

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

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Implementation of the action plan agreed at the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

Summary update report submitted by Australia

Australia submits the present summary update report in accordance with action 20 of the action plan agreed at the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (see [NPT/CONF.2010/50 \(Vol. I\)](#)). In accordance with the request for documentation to be short and provide only new information, the present report should be read in conjunction with the reports submitted by Australia during the 2020 review cycle ([NPT/CONF.2020/PC.I/12](#), [NPT/CONF.2020/PC.II/8](#) and [NPT/CONF.2020/PC.III/9](#)). In the present report, the template attached to the working paper submitted by the members of the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative on proposals to enhance transparency for strengthening the review process for the Non-Proliferation Treaty ([NPT/CONF.2020/PC.II/WP.26](#)) is used. We encourage all States parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty also to use the reporting template.

Action number

Nuclear disarmament

- 1 As outlined in successive national reports, the long-standing commitment of Australia to the Non-Proliferation Treaty and the objective of achieving a world without nuclear weapons remains undiminished. We hold ourselves to the highest standards of compliance with our non-proliferation obligations. Australia advocates a patient and pragmatic approach in a complex security environment. Our advocacy of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation includes a comprehensive ban on nuclear tests (the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, which Australia ratified in July 1998), commitment to negotiations on a treaty to cap the production of fissile materials and efforts to address the technical requirements for verifying nuclear disarmament. In December 2019, the Government of Australia announced the appointment of the inaugural Ambassador of Australia for Arms Control and Counter-Proliferation, as part of its commitment to enhancing the country's leadership and international advocacy on global arms control, non-proliferation and disarmament, as well as sanctions and other measures.



Action number

- Australia participated actively in discussions on nuclear disarmament in the Conference on Disarmament, including as one of the Presidents of the Conference in 2020. Australia continues to support and promote the role of women in disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control, and has been active in promoting gender issues in the Conference, through the Non-Proliferation Treaty and at the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). As Chair of the Disarmament Commission in 2018, Australia secured the early adoption of a substantive agenda for the 2018–2020 cycle. Australia regrets the inability of the Commission to hold a formal session since 2018 and looks forward to a return to substantive meetings in 2022. In 2020, the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative, established by Australia and Japan to implement the action plan, marked its tenth anniversary. The Initiative, a cross-regional and diverse group of 12 countries, continues to make valuable contributions across the three pillars of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, as noted below.
- 2 As detailed in successive reports on the implementation of the action plan, Australia reaffirms its commitment to applying the principles of irreversibility, verifiability and transparency in relation to the implementation of its Non-Proliferation Treaty obligations. Transparency has long been a key focus of the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative, which Australia proudly coordinated in 2020. Australia continues to play a leading role in the work of the International Partnership for Nuclear Disarmament Verification as it continues its third phase, including by co-chairing one of the three task groups. Australian Safeguards and Non-Proliferation Office experts participated in the evaluation of a joint exercise by France and Germany on verified dismantlement of a nuclear explosive device in September 2019. At the invitation of the Secretary-General, Australia will participate in the second United Nations Group of Governmental Experts on Nuclear Disarmament Verification, to commence in February 2022.
- 6 Australia supported the establishment of a subsidiary body on nuclear disarmament in the Conference on Disarmament in 2018 and contributed actively to the related discussions. Australia used its presidency of the Conference in 2020 to try to build trust and strengthen dialogue.
- 7 Australia has consistently called for the adoption by the Conference on Disarmament of a programme of work that would provide for the implementation of this action. Australia continues to support efforts within the Conference to resume substantive work.
- 9 and 11 Refer to the report submitted by Australia on the implementation of the action plan in 2019 ([NPT/CONF.2020/PC.III/9](#)).
- 12 and 13 In a national statement delivered to the Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty on 23 September 2021, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Australia reiterated its support for the Treaty's early entry into force and its commitment to strengthening the normative force against testing.
- In the years in which the Conference is not held, Australia co-chairs the Ministerial Meeting in Support of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, which was held most recently in New York on 27 September 2018. While the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic prevented the meeting from proceeding in 2020, each of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Group of Friends – together with the Secretary-General, António Guterres, and the then-Executive Secretary of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization, Lassina Zerbo – issued a video message highlighting the Treaty's essential role in the nuclear non-proliferation architecture.

Action number

The Ministers for Foreign Affairs of Australia and Japan co-chaired a ministerial meeting of the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative in Nagoya, Japan, on 23 November 2019. In a joint statement issued at that meeting, the ministers underscored their commitment, inter alia, to achieving progress on the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty in advance of the 2020 Review Conference. Australian support for the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty also extends to contributing to capacity-building exercises for countries considering the signature or ratification of the Treaty, especially countries in the same region as Australia. In September 2019, Australia worked with the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization to promote the Treaty at a meeting of the Inter-Parliamentary Union in Wellington. In 2018 and 2019, Australia provided capacity-building assistance, including follow-up advocacy on the Treaty, to Timor-Leste.

Australia, as a member and Chair of the Vienna Group of Ten (Australia, Austria, Canada, Denmark, Finland, Hungary, Ireland, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway and Sweden), submits for each session of the Preparatory Committee for the Review Conference, and for each Review Conference, a working paper on addressing “Vienna issues”, including issues related to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty.

See also the report submitted by Australia on the implementation of the action plan in 2019 ([NPT/CONF.2020/PC.III/9](#)).

- 14 Australia hosts the third-largest number of facilities in the International Monitoring System established pursuant to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. The facilities, which comprise 20 monitoring stations and a radionuclide analysis laboratory, have been fully operational since 2018. Australia also actively supports the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization in developing other aspects of the verification regime, for example by leading discussions on the development of a draft operational manual for on-site inspections. Australia was pleased to assist with the operation of two additional particulate monitoring stations in Nadi, Fiji, and Kiritimati, Kiribati. Australian experts have also participated in international workshops in support of verification of compliance with the Treaty and in training activities of the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization related to International Monitoring System station operation.
- In May 2021, Australia’s candidate for Executive Secretary of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization Preparatory Commission, Robert Floyd, was elected to the role, the first Executive Secretary elected from the Indo-Pacific. Dr Floyd was previously the Director General of the Australian Safeguards and Non-Proliferation Office.
- 15 Refer to the report submitted by Australia on the implementation of the action plan in 2019 ([NPT/CONF.2020/PC.III/9](#)).
- 19 In our region, Australia has been active in advancing discussion on risk reduction, co-chairing the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Regional Forum Risk Reduction Workshop alongside the Philippines in 2020. We continue to contribute constructively to discussions on risk reduction under the Creating an Environment for Nuclear Disarmament initiative. Australia has also supported the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research’s activities under the risk reduction workstream. See also the response to action 2.

Action number

- 20 Australia submits regular reports on the implementation of the action plan.
- 22 As outlined in the report submitted by Australia on the implementation of the action plan in 2019 ([NPT/CONF.2020/PC.III/9](#)), Australia has a long-standing commitment to actively promoting disarmament and non-proliferation education, including through the work of the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative. The appointment of the inaugural Ambassador of Australia for Arms Control and Counter-Proliferation further enhances the country's capacity to engage in and encourage informed community debate on disarmament and non-proliferation issues. Australia supports the General Assembly resolution on disarmament and non-proliferation education and co-sponsors the resolution on youth, disarmament and non-proliferation, which, inter alia, promotes disarmament and non-proliferation education. Australia hosted the International Youth Nuclear Congress 2020 Conference in Sydney, in March 2020. Under the theme "Diversity in Nuclear," the conference promoted and enabled the diversity of people engaged in the many peaceful uses of nuclear science and technology.

Nuclear non-proliferation

- 23 to 25 Refer to the report submitted by Australia on the implementation of the action plan in 2019 ([NPT/CONF.2020/PC.III/9](#)).
- 26 Australia holds itself to the highest standards of compliance with its non-proliferation commitments and obligations, and cooperates fully with IAEA. Australia has worked closely with IAEA to solve complex technical challenges in nuclear verification, including by commissioning an active well coincidence counter in 2019 and conducting the first formal verification in 2020, ensuring that nuclear material in radiopharmaceutical waste from the Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organisation can be inspected and measured by IAEA.
- 27 Refer to the report submitted by Australia on the implementation of the action plan in 2019 ([NPT/CONF.2020/PC.III/9](#)).
- 28 Australia actively encourages all States that have not yet done so to bring into force an additional protocol to their safeguards agreements with IAEA. Australia consistently advocates that a comprehensive safeguards agreement, together with an additional protocol, represents the current verification standard under article III (1) of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. This is reflected in the uranium policy of Australia, which limits export of Australian uranium to States that have a safeguards agreement and an additional protocol in force.
- 29 Australia continues to participate actively in support of the goal of the Asia-Pacific Safeguards Network to promote safeguards best practice in the region. The Australian Safeguards and Non-Proliferation Office continued its leadership role at the tenth annual plenary meeting of the Network, held in Bali, Indonesia, in August 2019, and at the virtual annual meeting hosted by Indonesia in December 2020. In February 2019, Australia assisted the United States and IAEA in delivering introductory safeguards implementation training to Timor-Leste.
- 30 Refer to the report submitted by Australia on the implementation of the action plan in 2018 ([NPT/CONF.2020/PC.II/8](#)).

Action number

- 32 As a member of the IAEA Board of Governors, Australia supports the efforts of the Director General and Board to continually strengthen the effectiveness and efficiency of IAEA safeguards. The Director General of the Australian Safeguards and Non-Proliferation Office chaired the Standing Advisory Group on Safeguards Implementation of the Director General of the IAEA until June 2021. An Australian expert remains a member of the Standing Advisory Group.
- 33 Further to the details provided in the report submitted by Australia on the implementation of the action plan in 2019 ([NPT/CONF.2020/PC.III/9](#)), Australia maintains laboratories at the Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organisation and the University of Western Australia, laboratories that assist IAEA by conducting analysis of samples from safeguards inspections as part of the IAEA Network of Analytical Laboratories. Australia also assists IAEA with research and development related to new safeguards tools and techniques and provides training to IAEA inspectors and analysts.
- 34 Since 1980, the Australian Safeguards Support Programme has supported the IAEA in provision of safeguards training, technical services, and research and development on safeguards concepts and technologies. With the Programme's support, the IAEA Robotics Challenge, hosted by the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation in November 2017, led to further collaboration between the Organisation and IAEA to develop further the concept of robotics for safeguards inspection. Australia is also providing a consultant to IAEA to assist with developing methods for trade analysis, and research is under way on the application of distributed ledger technology to nuclear material accountancy.
- 35 to 39 Refer to the report submitted by Australia on the implementation of the action plan in 2019 ([NPT/CONF.2020/PC.III/9](#)).
- 40 Australia maintains the highest possible standards of security and physical protection of nuclear materials and facilities. Australia has contributed over 2.8 million Australian dollars to the IAEA Nuclear Security Fund since the Fund's inception, including support for the Agency's activities in the Indo-Pacific region.
- 41 Refer to the report submitted by Australia on the implementation of the action plan in 2019 ([NPT/CONF.2020/PC.III/9](#)).
- 42 Australia ratified the 2005 Amendment to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material on 17 July 2008. As a member of the IAEA Board of Governors, we consistently draw attention in our statements to the importance of the 2005 Amendment and call on those who have not yet done so to become party to the amended Convention. Australia has been actively involved in preparations for the review conference to be held in March 2022 in accordance with article 16 (1) of the amended Convention, including by co-chairing Preparatory Conference meetings held in 2020 and 2021.
- 43 Refer to the report submitted by Australia on the implementation of the action plan in 2019 ([NPT/CONF.2020/PC.III/9](#)).
- 44 Australia continues to contribute to the IAEA Incident and Trafficking Database through the detailed analysis, reporting and sharing of lessons learned when dealing with material out of regulatory control.

Action number

- 45 Refer to the report submitted by Australia on the implementation of the action plan in 2019 ([NPT/CONF.2020/PC.III/9](#)).
- 46 As a member of the IAEA Board of Governors, Australia affirms its support for strengthening regulatory controls on nuclear material. Australia further broadens its support for IAEA programmes through its participation in the IAEA Member State Support Programmes. Australia also assists with the delivery of training courses on the establishment and maintenance of State systems of accounting for and control of nuclear material. In 2021, Australia contributed to training in the context of the Asia-Pacific Safeguards Network and the IAEA Comprehensive Capacity-Building Initiative for State Systems of Accounting for and Control of Nuclear Material and State or Regional Authorities.

Peaceful uses of nuclear energy

- 47 to 50 Australia was pleased to have chaired Main Committee III, on the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, at the 2015 Review Conference. Australia respects each country's choices and decisions in the field of peaceful uses of nuclear energy, and engages in extensive cooperation with other States parties and international organizations in the further development of nuclear energy for peaceful uses. Australia shares its experience with neighbouring countries in the safe application of nuclear science and technology, including via the Regional Cooperative Agreement for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology. As a member of the IAEA Board of Governors, Australia is involved in deliberations relating to all aspects of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy (as noted in relation to actions 32, 33, 46 and 58). Australia works with the European Organization for Nuclear Research under a joint statement of intent and cooperates with approximately 50 sister organizations under a series of bilateral memorandums of understanding. The Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative, of which Australia is an active member, submitted at the third session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2020 Review Conference, held in 2019, a working paper entitled "Promotion of the peaceful use of nuclear technology: a tool to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals" ([NPT/CONF.2020/PC.III/WP.22](#)).
- 51 See the responses to actions 35, 36 and 38.
- 52 to 54 Refer to the report submitted by Australia on the implementation of the action plan in 2019 ([NPT/CONF.2020/PC.III/9](#)).
- 55 Refer to the report submitted by Australia on the implementation of the action plan in 2019 ([NPT/CONF.2020/PC.III/9](#)).
- 56 Australia continues to provide training bilaterally and in cooperation with IAEA in relation to peaceful uses of nuclear energy. In addition to multilateral activities, such as those under the Regional Cooperative Agreement for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology and activities under the extensive bilateral cooperative agreements and memorandums of understanding of the Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organisation with sister organizations, the Organisation and the Australian Safeguards and Non-Proliferation Office are actively involved in the delivery of university programmes on nuclear science and applications, including nuclear safety, security and safeguards.
- 57 See the responses to actions 38 and 40.

Action number

- 58 Refer to the report submitted by Australia on the implementation of the action plan in 2019 ([NPT/CONF.2020/PC.III/9](#)).
- 59 As previously reported, Australia is a party to all the conventions listed in this action.
- 60 The Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Agency continues to participate in the development of the IAEA Safety Standards, including through senior representation on the Agency’s Commission on Safety Standards and representation on all the Safety Standards Committees. Australia also participated in the third International Conference on Nuclear Security, held in 2020. See also the response to action 40.
- 61 to 63 As outlined in the report submitted by Australia on the implementation of the action plan in 2019 ([NPT/CONF.2020/PC.III/9](#)), Australia has minimized its possession and use of highly enriched uranium through the exclusive use of low enriched uranium for its nuclear research reactor fuel and for targets used in the manufacture of medical radioisotopes. Through the Vienna Group of Ten, Australia has submitted working papers on addressing “Vienna issues” at successive sessions of the Preparatory Committee and at Review Conferences, covering, inter alia, the issue of highly enriched uranium minimization under the heading of nuclear security. Australia has reported its highly enriched uranium holdings to IAEA (see IAEA document INFCIRC/912/Add.4).
- Australia works to meet the highest standards of safety, security and environmental protection in the transport of radioactive materials through its stringent regulation of nuclear activities, including uranium mining, regulation that takes into consideration all IAEA requirements and recommendations. Australia supports the principles enshrined in the nuclear liability conventions.
- 64 Australia abides by this decision.
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