
Preparatory Committee for the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

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Nuclear non-proliferation and non-compliance

Working paper submitted by the Republic of Korea

1. Since its inception, the NPT has served as the foundation of the global nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime. The non-proliferation of nuclear weapons is a fundamental goal of the NPT regime. This objective can be achieved only when pursued in balance with the other two pillars of nuclear disarmament and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. The Republic of Korea reaffirms its conviction that maintaining the delicate balance among the three pillars of the NPT is vital to the integrity and viability of the Treaty. The heightened threat of nuclear weapons proliferation and the inadequacy of the traditional responses to such threats highlight the need to redouble our efforts to consolidate the NPT regime.

2. Universal adherence to the Treaty is a core element of any strategy to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons. The Republic of Korea urges the three States still outside the NPT to join the Treaty as non-nuclear-weapon States without further delay or preconditions. Pending their accession to the Treaty as non-nuclear-weapon States, the Republic of Korea also urges these three States to refrain from acts contrary to the purposes of the Treaty, including any nuclear testing or transfer of sensitive nuclear materials and technologies.

3. The international community should also strive towards universalization and strengthening of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards system. This year we celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of IAEA. The Republic of Korea supports the essential role of IAEA as the competent authority responsible for the verification and assurance of compliance with non-proliferation obligations. Universalization of the Additional Protocol to the IAEA Safeguards Agreement would enhance confidence in the compliance of States parties with their non-proliferation obligations, which is a prerequisite for unimpeded international cooperation on the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. The Republic of Korea calls upon those States that have yet to sign the Additional Protocol to do so without further delay. Korea also supports the Protocol as a condition for the supply of nuclear materials and technology.

4. The recognition of the respective roles of IAEA and the Security Council of the United Nations is another important element in addressing compliance



challenges. Non-compliance findings should be based on the objective and professional judgment of IAEA. Strengthening an effective and reliable mechanism for findings of non-compliance is essential to uphold the integrity of the Treaty and the authority of the IAEA safeguards system. Also, the Security Council should play a vital role in enforcing compliance with safeguards obligations by taking appropriate measures against non-compliance cases referred to it by IAEA.

5. Recognizing the absence of a process within the NPT to respond to non-compliance, the Republic of Korea supports discussions on ways to strengthen the NPT compliance mechanisms and safeguards obligations. Korea hopes to see meaningful progress in our discussions on compliance, in which reinforcing the authority of the safeguards system should be one of the highest priorities.

6. The unprecedented non-compliance challenges facing the NPT regime in recent years have not been resolved. The nuclear weapons programme of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has long been a threat to peace and security in north-east Asia and beyond. The nuclear test carried out by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea on 9 October 2006 drew broad criticism from the international community. It was therefore a source of relief that the six parties agreed on 13 February on the initial steps to tackle the present situation and proceed towards the complete denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. It cannot be over-emphasized that the parties must faithfully implement the agreement without further delay.

7. The success of the six-party process will not only enhance peace and security in north-east Asia, but will demonstrate to other regions the validity of a multilateral approach to reinforcing the global non-proliferation regime. The Republic of Korea emphasizes its commitment to pursuing the resolution of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea nuclear issue in a diplomatic manner through dialogue and negotiation, and to playing our due part in the process.

8. As for the Iranian nuclear case, the Republic of Korea sincerely hopes that it will be resolved in a peaceful and diplomatic manner through the immediate implementation by Iran of Security Council resolutions 1737 (2006) and 1747 (2007) and of the relevant resolutions adopted by the IAEA Board of Governors. Korea wishes to highlight that the right to the peaceful use of nuclear energy under article IV of the NPT is inalienable, but is conditional upon compliance with non-proliferation obligations under articles I, II and III of the same Treaty. In this context, as a practical means of closing the loopholes in the NPT, Korea attaches great importance to the constructive role of export control regimes, notably the Nuclear Suppliers Group, in controlling nuclear technologies and items with proliferation potential.

9. Today, the world also faces mounting threats from non-State actors seeking to acquire weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear weapons. The Republic of Korea fully supports ongoing efforts to strengthen the physical protection of fissile materials. It has become imperative for the international community to work together to address these threats, which national systems are ill-equipped to deal with. Against this backdrop, Security Council resolution 1540 (2004), and its renewal resolution 1673 (2006), have served as the focal point of our efforts to establish and reinforce a meaningful non-proliferation mechanism against non-State actors. The full implementation of these resolutions by all Member States is critical in preventing the proliferation of sensitive nuclear materials, equipment and technology to non-State actors.