such as the Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, the success of which would be permanently established by the accession and ratification by all Annex 2 States. To begin negotiations on a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices would be another factor in underpinning the existing non-proliferation arrangements.

21. Apart from the disarmament aspect and difficulties regarding the proliferation pillar, there were positive stories to take from the implementation of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. The great achievements in the peaceful application of nuclear technology and the increasing acceptance of IAEA comprehensive safeguards agreements and additional protocols were particularly noteworthy. However, dark clouds on peaceful use were gathering in Ukraine, where the invading Russian armed forces played fast and loose with the safety of nuclear energy facilities.

22. It was more urgent than ever to apply more energy, creative thinking and resources to disarmament and arms control efforts in general. Although there was no substitute for concrete nuclear disarmament, various practical proposals on risk reduction, verification, stronger safeguards and peaceful uses would be important steps to create trust and confidence, and thereby contribute to breaking the stalemate regarding the ultimate goal: a world without nuclear weapons. In that regard, there were strong expectations of the proposals included in the Stockholm Initiative on Nuclear Disarmament and the joint statement of the leaders of the five nuclear-weapon States on preventing nuclear war and avoiding arms races.

23. Iceland reaffirmed its strong belief that every effort should be made to ensure that women had an active and equal role in disarmament processes in line with Security Council resolution [1325 \(2000\)](#). To that end, the Review Conference should deliver results.

24. **Mr. Knyazyan** (Armenia) said that, over the decades, the Non-Proliferation Treaty had played a key role in preventing the spread of nuclear weapons and technologies, promoting cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and advancing the goal of nuclear disarmament and general and complete disarmament. Its effective implementation was crucial for the security of all members of the international community and for all of humanity. In that regard, Armenia attached great importance to the full, comprehensive and effective implementation of the Treaty. Its three pillars were equally important and mutually reinforcing. While there

were different approaches regarding the disarmament pillar, the disarmament agenda should be further pushed forward in accordance with the spirit and letter of the Treaty. Necessary steps that would contribute to further disarmament efforts included the early entry into force of the Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty.

25. The safe use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes was a priority for his country, which had an operating nuclear power plant. Armenia pursued a transparent and open policy for the safe and peaceful use of nuclear energy and would continue to undertake necessary measures to maintain and enhance nuclear and radiation safety. In that respect, cooperation with IAEA through its safeguards agreements, additional protocols and technical assistance programme was of crucial importance.

26. The current Review Conference had taken on particular relevance in light of the current turbulent international environment as it provided a unique opportunity for the international community to reiterate its commitment to the values and principles of the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

27. **Mr. Bahr Aluloom** (Iraq) said that achieving the universality of the Non-Proliferation Treaty was the only way to protect human beings and the environment from the lethality of nuclear weapons. Measures to prevent terrorists from acquiring weapons of mass destruction must be strengthened by ensuring the elimination of such weapons and contributing to global counter-terrorism efforts.

28. Half a century after the adoption of the Treaty, it continued to be implemented unevenly. Having failed to uphold their nuclear disarmament obligations, the nuclear-weapon States instead persisted in attempting to develop new nuclear weapons and maintain a role for them in their security and military doctrines, undermining the credibility of the Treaty. Efforts must be redoubled to overcome the present impasse and multilateralism must be promoted as a core principle of disarmament negotiations aimed at reaching an agreed, sustainable solution, in line with the Charter of the United Nations.

29. Efforts to achieve nuclear non-proliferation should be balanced and synchronized with disarmament efforts. For their part, the nuclear-weapon States must fulfil the commitments undertaken at the 1995 Review and Extension Conference and the 2000 and 2010 Review Conferences, eliminate their nuclear arsenals and commence negotiations on nuclear disarmament without delay and on a specific timetable. Once that objective was achieved, States parties must agree on a binding international legal instrument that would provide

non-nuclear weapon States with assurances against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons by nuclear-weapon States. However, such an instrument should not be a substitute for disarmament.

30. Developing countries had an inalienable right to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy without discrimination, as that right was one of the pillars of the Treaty. IAEA should continue to perform its mandate of providing support and technical assistance to its Member States, in accordance with its statute.

31. The establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones was an important measure in support of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. A zone free of weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East must be established without delay, in line with the relevant United Nations resolutions, 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 and the Final Document of the 2010 Review Conference. Moreover, Iraq hailed the extraordinary effort to ensure the success of the second session of the Conference on the Establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction but underscored that that effort was not a substitute for implementation of the 1995 resolution or the resolutions adopted by later Review Conferences. All States parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty should continue to work in support of those efforts at the forthcoming third session of the Conference.

32. The failure of the 2015 Review Conference to reach consensus on an outcome document and plan of action setting forth the obligations of the nuclear-weapon States was disappointing. Political will would be crucial to make the current Review Conference a success. Iraq called on the nuclear-weapon States to reaffirm their full compliance with the Treaty and the outcomes of previous Review Conferences and demonstrate the necessary flexibility to adopt an outcome document that met the collective aspiration of ridding the world of nuclear weapons.

33. **Mr. Hoxha** (Albania) said that the Non-Proliferation Treaty remained a fundamental multilateral instrument for international peace and security, the cornerstone of the global disarmament and non-proliferation architecture and a key element in facilitating cooperation on nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. Albania would continue to promote the universality and effectiveness of the Treaty and called on those States that had not yet acceded to it to do so without delay.

34. Committed to the long-term goal of a world without nuclear weapons, Albania believed that in the

current security context a step-by-step approach to global nuclear disarmament was the right path to build trust and confidence. In that context, it had endorsed the concrete proposals for nuclear disarmament contained in the Stockholm Initiative. Furthermore, aware of the magnitude of the threat from terrorism and the risk that non-State actors might acquire, develop, traffic in or use nuclear weapons and their means of delivery, it attached paramount importance to the implementation of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) and to the role of IAEA in monitoring the implementation of the non-proliferation regime.

35. In January 2022, his delegation had welcomed the joint statement of the leaders of the five nuclear-weapon States on preventing nuclear war and avoiding arms races. However, since February 2022, military aggression by Russia in Ukraine had seriously affected European and world security. Russia had blatantly violated international law, the Charter of the United Nations and its own commitments under the Memorandum on Security Assurances in Connection with Ukraine's Accession to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (Budapest Memorandum).

36. The nuclear safety and security risks in Ukraine were a matter of serious concern. Since the beginning of the war, IAEA had warned about the risk of a severe nuclear accident. The IAEA Director General should therefore be allowed to send a mission to the Zaporizhzhia facility to carry out safety, security and safeguards protocols. Moreover, it was well known that a nuclear war could not be won and therefore should not be fought. Nuclear sabre-rattling over the possible use of nuclear weapons should be condemned in the strongest terms and those who wished to push the world backwards must not be allowed to do so.

37. His delegation remained deeply concerned by the objective of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea regime to enhance its weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missile programme in violation of international law and several Security Council resolutions, and condemned all intercontinental ballistic missile launches from that country and called for an end to its continuous, unilateral and grave escalations that were seriously threatening the Korean Peninsula, the Indo-Pacific region and the whole world. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea must fully implement the relevant Security Council resolutions and return to compliance with the Non-Proliferation Treaty and IAEA safeguards.

38. The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action remained the only tool at hand for the international community to be reassured that the nuclear programme of Iran was, and remained, solely and verifiably dedicated to

peaceful purposes. Iran should engage in good-faith negotiations and seek realistic and lasting solutions. Albania welcomed the resolution of the IAEA Board of Governors that called on Iran to act quickly to fulfil its legal obligations and resolve all outstanding safeguards issues under the Treaty. The recent decision of the Iranian authorities to shut down the IAEA cameras of the Online Enrichment Monitor was deeply regrettable. Iran must fully cooperate with IAEA and not undermine its work.

39. Albania supported disarmament and non-proliferation education initiatives in line with *Securing Our Common Future: An Agenda for Disarmament* by developing and implementing policies and educational programmes for young people to increase and facilitate their constructive engagement in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation. It was important for the United Nations to provide leadership in bringing relevant gender perspectives to the centre of attention in disarmament affairs and to recognize the disproportionate impact of nuclear radiation on women and girls. The full, equal and meaningful participation of women should be ensured in all disarmament and non-proliferation decision-making processes, including in the implementation and review of the Treaty.

40. **Ms. González López** (El Salvador) said that El Salvador was a State party to the historic Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (Treaty of Tlatelolco), which had served as a model for the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones worldwide, demonstrating that such zones strengthened international peace and security. Her country was also a State party to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, whose recent ratification by Guatemala had made Central America the first region of the world to ratify that Treaty fully, attesting to the region's political will to support multilateral disarmament and non-proliferation efforts. A prompt entry into force of the Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, which El Salvador had also ratified, was vital, hence the need for those countries that had not yet ratified it to do so, particularly Annex 2 countries. Nuclear tests undermined efforts to maintain international peace and security, placed human life at risk and violated the objectives and obligations set forth in the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

41. The use of nuclear weapons was contrary to the Charter of the United Nations and, as such, a grave violation of international law. Any attempt to use such weapons must therefore be condemned categorically. Nuclear weapons were not a means of guaranteeing international peace and security; rather, only total, unconditional and verifiable nuclear disarmament –

a pressing objective in view of the danger posed by such weapons – could ensure the preservation of humankind and the planet. In that connection, all States not party to the Non-Proliferation Treaty should ratify it promptly and the nuclear-weapon States should eliminate their arsenals and commit to abstaining from their use.

42. IAEA and its safeguards regime played a crucial role in facilitating the verification of the peaceful use of nuclear energy, whose applications ranged from medical research to food security and environmental protection.

43. El Salvador regretted the failure to reach a consensus at the 2015 Review Conference and called upon delegations to work together constructively at the present Conference to achieve a successful outcome. The compromise on the Middle East reached at the 1995 Review and Extension Conference would strengthen regional efforts to achieve lasting peace. In that regard, it was unfortunate that a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction had yet to be established in the Middle East.

44. In closing, she called for full, equitable and meaningful participation by women in decision-making processes on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

45. **Archbishop Caccia** (Holy See), reading out a message on behalf of His Holiness Pope Francis, said that the Non-Proliferation Treaty had played a vital role in maintaining peace among nations and limiting nuclear proliferation for half a century. Even so, the world faced grave challenges in the areas of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. States parties had an opportunity and a duty to reach consensus on concrete actions, in accordance with their joint goal of a world free of nuclear weapons. In order to make that vision a reality, it would be necessary to promote dialogue and move with determination from a perspective of competition to one of cooperation.

46. A world free of nuclear weapons demanded a strong commitment to nuclear disarmament. Active negotiations to reduce nuclear weapons had not taken place since 2011, and achieving further reductions remained challenging. The Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty had lapsed, and both the United States and the Russian Federation had withdrawn from the Treaty on Open Skies. Reliance on deterrence continued to drive nuclear-weapon States to increase their nuclear capabilities, both quantitatively and qualitatively. The indefinite extension of the Non-Proliferation Treaty in 1995 should in no way be interpreted as the tacit acceptance of the indefinite possession of nuclear weapons. Progress must be made towards an agreed global ceiling from which nuclear arms could be reduced.

47. The war in Ukraine had alerted the world to the heightened risk of a conventional armed conflict escalating to involve the use of nuclear weapons. To lessen the risk of inadvertent escalation, the Holy See urged States that possessed nuclear weapons to take steps to decrease the operational readiness of their nuclear forces and their nuclear arsenals, in line with commitments agreed upon at the 2000 and 2010 Review Conferences.

48. The inertia of recent years had prompted many States to seek ways to accelerate the process of achieving a world free of nuclear weapons, in view of the catastrophic consequences of their use. More than ever, the use of atomic energy for purposes of war was immoral and a crime against the dignity of human beings and against any future for their common home.

49. The Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, ratified promptly by the Holy See, mutually reinforced the nuclear non-proliferation regime, especially article VI of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. The entry into force of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons should encourage the present Review Conference to make progress towards nuclear disarmament and further explore how the two treaties could mutually reinforce one another, including through collaboration between nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear-weapon States in the areas of nuclear disarmament verification, environmental remediation and victim assistance.

50. Reducing the nuclear threat would require a renewed global ethic that upheld disarmament treaties as moral commitments, not mere legal obligations. The pressing need for responsibility, solidarity and cooperative security must be recognized, since international peace and stability could not be based on a false sense of security, on the threat of mutual destruction or total annihilation or on the maintenance of a balance of power. Any response to the threat of nuclear weapons should be concerted and based on mutual trust. Disarmament and non-proliferation education could contribute to that endeavour by raising awareness, especially among youth, of the risks and consequences of nuclear weapons for current and future generations.

51. Nuclear deterrence was an inadequate response to such twenty-first century threats to security as the COVID-19 pandemic, climate change and terrorism. Consequently, the international community should adopt forward-looking strategies to promote international peace and avoid short-sighted approaches to national and international security problems. Even before the entry into force of the Non-Proliferation

Treaty, Pope Paul VI had long been a proponent of a global fund, to be established with the money otherwise spent on weapons and other military expenditures, with a view to ending hunger and favouring development in the most impoverished countries. The pressing, universal needs exacerbated by the pandemic were surely a summons to put talents and resources to use to fulfil the commitments enshrined in the Treaty and thereby to build a safer world.

52. **Mr. Vongnorkeo** (Lao People's Democratic Republic) said that his Government remained a strong supporter of international efforts to rid the world of nuclear weapons, whose continued existence gravely imperilled international peace and security. The total elimination of nuclear weapons was the only fundamental guarantee against their use or threat of use. His delegation therefore called for strict adherence to article VI of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, which remained the cornerstone of the non-proliferation and disarmament regime.

53. The international community must reaffirm its commitment to the Treaty's objectives by implementing the three pillars of nuclear non-proliferation, nuclear disarmament and peaceful uses of nuclear energy. In that connection, his delegation recognized the significant role of IAEA in nuclear non-proliferation and in promoting the peaceful uses of nuclear science and technology.

54. Lastly, the creation of regional nuclear-weapon-free zones, the entry into force of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons and the implementation of the relevant Security Council resolutions would help to strengthen the global nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime. Renewed political will on the part of all would be crucial to making the present Review Conference a success.

55. **Mr. Lagos Valle** (Honduras) said that the full, balanced implementation, without discrimination, of the three pillars of the Non-Proliferation Treaty was crucial to promoting international peace and security. Honduras maintained its principled positions on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation and expressed concern at the threat that nuclear weapons and their possible use or threat of use posed to humankind. Nuclear proliferation threats must be addressed through multilateral, negotiated agreements that were universal, broad and non-discriminatory, so as to prevent a global catastrophe. In that context, his delegation welcomed multilateral efforts aimed at achieving nuclear disarmament and eliminating nuclear weapons, including the entry into force in January 2021 of the

Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, which Honduras had been the fiftieth State to ratify.

56. Against a backdrop of global crisis, military doctrines that relied upon the development of nuclear weapons posed a grave threat to peace and security. There was an urgent need to launch negotiations on effective, universal, unconditional, non-discriminatory, irrevocable and legally binding security assurances against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons in any circumstance.

57. Every State had the right to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes and to promote the exchange of relevant scientific and technical information. IAEA remained the sole competent authority responsible for verifying the fulfilment of obligations under the safeguards agreements concluded with States parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

58. As a State party to the Treaty of Tlatelolco, pursuant to which the largest and most densely populated nuclear-weapon-free zone in the world had been established, Honduras deemed such zones to be of vital importance in fulfilling the objectives of the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

59. Stressing the importance of the universality of the Treaty, he urged all States not yet party to the Treaty to ratify it unconditionally and without delay. The present Review Conference must reaffirm that the obligations undertaken at the 1995, 2000 and 2010 Review Conferences with respect to nuclear disarmament, nuclear non-proliferation and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy remained valid and must be upheld fully.

60. **Mr. Kmentt** (Austria) said that the Non-Proliferation Treaty, a vital instrument, must be strengthened and fully implemented across all three pillars. International cooperation and multilateralism were central to addressing the many challenges and dangers that nuclear weapons posed to the international community. The war of aggression waged by Russia against Ukraine and the nuclear threats made by Russia had shaken the entire nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime and the Treaty in particular. His Government categorically rejected and condemned the clear violation by Russia of international law, including the Charter of the United Nations. The consequences for the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime were alarming, with some States making the grave mistake of responding with a re-emphasis on nuclear weapons and nuclear deterrence. The previous few months had only further demonstrated the precarious fallacy on which belief in nuclear deterrence was predicated. At the present, critical juncture, the global community could either opt for a

nuclear arms race and increased proliferation pressure, or return to nuclear disarmament and abandon belief in a nuclear-weapons-based security approach.

61. Regrettably, the implementation of nuclear disarmament obligations had been uneven and lacking. Even more alarmingly, some if not all nuclear-weapon States were moving in a direction counter to their obligations and commitments, modernizing and increasing their arsenals, improving their capabilities, reducing transparency and adding nuclear use cases. Moreover, portraying nuclear weapons as essential to national security was a dangerous driver of proliferation. The increasingly strident nuclear rhetoric and threats by some were just as disconcerting.

62. Austria categorically rejected and condemned all nuclear threats, whether explicit or implicit and irrespective of the circumstances. Any use or threat of use of nuclear weapons was a violation of international law. His Government unequivocally condemned the irresponsible and unacceptable nuclear threats levelled by Russia. However, it must be acknowledged that nuclear deterrence doctrines were necessarily based on the threat of actual use of nuclear weapons and, by extension, on credible and concrete planning and intentions to inflict catastrophic global consequences, entailing constant risks. Therefore, any attempt to distinguish between “irresponsible” and “responsible” nuclear threats was highly questionable.

63. It could not be said that article VI of the Non-Proliferation Treaty was being implemented while 13,000 weapons remained in the possession of nine States that all had security doctrines in some form setting out cases of use or threat of use. Such doctrines posed serious risks to all humankind and, consequently, diminished the common security of all.

64. The Review Conference must be used to advance the implementation of the Treaty to achieve significant and credible progress on nuclear disarmament and strengthen non-proliferation. Most States had been doing just that, by shifting the focus towards the powerful evidence of the catastrophic, transboundary and potentially global humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons, their inherent risks and the dangers of nuclear deterrence. Such arguments offered the best possibility of moving away from a notion of international security that was based on threatening mass destruction.

65. Evidence of the dangers of nuclear weapons and nuclear deterrence also underpinned his country’s firm commitment to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, which was not only fully complementary to the Non-Proliferation Treaty but also re-enforced

nuclear disarmament norms. Austria called on all States to join the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons and to engage constructively with the profound arguments that underpinned it.

66. Until all States were ready to implement their obligations under article VI of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, reducing the nuclear risks imposed on all humankind would be one key area of work. The key obligations of the nuclear-weapon States must be discussed in a broad and inclusive manner that went beyond strategic considerations, encompassing all relevant measures to minimize use and potential accidents as far as possible. Urgent progress was also needed on the Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, especially by Annex 2 States.

67. While Austria supported the pillar of the Non-Proliferation Treaty on the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and the many important peaceful applications of nuclear energy, subject to stringent security and safety standards, it regarded such energy as incompatible with the concept of sustainable development and considered it neither viable nor cost-efficient for the purposes of combating climate change. Furthermore, the issue of safe and permanent disposal of high-level radioactive waste and spent nuclear fuel remained unresolved.

68. With catastrophic climate change and a pandemic sweeping the globe, humankind had finally realized that the existential threats that experts had long warned of could no longer be ignored. The only way to confront the existential threat posed by nuclear weapons was to act pre-emptively and remove them altogether, as it was impossible to prepare for or await their consequences. Only through a concerted, collective effort in the interest of humanity and common security could a solution be found.

69. **Mr. Vishnevetskii** (Russian Federation), reading out a message on behalf of President Putin, said that for over half a century, the Non-Proliferation Treaty had been a key element of the international system of security and strategic stability. The obligations stipulated in the Treaty in the areas of non-proliferation, disarmament and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy fully served the interests of nuclear- and non-nuclear-weapon States alike. The Russian Federation had consistently followed the spirit and the letter of the Treaty and had fulfilled its obligations under bilateral agreements with the United States on arms reduction and limitation. It believed that a nuclear war could not be won and must never be fought and advocated equal and indivisible security for all members of the international community. The IAEA safeguards system was of great importance as a verification mechanism for

the Treaty and it was vital that its implementation was objective, depoliticized and technically sound. All States parties in compliance with the Treaty should have the right to access the peaceful uses of nuclear energy without any preconditions and the Russian Federation stood ready to share its experience in that field with its partners. The present Review Conference should reaffirm the commitment of all States parties to the Treaty to comply strictly with their obligations and make a significant contribution to strengthening the nuclear non-proliferation regime and ensuring peace, security and stability in the world.

70. Turning to the statement on behalf of his delegation, he said that international security and strategic stability had recently deteriorated significantly. A gross violation of the principle of equal and indivisible security resulting from the malicious expansion by a military bloc of countries that were striving for undivided strategic military and geopolitical dominance had caused a major crisis in central Europe. The Russian Federation, which had been forced to defend its legal right to protect its fundamental security interests, had been subject to a hybrid military campaign which risked slipping into direct armed conflict between nuclear Powers.

71. The Russian Federation remained committed to the noble goal of a world free from nuclear weapons. Through total compliance with its international obligations, including article VI of the Treaty, it was dutifully doing its part to maintain peace and to strengthen global security. It would also continue to fulfil its commitments under the New START Treaty, the duration of which had been extended in 2021 by five years. In the same year, a comprehensive dialogue on strategic stability had also been initiated with the United States. However, the progress had been undermined by the disregard of the United States for the “red lines” drawn by Russia in the area of security. The United States had used Russian resistance to that damaging approach as a pretext to freeze the strategic dialogue.

72. Given the current situation, it was more important than ever for the nuclear Powers to behave responsibly and with restraint. The principle that a nuclear war could not be won and it must never be fought had been reaffirmed in the dialogues held between the Russian Federation and the United States and China, and in the joint statement of the leaders of the five nuclear-weapon States on preventing nuclear war and avoiding arms races.

73. The faith of States parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty in IAEA safeguards was crucial to the sustainability of the nuclear non-proliferation system.

The safeguards systems must continue to be based on the principles of objectivity, technical feasibility and respect for the safeguards agreements concluded between the Agency and States.

74. Nuclear-weapon-free zones were an important element of the nuclear non-proliferation regime, the creation of which was significant not only for the enhancement of the regime but also for regional security and stability. The Russian Federation supported the efforts of States in the Middle East to establish a zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction in the region, as provided for in the resolution on the Middle East adopted at the 1995 Review and Extension Conference. In relation to the nuclear programme of Iran, it was also convinced of the need to return to the full implementation of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action as soon as possible. There was simply no alternative to those arrangements.

75. Access for States parties to the benefits of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy was an important provision of the Treaty. The Russian Federation continuously defended the right to develop peaceful nuclear technologies and it actively supported countries to that end.

76. He utterly rejected all the accusations that had been made against the Russian Federation about the “unprovoked aggression” against Ukraine. The current regime in Kiev had come to power following a coup d’état and it had immediately begun persecuting, including, later, through military force, the Russian-speaking inhabitants of Donbass. Over eight years, Ukrainian nationalists had been killing the peaceful population with impunity and they had prepared a large-scale military invasion of a republic that had effectively broken away from Ukraine. The authorities in Kiev were, therefore, not going to implement the Minsk arrangements, which they had signed and which were the only way to bring peace to the territory. The situation in Ukraine had reached its limits and Russian action, which was the necessary response to the atrocities that occurring there, would continue until its logical conclusion.

77. In conclusion, he hoped that the work of the Review Conference would take place in a spirit of good will, without confrontation and would ultimately be fruitful. His delegation would do its utmost to contribute to that outcome.

78. **Mr. Gala López** (Cuba) said that the entry into force of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons had been a milestone in the quest to achieve nuclear disarmament. His delegation called on all States to ratify that Treaty to bring about its prompt universalization.

79. More than five decades after the entry into force of the Non-Proliferation Treaty and 11 years after the launch of the action plan contained in the Final Document of the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties, Cuba regretted the lack of tangible progress on nuclear disarmament, in particular, the failure of the nuclear-weapon States to fulfil their obligations and commitments. It was unacceptable for those States to devote resources that should be used to combat the impact of COVID-19 and achieve the Sustainable Development Goals to instead continue developing new types of nuclear weapons and increasing and modernizing their arsenals, in violation of their Treaty obligations.

80. Military doctrines based on nuclear deterrence, strategic stability, or the supposed need to create the conditions for nuclear disarmament must be abandoned. The only sustainable solution to the existential problem of nuclear weapons was their total elimination in a transparent, irreversible and verifiable manner. In that regard, Cuba rejected attempts to place conditions on nuclear disarmament and legitimize the status quo. Political manipulation, selectivity and double standards in the area of non-proliferation must end. It was neither just nor acceptable for a group of States parties to fulfil all their Treaty obligations while others did not, or for States that continued to optimize their nuclear arsenals to condemn and demonize certain countries for allegedly violating the non-proliferation regime.

81. Progress towards the implementation of the Non-Proliferation Treaty was crucial, in particular with regard to article VI thereof. A balanced assessment of the three pillars of the Treaty would be key to its legitimacy, integrity and effectiveness. In that regard, the Review Conference should conclude with an unequivocal call on the nuclear-weapon States and those States protected by the so-called “nuclear umbrella” to fulfil their obligations and implement the commitments made in 1995, 2000 and 2010, including the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. The nuclear-weapon States must respond to the long-standing request by non-nuclear-weapon States for irreversible security assurances against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons.

82. No measure or initiative taken by the Review Conference should be allowed to place conditions on the inalienable right of States to develop research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination and in conformity with articles I, II, III and IV of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. States parties must honour their commitments to facilitate participation in the exchange of equipment,

materials and scientific and technological information for the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

83. His Government rejected in the strongest terms the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States against Cuba and its extraterritorial character.

84. Cuba would maintain its firm support for the total prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons, which predated its ratification of the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

85. **Mr. Pieris** (Sri Lanka) said that, in the context of multiple global crises, including an alarming deterioration in international security, the relevance of the Non-Proliferation Treaty and the importance of a substantive consensus outcome from the current Review Conference could not be overemphasized. The Treaty was an invaluable instrument that provided a balanced and non-discriminatory approach to maintaining international peace and security, while safeguarding equal access to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and technology.

86. According to the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice issued in 1996, the threat or use of nuclear weapons should be compatible with the principles and rules of international humanitarian law, and any such threat or use would be generally contrary to those principles. That opinion appeared to have influenced later developments, including a joint statement in which 16 States members of the Preparatory Committee had declared in 2012 that it was of utmost importance that nuclear weapons never be used again under any circumstances, which could only be guaranteed through their total, irreversible and verifiable elimination. Sri Lanka had always stood at the forefront of global non-proliferation and disarmament efforts, and the historic 1995 Review and Extension Conference had been presided over by Sri Lanka.

87. Sri Lanka welcomed the joint statement by the five permanent members of the Security Council issued in January 2022, in which they had affirmed that a nuclear war could not be won and must never be fought. The extension of the New START Treaty was also a positive step towards strategic stability and mutual confidence. Nuclear-weapon-free zones also played an essential role in assuring mutual security.

88. Disarmament education, in furtherance of the total elimination of nuclear weapons, was also important. Member States and the United Nations should continue to invest in the development of expertise in the political, technical, scientific and legal areas of disarmament for the capacity-building and empowerment of youth in the campaign for disarmament.

89. His delegation reiterated the continued validity and relevance of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and nuclear technology in the advancement of socioeconomic development of States, as provided for under article IV of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. The peaceful use of nuclear technology should be made a lasting reality and an important priority through meaningful, sustained and practical measures.

90. While nuclear risk reduction could be an element of the disarmament process, it should not be viewed as an end in itself. It appeared that an approach based on nuclear risk reduction was emerging as a compromise in response to the unsatisfactory pace of progress towards the achievement of nuclear disarmament and the non-proliferation objectives of the Treaty. The Review Conference should not be diverted from the core objectives of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. It was important to promote cooperation, reciprocity and inclusiveness to build confidence among States. That would serve as an effective mechanism to prevent doubts and reduce the risk of accidental attacks.

91. The task at hand was urgent. The only acceptable compromise would be one that ensured a peaceful, nuclear-free world in which all humankind could live in lasting peace and dignity.

92. **Mr. Adom** (Côte d'Ivoire) said that the Non-Proliferation Treaty had become the cornerstone of the international peace and security system by helping to prevent the outbreak of a nuclear war. However, the current international situation, marked by heightened tensions and the risk of the use of nuclear weapons, gave rise to fears of a confrontation that would wipe out all the progress made in the implementation of the Treaty. The current Review Conference should work towards removing the spectre of nuclear conflict once and for all by strengthening the Treaty and ensuring compliance by all with all its provisions. Such results could not be achieved without a full and balanced implementation of the three pillars of the Treaty.

93. The nuclear-weapon States must urgently fulfil their nuclear disarmament commitments under the Treaty, in particular the announcement made in January 2022 to renounce any nuclear arms race. In addition, universal adherence to and the practical implementation of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons should help support collective efforts towards nuclear disarmament. In that regard, his delegation welcomed the successful holding, in June 2022, of the first Meeting of States Parties to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, which had resulted in the adoption of an ambitious action plan for the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

94. Furthermore, setting a qualitative limit to the development of nuclear weapons by preventing the building of more advanced arsenals, which was the objective of the Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, was an effective means of achieving disarmament. Annex 2 States were therefore urged to ratify that Treaty, with a view to ensuring the prohibition of all forms of nuclear testing, including laboratory test explosions. In a similar vein, his country supported the initiative to negotiate a fissile material cut-off treaty and had voted in favour of such a resolution at the General Assembly for several years.

95. Côte d'Ivoire advocated a peaceful resolution of the current proliferation crises and supported all initiatives for a negotiated settlement of the issues involving the Iran and North Korea. It also called for the creation of more nuclear-weapon-free zones, such as the one established by the African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty (Treaty of Pelindaba). Furthermore, the prevention of new forms of proliferation must be aimed at preventing the acquisition of weapons of mass destruction by malicious non-State actors and terrorist groups, in particular through the implementation of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004). His delegation welcomed the ongoing process of in-depth review of the implementation of that resolution and hoped that it would lead to its improvement and strengthening. Complementary programmes should also be encouraged, such as the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism, which had been launched to prevent, detect and respond to nuclear terrorism, and in which Côte d'Ivoire had participated since 2007.

96. In line with its commitments under the Non-Proliferation Treaty, his country supported the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, which would allow many people around the world to benefit from the various civilian applications of the atom. However, that third pillar remained the most neglected, and it was therefore important to make it a priority for the years to come, in particular through renewed support for the international cooperation activities led by IAEA. In Côte d'Ivoire, such cooperation had produced tangible results in areas as varied as nuclear medicine, animal health, crop productivity, food safety, environmental preservation and the prevention of soil erosion. Under the national nuclear safety and security regime, the first Integrated Nuclear Security Support Plan of Côte d'Ivoire, aimed at establishing a security system in line with international standards and requirements, had been adopted in August 2014, followed by a second plan in 2018. His country was also a signatory to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material and Nuclear Facilities and its 2005 Amendment, to the Convention on Early

Notification of a Nuclear Accident and to the Convention on Assistance in the Case of a Nuclear Accident or Radiological Emergency.

97. **Mr. Cassis** (Switzerland) said that the unacceptable nuclear threats made by Russia earlier in 2022, in the context of its military aggression against Ukraine, was hanging over the international community like the sword of Damocles. Any use of nuclear weapons would have catastrophic humanitarian consequences, and risk further escalation. A set of measures to reduce that risk must therefore be agreed on. The current Review Conference must set the course for urgent and necessary change: to reduce the role of nuclear weapons and the likelihood of a nuclear accident, or of use resulting from a misunderstanding. Words must be matched by deeds, to avoid humanitarian and environmental catastrophes.

98. Switzerland, together with its partners in the Stockholm Initiative, had presented a working paper containing a set of measures to reduce nuclear risks immediately. Those risks would remain until the last nuclear weapon was dismantled. It therefore called on the nuclear-weapon States to stop stockpiling and deploying such weapons, and to return to the path of arms control and disarmament. Even though the reduction of nuclear arsenals had come to a halt, the goal of a world free of nuclear weapons must be reaffirmed. The Stockholm Initiative had defined 26 “stepping stones” towards that end.

99. Recent international developments had shown that civilian nuclear facilities were vulnerable; their safety and security must be ensured in all circumstances, including during armed conflict, otherwise the humanitarian and environmental consequences would be catastrophic. He commended the IAEA Director General for defining the seven indispensable pillars of nuclear safety and security, which must be complied with and implemented in all circumstances.

100. For the Non-Proliferation Treaty to be effective, its non-proliferation norm must be upheld. That meant meeting regional challenges. For example, the further development of the nuclear programme of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, which violated Security Council resolutions, must be condemned. Likewise, all parties should return without delay to compliance with the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action. In addition, the IAEA safeguards system, which was the backbone of the nuclear non-proliferation regime, must be strongly supported.

101. It remained to be seen whether the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, which had entered into force in 2021, could be integrated into the normative architecture around the Non-Proliferation Treaty in a

complementary manner. The feasibility of aiming for nuclear disarmament without the participation of the nuclear-weapon States was also open to question.

102. The promotion of peace and security was one of Switzerland’s top priorities, and it was committed to facilitating dialogue and building bridges, including at the current Review Conference.

103. **Ms. Mudallali** (Lebanon) said that conflict, and the tense relationship between the great Powers, were wrecking the established global order. The COVID-19 pandemic, together with inflation – including the rise in food prices – were leading to hunger and even instability in some parts of the world. Those challenges, along with the state of the nuclear non-proliferation regime, were a matter of grave concern for all. The world was at risk of sliding into a nuclear war, and the use of nuclear weapons, by design or miscalculation, was higher than at any previous time. The arms control infrastructure that had kept nuclear weapons in their silos during the cold war had become frayed. The New START Treaty was the single remaining leg of that regime.

104. In the meantime, the nuclear-weapon States were modernizing and upgrading their nuclear arsenals in violation of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. Threatening to use nuclear weapons had become part of political rhetoric, and the role of nuclear weapons in military strategies was being elevated and mainstreamed by many countries. In the meantime, arms control had stalled, and the strategic dialogue between the United States and Russia was frozen, with little sign that it would soon resume.

105. Despite that dark picture, there were signs of hope, including the entry into force of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, the extension of the New START Treaty and the joint statement by the five permanent members of the Security Council, in which they had reaffirmed their commitment to their obligations under the Non-Proliferation Treaty, including article VI thereof, and had affirmed that a nuclear war could not be won and must never be fought.

106. The 2020 Review Conference was an opportunity for all the States parties to the Treaty, especially the five permanent members of the Security Council, to renew their commitments and obligations to the Treaty, to its three mutually reinforcing pillars and to the outcomes of the 2000 and 2010 Review Conferences. Such commitments would revitalize and strengthen the Treaty, which was the cornerstone of the non-proliferation regime, while also sending a strong message that there was a global consensus forbidding the use of nuclear weapons.

107. A recommitment to the Treaty by all its States parties should include a renewed commitment to the implementation of the resolution on the Middle East adopted at the 1995 Review and Extension Conference, which had called for the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in that region, and which was an integral part of the indefinite extension of the Treaty. Lebanon called on the States parties to the Treaty, especially the three sponsors of the 1995 resolution, to take immediate measures to implement it. Lebanon welcomed the successful 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, convened pursuant to General Assembly decision 73/546, and was looking forward to presiding over the third session of that Conference.

108. The 2020 Review Conference should also send a clear message that the entry into force of the Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty was urgently important.

109. The peaceful use of nuclear energy was a right, and an important pillar of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. The nuclear-weapon States should help developing countries to gain access to that right without delay or discrimination. Lebanon supported IAEA, and commended the professional and balanced role that the Agency had been playing.

110. Former President Kennedy of the United States had once said: “Every man, woman and child lives under a nuclear sword of Damocles, hanging by the slenderest of threads, capable of being cut at any moment by accident or miscalculation or by madness. The weapons of war must be abolished before they abolish us.” Nuclear weapons could not be allowed to cut humanity out of existence; they must be abolished.

111. **Ms. Cano Franco** (Panama) said that Panama recognized that the Non-Proliferation Treaty was a cornerstone of the global non-proliferation regime, and a pillar for the maintenance of international peace and security. It was important for all States attending the 2020 Review Conference to ensure that efforts aimed at nuclear non-proliferation went hand in hand with efforts aimed at nuclear disarmament, and general and complete disarmament. For Panama, disarmament and non-proliferation negotiations must continue in order to strengthen compliance with the legal obligations contained in the Treaty, as well as the IAEA safeguards regime and the commitment to the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

112. Her delegation noted with deep concern the modernization of nuclear arsenals, delivery vehicles, materials and related technologies – including hypersonic

weapons, stealth cruise missiles and systems equipped with artificial intelligence – which pointed to a new arms race that could undermine the principles and objectives of the Treaty. The risk that those weapons could fall into the hands of non-State actors, including terrorist groups, as well as their vulnerability to hacking and cyberattacks, was also cause for alarm.

113. The only effective guarantee against the threat posed by nuclear weapons was their prohibition and total elimination. Panama therefore welcomed the entry into force, in January 2021, of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, which was a historic milestone for nuclear disarmament and for full compliance with the obligations established in article VI of the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

114. The 2020 Review Conference was an opportunity to assess the commitments of the States parties to the Treaty, to follow up on the outcome of previous Review Conferences, to establish the mechanisms through which the full and effective implementation of the Treaty could be ensured, and to achieve its universality.

115. Furthermore, the potentially catastrophic humanitarian and environmental consequences of nuclear testing, or the use of any nuclear weapon, obliged all States to ensure that the rules of international law, including international humanitarian law, were enforced at all times. It was also important to recognize the disproportionate impact of ionizing radiation on women and girls, as well as the value of gender considerations in arms control, non-proliferation and disarmament efforts.

116. Latin America and the Caribbean had served as an example to other regions since they had formed the first nuclear-weapon-free zone in a permanently populated territory. The year 2022 marked the fifty-fifth anniversary of the opening for signature of the Treaty of Tlatelolco, a clear and tangible example of the political will and commitment of a region to general and complete disarmament.

117. Panama would continue to be committed to achieving one of the primary objectives of humanity: achieving peace in a world free of nuclear weapons.

118. **Mr. Filipsons** (Latvia) said that, despite the challenges posed by a harrowing global security environment, the 2020 Review Conference must strengthen the Non-Proliferation Treaty and reaffirm commitments to it, recognizing that it was the cornerstone of the international non-proliferation architecture. While the Treaty was by no means a panacea, it remained a key element of long-term peace and stability.

119. Latvia joined the international community in condemning the unprovoked and unjustified aggression by Russia against Ukraine, which was a blatant violation of international law that severely undermined European security and global stability. Latvia also condemned Belarus for its involvement in the Russian invasion, and for its support of the brutal violence taking place.

120. Latvia supported the goal of a world free of nuclear weapons and urged a progressive and practical approach to nuclear disarmament, accounting for security realities and strategic stability. It firmly supported a multilateral and treaty-based approach. The entry into force of the Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and the commencement of negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty would be relatively straightforward yet essential first steps. Latvia therefore urged all States that had not yet done so to join the overwhelming consensus against nuclear testing, in particular the remaining Annex 2 countries. Furthermore, those concrete steps should be complemented by advancing indisputable methods of disarmament verification.

121. With regard to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, Latvia urged Iran to appreciate the spotless record of IAEA in upholding the safeguards regime. The Agency must be allowed to conduct monitoring without any impediments. Iran should come to an agreement to return to full implementation of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action.

122. The irresponsible behaviour of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea threatened peace and security both on the Korean Peninsula and globally. Diplomacy remained the best available tool towards complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearization. Latvia urged the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to refrain from further escalation and to engage in meaningful dialogue.

123. Russia had failed in its obligations as a permanent member of the Security Council and a nuclear Power. Its invasion of Ukraine was singularly shameful because it was carried out against a nation that had received security assurances upon relinquishing its nuclear weapons and joining the Non-Proliferation Treaty. The violation of the Budapest Memorandum was a permanent stain on Russia. In addition, Latvia condemned the irresponsible Russian threats against nuclear safety and security in Ukraine, particularly the ongoing occupation of the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant. Furthermore, the intention of Russia to transfer nuclear-capable ballistic missile systems to Belarus and to make the fighter planes of Belarus capable of carrying nuclear weapons were causes for concern and would

further violate the commitments made by both States under the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

124. The international community must do its utmost to help Ukraine and to strengthen the non-proliferation regime. In that context, his delegation recalled that, in January of 2022, the five permanent members of the Security Council had stated that a nuclear war could not be won and must never be fought. Latvia called on Russia to comply with the letter and spirit of that statement and to stop its dangerous nuclear rhetoric.

125. The opportunities offered by peaceful uses of nuclear energy should not be forgotten. Research into such uses should be significantly increased, while ensuring the highest levels of security, safety and accountability. Latvia employed strict export and transit controls to make sure that sensitive materials could not be used for malicious purposes. The international export control regime was not an obstacle to cooperation on peaceful uses, but rather a key factor for such cooperation and sustainable development. Likewise, in order to maintain a sustainable and future-oriented non-proliferation system, new and emerging technologies must be developed and regulated, and the women and peace and security agenda must be implemented.

126. **Mr. Papakostas** (Greece) said that disarmament and stability were at a crossroads, and international security was being threatened by the ongoing war in Ukraine, caused by the invasion of that country by Russia. Greece strongly and unequivocally condemned that unprovoked attack, which was challenging fundamental concepts of international law.

127. The preservation and universalization of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, including its three pillars, were at the core of the global non-proliferation and disarmament architecture. Greece supported the ultimate goal of a world without nuclear weapons, as stipulated in article VI of the Non-Proliferation Treaty; hence it had voted in favour of General Assembly resolution [73/47](#) on the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons. To that end, transparency and inclusive dialogue among the nuclear-weapon States would encourage confidence-building and promote risk reduction efforts.

128. In a communiqué issued in December of 2021, the five permanent members of the Security Council had addressed, inter alia, their responsibility to work constructively to reduce the risk of nuclear conflict, including the likelihood of the use of nuclear weapons. Furthermore, initiatives that had been under discussion during preparations for the 2020 Review Conference provided a strong foundation for further deliberations,

including on disarmament verification, risk reduction and an improved security environment, which were a sound basis for rich discussions that could successfully guide the Treaty process forward. Unlike the Non-Proliferation Treaty and the provisional road map for the implementation of the first pillar, the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons did not contain provisions necessary for the incremental withdrawal of nuclear weapons or provide a verifiable mechanism that would oversee such an undertaking.

129. Greece looked forward to a dialogue on the creation of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East and acknowledged all States' sovereign right to opt for peaceful nuclear energy. In addition, the safety standards of IAEA must be strictly implemented. Multilateral confidence-building could also be supported through IAEA assistance with peer-review missions.

130. Given the ongoing conflicts in the Eastern Mediterranean region, and the pattern of seismic activity there, the transparent application of safety and security measures for peaceful nuclear activities were of heightened relevance. Safety and security, and the implications of safeguards, must also be fully respected in Ukraine, where facilities should operate without interference and under the full control of the Ukrainian regulator. IAEA experts must have full access to all nuclear plants and inventories to conduct safety activities and monitoring.

131. The entry into force of the Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and the conclusion of deliberations on a fissile material cut-off treaty would signal a major turning point in disarmament negotiations. The 2020 Review Conference should take stock of available options and seek to adopt a forward-looking outcome to strengthen the norms of the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

132. **Ms. Chan Valverde** (Costa Rica) said that the Non-Proliferation Treaty was an indispensable and irreplaceable legal framework that served as the basis for other critical elements of the international nuclear non-proliferation architecture, including nuclear-weapon-free zones, nuclear test bans and the comprehensive application of IAEA safeguards.

133. However, tensions between the nuclear Powers had escalated considerably since the previous Review Conference. The growing competition between the United States and China had the potential to lead to a new nuclear arms race, while nuclear arms control, especially between the United States and the Russian Federation, was in deep crisis. The Russian Federation, a nuclear-weapon State party to the Treaty, had not only invaded Ukraine, a non-nuclear-weapon State party, but

had repeatedly threatened to use its nuclear force against any State that might interfere with its illegal invasion. That was nuclear coercion, not nuclear deterrence. Since February 2022, Russian forces had fired on reactor buildings and a facility used to store nuclear waste in Ukraine, and had seized an entire nuclear power plant there, endangering nuclear facilities and preventing their safe and secure operation, as well as the ability of IAEA to conduct safeguards inspections.

134. The nuclear activities of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, together with uncontrolled nuclear weapons programmes in South Asia, further increased the nuclear risk. At the same time, the uncertain future of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action and the expansion of the Iranian nuclear programme were also worrisome.

135. Meanwhile, all the nuclear-weapon States were extensively modernizing their nuclear programmes. Instead of committing themselves to multilateral nuclear disarmament, they had strengthened their arsenals with the latest technologies, some had announced increases in the size of their arsenals, and others were developing new delivery systems. The development and deployment of low-yield nuclear weapons was also concerning. It was a myth that those weapons were less devastating; the use of one could not only lead to a nuclear exchange – even a single detonation would have enormous humanitarian and environmental consequences. More than 25 years had passed since the indefinite extension of the Non-Proliferation Treaty; the nuclear-weapon States should reflect seriously on the trust that their non-nuclear-weapon partners placed in the implementation of article VI on agreeing to its indefinite extension. It was time for the nuclear-weapon States to live up to that trust by completely eliminating their nuclear arsenals.

136. Since the preceding Review Conference, the international community's progress on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation had come from the non-nuclear-weapon States. The promotion of gender sensitivity and advocacy for women and girls in the context of nuclear security and the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons were two concrete examples. That Treaty mandated complete nuclear disarmament without conditions and rejected the idea that an instrument of mass destruction was the source of security or the guardian of international peace. It established a framework for victim assistance, environmental remediation and international cooperation, as well as assistance to address the ongoing damage caused by nuclear use and testing. In addition, it supported disarmament education and recognized the

disproportionate impact of nuclear weapons programmes on indigenous peoples.

137. The Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons was also the only gender-sensitive nuclear weapons treaty in existence. It contrasted with previous instruments and forums, which had largely excluded or tokenized the knowledge and experience of women and girls. It focused on greater participation of women in decision-making and recognized the disproportionate effects of nuclear weaponry on women and girls, while elevating female perspectives that challenged masculinized narratives of power. However, increased awareness must translate into effective and thoughtful inclusion that drove action, not just by increasing the number of women in nuclear disarmament spaces, but also by including other marginalized groups and conducting gender analyses. Only when women were accommodated and able to insist on being heard would it be possible for them to begin to change the systems and power structures that had cost them their security for generations. The goal of gender mainstreaming was to prevent gender from being an add-on, by insisting that every aspect of a given activity – such as peace or disarmament negotiations, or peacekeeping operations – should be assessed in terms of its gender implications. The time had come for the Non-Proliferation Treaty to recognize women and girls as equal partners in international relations and nuclear security. A progressive approach to gender and inclusion would advance the shared goal of nuclear disarmament.

Statements made in exercise of the right of reply

138. **Mr. Trofimov** (Russian Federation), said that, in relation to the allegations of violations by the Russian Federation of the Budapest Memorandum, the Russian Federation had stringently fulfilled its obligations, including the requirement to not use and to not threaten to use nuclear weapons, which was being fully observed in relation to Ukraine, including in recent months. The interpretation of statements by the leadership of the Russian Federation as threats to use nuclear weapons in Ukraine was unscrupulous and did not hold up under review if the primary source was considered.

139. He was compelled to express concern in relation to comments made by representatives of Kiev that had not only called into question the viability of the Budapest Memorandum but could also be interpreted as a bid to reconsider the non-nuclear status of Ukraine. Such a destabilizing step would contradict the obligations of Kiev under the Non-Proliferation Treaty, grossly undermine the integrity of the nuclear-weapon non-proliferation regime and present unacceptable risks to international security. For many years, Kiev had not

been respecting its obligations under the Budapest Memorandum, particularly those on countering the rise of aggressive nationalism and chauvinism in Ukraine.

140. The fact that Ukraine had lost territorial integrity had been the result of internal, centrifugal processes caused by the external, destabilizing actions of the West in an attempt to draw Ukraine away from Russia, in relation to which neither the Russian Federation nor its obligations under the Budapest Memorandum had any relevance. Neither in 1994 nor subsequently had Russia accepted the requirement to recognize the coup d'état and to force parts of Ukraine to remain within it against the will of the local population.

141. He also utterly rejected the totally unfounded, far-fetched and unacceptable speculation that Russia was supposedly threatening to use nuclear weapons, specifically in Ukraine. His delegation did not rule out that its purpose was to stir up anti-Russian hysteria. The Russian position on the matter was well known and abundantly clear: the Russian Federation would hypothetically permit a nuclear response only in response to an attack with weapons of mass destruction or in response to an attack with conventional weapons when the very existence of the State was threatened. Neither of those hypothetical scenarios was relevant to the situation in Ukraine.

142. He recalled that only one country had used a nuclear weapon and that was the United States, which had dropped atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in Japan despite the fact it had not been militarily appropriate and that it had actually been a test of weapons of mass destruction on Japanese cities and their inhabitants.

143. In the current circumstances, Russia was seriously concerned by the trend towards greater international turbulence and its associated heightened nuclear risks. One of the most important tasks in that context was for all five nuclear-weapon States to maintain their commitment to prevent nuclear war, as they had reaffirmed in January 2022 in their high-level joint statement. The Russian Federation maintained that commitment in full.

144. Given the deterioration of the Ukrainian crisis, which had been caused by the regime in Kiev and its Western backers, the message contained in the statement by the five permanent members of the Security Council was no less relevant and had acquired greater resonance. As they had reaffirmed, all military confrontation between nuclear Powers should be prevented since it risked escalating to the nuclear level. That was why Russia had warned of the potential consequences of direct aggression by NATO countries against it in the context of

the Ukrainian crisis, which had actually turned into a bitter, hybrid stand-off with Russia that was verging dangerously on open military confrontation. Such a step could lead to events unfolding into one of the two emergency situations that were described in his country's doctrine. His delegation did not want that to happen but if Western States tried to test the resolve of Russia, it would not retreat. That was absolutely not threatening language but was an observation of what was possible and it was the logic of deterrence.

145. In that context, the decision by the President of the Russian Federation to put the deterrent forces on high alert temporarily had been interpreted unfairly. It had concerned only a change in shifts among the strategic command to be on duty with reinforced personnel. In practice, it meant that there had been greater vigilance against acts of intimidation or force involving nuclear attacks against his country. The grounds for the decision had been the confrontational actions and provocative statements by the representatives of Western nuclear States about potential interference by NATO in military action in Ukraine against Russia.

146. **Mr. Ogasawara** (Japan), responding to the earlier statement by the representative of China in which reference had been made to the disposal of nuclear-contaminated water following the accident at Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant, said that the basic policy on the handling of advanced liquid processing system-treated water at the plant had been announced by the Government of Japan in April 2021 and concerned the discharge of such treated water containing concentrations of radioactive materials far below regulatory standards, not the discharge of contaminated water, as the representative of China had said. Under that policy, the Government of Japan would never approve the discharge of such water into the sea without meeting regulatory standards that were based on international standards. With regard to the handling of the treated water, Japan had been taking measures to abide strictly by relevant international law and giving due consideration to international practices and would continue to do so. IAEA and third-party international experts had been reviewing the efforts by Japan and would continue to do so. The Government of Japan had been explaining that matter to the international community, including China, in a highly transparent manner and on the basis of scientific evidence, and would continue to do so.

147. **Mr. Elhomosany** (Egypt), responding to the statement in which the representative of Luxembourg had called on Egypt to ratify the Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (NPT/CONF.2020/SR.3, para. 64), said that Egypt fully supported that Treaty, had participated seriously and

effectively in the negotiations concerning it and had signed it. The reason that Egypt had yet to ratify it was well known: there was an imbalance in the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime in the Middle East; some countries had yet to join the Treaty on the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons; and there were nuclear facilities operating outside the IAEA comprehensive safeguards regime. Moreover, the action of the 2010 Review Conference had identified the main responsibility of the nuclear-weapon States to ratify the Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. In addition, all Review Conferences of the Non-Proliferation Treaty had stressed the need to ensure the universality of the Treaty, which had yet to be accomplished. Therefore, his delegation urged all countries to comply with the universalization of the Treaty and action 10 of the action plan.

148. **Mr. Biggs** (Australia), speaking also of behalf of the United Kingdom and the United States, said that in September 2021 their three countries had announced the beginning of a trilateral effort to identify the optimal pathway to support the planned acquisition by Australia of nuclear-powered, conventionally-armed submarines as permitted under the Non-Proliferation Treaty. The three countries understood and welcomed the interest of Member States in that trilateral effort and wished to offer clarification on several points.

149. Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States would continue to undertake trilateral cooperation in a manner that was fully consistent with their respective non-proliferation obligations and commitments and that sought to strengthen the integrity of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime. They had already confirmed that the approach would operate under the framework of the comprehensive safeguards agreement and additional protocol of Australia. They would also be able to provide IAEA with full confidence at every step of the life cycles of the submarines that no diversion of nuclear material was taking place. They were committed to continuing to engage systematically and constructively with IAEA to set the highest possible non-proliferation standards for naval nuclear propulsion. At the June 2022 meeting of the IAEA Board of Governors, the IAEA Director General had expressed his satisfaction with the engagement and transparency shown by the three countries thus far and had, in his written statement, set out his plan to submit a report on the trilateral effort for consideration by the Board at its forthcoming meeting in September. The three countries remained committed to engaging openly and transparently and keeping Member States and partners informed. They encouraged other delegations to consider their working paper on the subject and would welcome further discussion and queries.

150. **Mr. Ding** Tongbing (China) said that the discharge of nuclear-contaminated water by Japan into the sea caused potential effects on the marine environment, food safety and human health, which concerned not only the interests of the people of Japan but also those of the peoples of other Pacific coastal countries. It could not be ignored. His delegation wished to make several comments on that issue.

151. First, the Government of Japan, in disregard of safe disposal measures and without comprehensively disclosing relevant information or fully consulting the surrounding countries and international organizations, had hastily announced its decision to discharge water into the ocean, to which many coastal countries in the Pacific region had expressed their concern and opposition.

152. Second, the delegation of Japan had emphasized that what was to be discharged was purified water that had been treated. However, according to reports provided by Japan, the relevant treatment technologies employed by Japan had not achieved the expected results. If the water in question could not satisfy any standards by any international means, then it could only be called nuclear-contaminated water and not so-called “treated water”.

153. Third, Japan had not fully consulted with international agencies. Since IAEA had been subjected to restrictions on authorization, it could only evaluate the solution provided by Japan for discharging nuclear-contaminated water into the ocean and had not been able to fully assess and validate other possible disposal options. Twice in 2022 the technical working group of IAEA had visited Japan for review and evaluation work but had not arrived at any conclusive results and had recommended that Japan supply further explanations and make improvements in many areas. The working group planned to visit Japan again by the end of the year and subsequently provide its final opinion. However, before IAEA had made any conclusions, Japan had only pushed ahead with the construction of ocean discharge facilities and had hastily approved the ocean discharge proposal put forward by the Tokyo Electric Power Company. Consequently, the international community had good reason to be suspicious of such an approach, which attempted to present a *fait accompli*.

154. Fourth, Japan had not adequately consulted with stakeholders in its actions. It had consistently claimed to be disposing of nuclear-contaminated water in an open and transparent manner and to have consulted with all stakeholders, including China. However, providing notifications through joint briefings and bilateral meetings was simply a way of imposing unilateral

decisions on others rather than engaging in meaningful consultation.

155. Lastly, Japan should come to terms with the legitimate and reasonable concerns of its own people and those of other countries, adequately engage in consultations with stakeholders and relevant international agencies, and dispose of nuclear-contaminated water in an open, transparent, scientifically reasonable and safe manner, including comprehensive evaluation of the various disposal solutions instead of adamantly pushing forward with discharge into the ocean.

156. **Mr. Ogasawara** (Japan), said that some of the remarks by the representative of China could be misleading and he therefore wished to provide clarification. In order to ensure the safety of the public and the surrounding environment, advanced liquid processing system-treated water would be discharged into the sea only when the Tokyo Electric Power Company complied with regulatory standards based on recommendations by the International Commission on Radiological Protection. It would also be discharged in line with international practice. IAEA had also acknowledged discharge into the sea as technically feasible and in line with international practice. In addition, IAEA was reviewing the handling of the treated water from an independent perspective. The Government of Japan would continue to explain its efforts and their outcomes to the international community in a highly transparent manner and to take very seriously any concerns expressed by international partners.

157. **Mr. Ding** Tongbing (China) said that in the general debate and in its working paper, China had very clearly expressed its concern and position regarding the nuclear submarine cooperation among Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States. His delegation had also noted the positions on the issue stated by other countries as well as the statements made by the three cooperating countries in the relevant working papers in defence of the legitimacy and lawfulness of such cooperation. It was an obvious fact that enormous contention existed on the question of whether that cooperation violated the Non-Proliferation Treaty and whether it was consistent with the IAEA statute. There was also great contention in the international community regarding the applicability of IAEA comprehensive safeguards agreements to the cooperation among the three countries.

158. In view of those realities, his delegation hoped that the State parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty would use the present Review Conference as an opportunity to fully discuss the implications of nuclear proliferation

posed by the cooperation among the three countries in question and would support IAEA, with reference to conventional practice, in an intergovernmental process to discuss the political, legal and technical issues relating to safeguards as a result of the cooperation among those countries. All interested States had the right to participate in those discussions since a safeguards arrangement established by Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States with the secretariat of the IAEA would become a precedent and have an impact on the rights and interests of all IAEA member States. His delegation hoped that the three countries and the IAEA secretariat would refrain from taking hasty action towards a safeguards agreement prior to reaching a solution through the intergovernmental process.

The meeting rose at 6.05 p.m.