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

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Temporary Chair: Mr. Markram (South Africa)

Chair: Mr. van der Kwast (Netherlands)

Contents

Opening of the session

Election of the Chair

Statement by the Chair

Adoption of the agenda

Organization of work

General debate on issues related to all aspects of the work of the
Preparatory Committee

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Opening of the session

1. **The Temporary Chair** declared open the first session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, which was being convened pursuant to General Assembly resolution 70/68 of 11 December 2015. He said that the beginning of a new review cycle was always important as it laid the foundation for what States parties aimed to achieve at the next Review Conference. Despite intensive consultations on a substantive final document, agreement could not be reached at the 2015 Review Conference. During the current cycle, the burden on States parties to start shaping the basic tenets for a successful 2020 Review Conference was therefore all the greater. While that might entail the reaffirmation of certain principles, action must also be taken on what had already been agreed in order to fulfil the obligations under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and seek further ways and means to advance nuclear disarmament, strengthen the nuclear non-proliferation regime and promote its universality.

Election of the Chair

2. **The Temporary Chair** said that, as had been the practice in the past, the first session of the Preparatory Committee would be chaired by a representative from the Group of Western European and other States, which had nominated Mr. van der Kwast of the Netherlands.

3. *Mr. van der Kwast (Netherlands) was elected Chair by acclamation.*

4. *Mr. van der Kwast (Netherlands) took the Chair.*

Statement by the Chair

5. **The Chair** said that the Non-Proliferation Treaty was of fundamental importance to regional and international security, which was the reason why States parties must always work to maintain and strengthen it. However, the 2015 Review Conference had failed to agree on a final document and differences of opinion had not decreased since then. Indeed, mounting geopolitical tensions had only further added to urgency of the task at hand.

6. The Treaty was more than just its eleven provisions. The history, preamble and implementation of the Treaty over the years had placed it at the heart of the non-proliferation regime. Moreover, the Treaty had created a political rules-based order that was the shared

responsibility of all States parties to maintain and strengthen. In that spirit, in his capacity as Chair, he would continue to promote efforts to be as open and inclusive as possible during the current session.

7. He urged States parties not to focus exclusively on ongoing areas of disagreement but instead to keep in mind what they all had in common and the ultimate goals they shared. As a starting point, the outcomes of the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and the 2000 and 2010 Review Conferences provided a good frame of reference.

Adoption of the agenda (NPT/CONF.2020/PC.I/7)

8. *The agenda was adopted.*

Organization of work

9. **The Chair** said that, in accordance with previous practice, the sessional Chairs served as Vice-Chairs of the Committee during sessions when they were not serving as Chair. In that regard, the Group of Eastern European States had nominated Mr. Bugajski of Poland to serve as the Chair of the second session of the Preparatory Committee. He took it that the Committee wished to elect Mr. Bugajski as the Chair of the second session.

10. *It was so decided.*

11. **The Chair** said that, based on information provided by the Secretariat, the proposed dates for the second session of the Preparatory Committee, to be held in Geneva, were 23 April to 4 May 2018. Those dates took into account the provisional calendar of meetings of the United Nations disarmament bodies. If he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee wished to hold its second session on those dates.

12. *It was so decided.*

13. **The Chair** suggested that the Committee should adopt the following decision: "The Committee decides to make every effort to adopt its decisions by consensus. In the event that consensus could not be reached, the Committee would then take decisions in accordance with the rules of procedure of the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty, which would be applied mutatis mutandis."

14. *It was so decided.*

15. **The Chair** suggested, with regard to participation at sessions of the Preparatory Committee of entities other than States parties, that the Committee might

wish to adopt the following decision, based on the practice of the previous Preparatory Committees, the relevant rules of procedure of the 2015 Review Conference and the agreement at the third session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2015 Review Conference:

“1. Representatives of States not parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) should be allowed, upon request, to attend as observers the meetings of the Committee other than those designated closed meetings, to be seated in the Committee behind their countries’ nameplates and to receive documents of the Committee. They should also be entitled to submit documents to the participants in the Committee.

“2. Representatives of specialized agencies and international and regional intergovernmental organizations should be allowed, upon request, to attend as observers the meetings of the Committee other than those designated closed meetings, to be seated in the Committee behind their organizations’ nameplates and to receive documents of the Committee. They should also be entitled to submit, in writing, their views and comments on questions within their competence, which may be circulated as documents of the Committee. Furthermore, the Committee decides, based on the agreement at the third session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2010 NPT Review Conference, which would be applied *mutatis mutandis*, that specialized agencies and international and regional intergovernmental organizations should be invited to make oral presentations to the Committee upon the decision of the Committee on a case-by-case basis.

“3. Representatives of non-governmental organizations should be allowed, upon request, to attend the meetings of the Committee other than those designated closed, to be seated in the designated area, to receive documents of the Committee and, at their own expense, to make written material available to the participants in the Committee. The Committee shall also allocate a meeting to non-governmental organizations to address each session of the Committee.”

16. *It was so decided.*

17. **The Chair** said that the following specialized agencies and intergovernmental organizations and entities had requested to attend the session of the Preparatory Committee: the African Commission on

Nuclear Energy, the African Union, 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 European Union, the International Committee of the Red Cross, the League of Arab States, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization and the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research; in addition, 48 non-governmental organizations listed in document [NPT/CONF.2020/PC.I/INF.3](#) had submitted requests. He took it that the Committee wished to take note of those requests.

18. *It was so decided.*

19. **The Chair** said that he took it that the Committee wished to continue its past practice of using Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish as its working languages.

20. *It was so decided.*

21. **The Chair** noted that during the previous sessions of the Preparatory Committee summary records had been provided, at each session, for the Committee’s opening meeting, the general debate and the closing meeting. In addition, records had been kept of the decisions taken at other meetings. He took it that the Committee wished to proceed accordingly at the current session.

22. *It was so decided.*

23. **The Chair** said that he had held consultations with many delegations regarding the indicative timetable contained in document [NPT/CONF.2020/PC.I/INF.4](#). A summary of the timetable was contained in document [NPT/CONF.2020/PC.I/INF.5](#). He took it that the Committee wished to take note of the timetable and to structure its work accordingly.

24. *It was so decided.*

25. **The Chair** said that the attention of delegates had been drawn to the guideline contained in document [NPT/CONF.2015/PC.I/Rev.1](#) concerning the submission of documentation by 17 March 2017 to facilitate translation and timely issuance. Some delegations had submitted documentation by that deadline and the documents were available in the official languages on the Committee’s website. Many documents had been submitted within days of the start of the session. The Secretariat would make them available in their original languages immediately and translations would be provided as they became available.

General debate on issues related to all aspects of the work of the Preparatory Committee

26. **Mr. Kishida** (Japan) said that he first of all wished to pay tribute to the survivors of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki — the *hibakusha*. They, like members of civil societies all over the world, had long been working to bring about a world free of nuclear weapons. Awareness of the humanitarian consequences of the use of nuclear weapons underpinned all their efforts.

27. To achieve the goal of a world without nuclear weapons, it was important to be realistic: the security environment would also need to be improved in order to reduce incentives to possess nuclear weapons. Unfortunately, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea had conducted two nuclear tests and had launched more than 30 ballistic missiles since the previous year. Its nuclear and missile development had reached a new level and posed a real threat to the region and beyond, representing a challenge to the international nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime that was centred on the Treaty. Such acts of provocation deserved strong condemnation and Japan would lead the diplomatic efforts to denuclearize the Korean Peninsula.

28. To that end, Japan strongly urged the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to immediately and fully implement the relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions as well as the Joint Statement of the Fourth Round of the Six-Party Talks; to abandon all nuclear weapons and existing nuclear and ballistic missile programmes in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner; to once again accede, at an early date, to the Treaty; and also to accept safeguards of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

29. The success of the 2020 Review Conference was more important than ever, given the deepening gap between nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear-weapon States. Confidence between both sides could be further increased by enhancing transparency, which included reliable detection of nuclear testing by enhancing the international monitoring system under the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, the reporting of nuclear forces by nuclear-weapon States and the reporting of all fissile materials that could be used for nuclear weapons.

30. Once confidence and trust had been rebuilt, it would be possible to move towards the early entry into force of the Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and the commencement of negotiations on a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. Those instruments,

which would limit both qualitative and quantitative improvements to nuclear forces, could be followed by a steady decrease in the number of nuclear weapons, efforts to build an internationally reliable verification system and the introduction of a legal framework aimed at achieving a world free of nuclear weapons. That approach provided realistic and practical shortcuts towards the ultimate goal at hand, instead of pushing for a legally binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons in a manner that deepened the gap between nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear-weapon States.

31. Japan would continue to call for the universalization of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. Among other assistance, including financial contributions, it would also promote regional and international efforts to strengthen non-proliferation and export controls through capacity-building in Asia and other regions.

32. **Mr. Marschik** (Austria) said that the Treaty remained the best system for nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament currently in existence. However, following the disappointing failure of the 2015 Review Conference, its provisions would need to be protected and strengthened. To that end, more efforts should be made to achieve universality of the Treaty, to implement its three pillars — nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and the peaceful use of nuclear energy — as a package deal, and to fulfil previously agreed commitments.

33. Some positive developments had occurred since the 2015 Review Conference, in particular the conclusion of the joint comprehensive plan of action with Iran which represented a significant success for non-proliferation and had clearly strengthened the Treaty. The launch of negotiations on a treaty for the prohibition of nuclear weapons was another reason for hope. Credit was due in that respect to the Humanitarian Initiative, a group of 159 States concerned about the impact of nuclear weapons. The Austrian Foreign Minister had in fact delivered a statement at the 2015 Review Conference on behalf of the group, which wished to make everyone safer, non-nuclear-weapon States and nuclear-weapon States alike. The adoption of a new instrument prohibiting nuclear weapons would only strengthen the existing Treaty.

34. However, there had been setbacks since the previous Review Conference. The acceleration by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea of its nuclear and ballistic missile programmes, in particular, was a threat to both regional and global peace and stability. Austria therefore called on that country to cease its

provocative and dangerous policies and rhetoric, to engage in negotiations about denuclearization and to once again become a State party to the Treaty.

35. Tensions had also risen in recent years in the Middle East, South Asia and Europe. In all those regions, the presence of nuclear weapons significantly raised the stakes of an armed confrontation. It would therefore be necessary, at the current session of the Preparatory Committee, to discuss global security issues and how to address them without relying on the precarious concept of nuclear deterrence.

36. The fact that the Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty had not yet entered into force was a long-standing concern. The need for a moratorium on nuclear test explosions or any other nuclear explosions, pending the entry into force of the Treaty, must therefore also be stressed at the current session.

37. In addition, the session should be used as a forum to ask questions and receive answers on other developments, such as current modernization programmes for nuclear arsenals and future engagement between the possessors of the two largest nuclear arsenals, particularly in view of the expiry of the Treaty between the United States of America and the Russian Federation on Measures for the Further Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms (New START Treaty).

38. Ultimately, confidence and trust were required to ensure the success of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. To foster that environment all possible forums should be used, including for example the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

39. **Mr. Haspels** (Netherlands) said that the current session of the Preparatory Committee was being held at a challenging time of international tensions that affected the functioning of the Treaty. The previous Review Conference had failed to reach a consensus on a final document, depriving the Committee of much-needed direction. In addition, the lack of progress on disarmament must still be overcome, including significant differences of opinion regarding what form such progress should take. Nevertheless, other challenges had been faced and overcome throughout the decades during which the Treaty had already been in existence precisely because the international community still shared common goals and principles.

40. Nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and the peaceful use of nuclear energy were of benefit to all. Moreover, as an inclusive process, the review cycle provided a confidence-building platform for discussion based on binding rules for 191 States. The Treaty had,

for example, provided the framework for a diplomatic resolution of the Iranian nuclear issue. In that context, the Preparatory Committee should send a strong signal of support for the joint comprehensive plan of action and reflect the need for those involved to continue working towards its implementation. Conversely, the rejection of the Treaty by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea had led to a major nuclear crisis on the Korean Peninsula. He strongly condemned that country's actions and urged the Committee to convey a clear and unified message that such behaviour was unacceptable.

41. As the Treaty was the only instrument that obliged its nuclear-armed members to disarm, the Preparatory Committee was also the correct venue to discuss how to achieve a world without nuclear weapons, including by prohibiting them. An exchange of views on such issues, with a readiness to listen to others, was always a first step towards reaching a compromise. The Preparatory Committee must be that first step with a view to the 2020 Review Conference.

42. Realistically, however, States would not disarm completely without an ironclad verification mechanism that also prevented the transfer of proliferation-sensitive weapons-related information. As such a mechanism, or the necessary technology, did not currently exist, it was important in the meantime to move forward with other useful initiatives, including the International Partnership for Nuclear Disarmament Verification and the work of the group of governmental experts to consider the role of verification in advancing nuclear disarmament.

43. Further progress could be made by the Preparatory Committee in a number of areas, including discussions on how to improve its own working methods. Discussions could also be held on the efforts to ban the production of fissile materials for military purposes, which would cap nuclear arsenals and help to curb the arms race. The new process initiated through the high-level fissile material cut-off treaty expert preparatory group presented an opportunity to advance the negotiations on such a treaty in the context of the Conference on Disarmament. In addition, the benefits of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, in the context of both power and non-power applications, should be discussed to see how cooperation in those areas could be further stimulated.

44. Progress could also be made in terms of transparency and reporting by building on the previous review cycle. Promoting information-sharing by nuclear-weapon States, both among themselves and with non-nuclear-weapon States, would increase

predictability and therefore stability. Such enhanced transparency would help to build confidence and trust, and could be a stepping stone towards further progress on disarmament.

45. **Mr. Amano** (Director General, International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)) said that the Agency was marking its sixtieth anniversary, which had provided an opportunity to look back on its many achievements over the years in contributing to international peace and security, and in improving the health and well-being of humankind through the peaceful use of nuclear technology. Much thought had also been given to how IAEA could continue to serve the international community in the coming decades by implementing its atoms for peace and development mandate. At the time of its establishment in 1957, the Agency had a membership of 26 countries. That number had now increased to 168, with four new countries having joined since the 2015 Review Conference. That reflected a growing appreciation of the immense value of nuclear science and technology, and a realization that the Agency was an organization that delivered.

46. The past 60 years had demonstrated that nuclear science and technology played a significant role in supporting development. The Agency, for example, was currently helping countries to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and developing countries were making increasing use of nuclear technology in health care, energy, food and agriculture, industry and many other areas.

47. The Agency also assisted countries in numerous applications of radiation science and technology. Last month the Agency had hosted the first International Conference on Applications of Radiation Science and Technology, held in Vienna. The remarkable applications presented had included sterilizing human tissue for use in surgery, tackling industrial pollution and producing high-quality biodegradable food packaging.

48. In recent years the Agency had demonstrated its ability to respond quickly to emergencies such as the Ebola and Zika viruses. IAEA had supplied affected countries with simple nuclear-derived kits so that they could diagnose those diseases quickly and accurately in the field. The sterile insect technique was helping farmers to suppress, and even eradicate, harmful insect pests such as the tsetse fly and the Mediterranean fruit fly. After devastating earthquakes in Ecuador and Nepal, the Agency had sent experts in non-destructive testing techniques to assess the safety of hospitals and schools in danger of collapse.

49. Improving access to effective cancer treatment in developing countries remained another important focus of IAEA work. The Agency worked with partners such as the World Health Organization to help improve the availability of radiotherapy and nuclear medicine. It provided education and training for health professionals and also supplied equipment for diagnosis and treatment. IAEA was an active partner in the United Nations Joint Global Programme on Cervical Cancer Prevention and Control, which aimed to reduce cervical cancer mortality in participating countries by 25 per cent by 2025. Its role in that important programme was to improve diagnostic capacity and access to radiotherapy, which was often an effective treatment for the disease.

50. The IAEA Technical Cooperation Programme was the primary mechanism for the delivery of its services. In recent years more of the Agency's regular budget had been allocated to implement technical cooperation activities, which had led to a higher implementation rate for the programme. The first International Conference on the IAEA Technical Cooperation Programme would start in Vienna at the end of the month. The aim was to ensure greater understanding of its work on sustainable development assistance.

51. The IAEA Peaceful Uses Initiative, launched in 2010, provided additional funds for the Agency's work in that area and had helped to raise over 100 million euros for more than 200 projects that benefited around 150 countries. He was very grateful to all countries for their contributions in that regard and also commended donor countries for their generous contributions towards the modernization of eight IAEA nuclear application laboratories in Seibersdorf. The laboratories trained scientists, supported research in human health, food and other areas, and provided analytical services to national laboratories.

52. Turning to nuclear power, he said that there were currently 449 nuclear power reactors in operation in 30 countries and another 60 reactors were under construction. Some two thirds of the new reactors being built were in Asia. The Agency's annual projects indicated continued growth in nuclear power in the coming decades. It remained to be seen whether that growth would be modest or significant. Nuclear power was also one of the lowest carbon-emitting technologies for the generation of electricity. As such, it could help to improve energy security, reduce the impact of volatile fossil fuel prices and mitigate the effects of climate change.

53. While nuclear safety and security were national responsibilities, the Agency served as the forum for international cooperation in those areas. It continued to assist Japan, for example, in dealing with the consequences of the Fukushima Daiichi accident of 2011 and had published a report whose intention was to enable all countries to make their nuclear facilities safer. Indeed, nuclear safety had greatly improved all over the world in the six years since the accident.

54. Demand for IAEA support in helping countries to prevent nuclear and other radioactive materials from falling into the hands of terrorists continued to grow. In that context a key nuclear security instrument, the Amendment to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material, had finally come into force in May 2016, 11 years after its adoption. The Amendment made it legally binding for States parties to the Convention to protect nuclear facilities, as well as nuclear material in domestic use, storage and transport. Its entry into force would help to reduce the risk of a terrorist attack involving nuclear material, which could have catastrophic consequences.

55. The Agency supported the establishment and implementation of nuclear-weapon-free zones, which already covered vast regions of the world, and it also made an important contribution to the establishment of a world free of nuclear weapons, primarily through its safeguards activities that aimed to provide credible assurances about the absence of undeclared nuclear material and activities in countries. That was a valuable international confidence-building activity. If requested, the Agency could also help to build confidence among States by verifying the implementation of nuclear disarmament agreements.

56. As the Final Document of the 2010 Review Conference had noted, safeguards were a fundamental component of the nuclear non-proliferation regime and played an indispensable role in the implementation of the Treaty. The Agency sent inspectors to verify that countries were complying with their safeguards agreements and advanced technology enabled it to detect diversions for use in nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. There were 182 States with safeguards agreements currently in force and 129 of those States also had additional protocols in force. He urged all States that had not yet done so to conclude and implement additional protocols as soon as possible.

57. The Agency had helped to bring about the joint comprehensive plan of action agreed with the Islamic Republic of Iran and, since its entry into force in January 2016, had been verifying and monitoring the

implementation of that country's nuclear-related commitments under the agreement. The plan of action represented a significant gain for nuclear verification because the Islamic Republic of Iran had become subject to the world's most robust nuclear verification regime. Accordingly, IAEA inspectors now had expanded access to sites and more information about the Iranian nuclear programme. The Islamic Republic of Iran was also provisionally implementing the additional protocol to its safeguards agreement with the Agency, which would continue to implement safeguards in that country with a view to being able to draw the broader conclusion that all nuclear material continued to be used for peaceful activities.

58. The nuclear programme of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, which had carried out two more nuclear tests the previous year and continued to launch missiles and threaten other countries, remained a serious matter of concern. The Agency's inspectors had left the country in 2009, following the declaration by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in 2003 of its withdrawal from the Treaty. Nevertheless, IAEA inspectors had continued to collect and evaluate information, including by monitoring satellite imagery and open-source and trade-related information. Without access to relevant sites and locations, however, the Agency could not confirm the operational status of nuclear facilities, but all indications suggested that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea was making progress with its nuclear programme. He therefore called upon that country to comply fully with its obligations under relevant Security Council resolutions, to cooperate with the Agency in implementing its safeguards agreement and to resolve all outstanding issues. IAEA inspectors remained ready to return to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea at short notice, if political developments made that possible.

59. Since the last Review Conference, there had been no major developments concerning the implementation by the Syrian Arab Republic of its safeguards agreement. It remained very likely that the building destroyed at the Dayr al-Zawr site was a nuclear reactor that should have been declared to the Agency by the Syrian Arab Republic under its safeguards agreement. He continued to urge the Syrian Arab Republic to cooperate fully with the Agency in connection with all unresolved issues.

60. **Mr. Zerbo** (Executive Secretary, Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization) said that the Non-Proliferation Treaty embodied the greatest struggle of the nuclear age: how to come to terms with humanity's mastery of

the technical means to instantaneously bring about its own destruction by putting in place the diplomatic, legal and normative tools to prevent such a terrible calamity. The Non-Proliferation Treaty had emerged from a growing consensus that international peace and security required immediate steps to halt a cascade of proliferation. Such a consensus had been possible because of the grand bargain on the Treaty's three pillars, an arrangement that had succeeded in preventing a massive expansion in the number of nuclear-weapons-capable States over the past half century.

61. While disagreements among States persisted, so did shared beliefs and principles regarding the devastating nature of nuclear weapons, the consequences of testing them and the need to prevent their use and, ultimately, eradicate them completely. The indefinite extension of the Non-Proliferation Treaty in 1995 had shown the real value that the States parties saw in the Treaty and its impact on global security. Nevertheless, it was clear that additional measures were needed in order for the nuclear-weapon States to make progress on nuclear disarmament, including the conclusion of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty.

62. More than 20 years since the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty had been opened for signature there was clear and conclusive evidence that the Treaty was achieving its stated intent. The international community now had the most far-reaching and sophisticated global monitoring system ever built. That detection capability had been demonstrated for each of the five nuclear tests carried out by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, when timely and accurate data on the nature of those events had been provided. Even as an interim organization, the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization stood ready to detect nuclear tests anywhere, by anyone and at any time.

63. Despite the existence of a legal framework, a well-functioning verification system and near universal support from the international community for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, the fact that the Treaty had not yet been brought into force meant that there was still no legally enforceable prohibition on nuclear testing. A failure to bring the Treaty into force would ultimately deal a devastating blow to the Non-Proliferation Treaty and the international nuclear non-proliferation regime built around it.

64. **Mr. Chacon Escamillo** (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela), speaking on behalf of the Group of States parties belonging to the Movement of Non-Aligned

Countries, said that the Preparatory Committee needed to work towards strengthening all three pillars of the Non-Proliferation Treaty in a balanced and non-discriminatory manner. A nuclear-weapon-free world was the highest priority for the Group, which remained extremely concerned by the threat to humanity posed by the existence of nuclear weapons. The total elimination of such weapons was the only guarantee against their use or threat of use.

65. The Group reiterated its deep concern over the slow pace of progress towards nuclear disarmament, including by the nuclear-weapon States in accomplishing the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals in accordance with their relevant multilateral legal obligations. Pending the total elimination of nuclear weapons, it was the legitimate right of all non-nuclear-weapon States parties to receive universal and legally binding security assurances against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons under all circumstances. The Group therefore reaffirmed the urgent need for the conclusion of a universal and legally binding instrument on unconditional, non-discriminatory and irrevocable negative security assurances to all non-nuclear-weapon States parties to the Treaty.

66. The Group stressed that reductions in deployments and in operational status could not substitute for irreversible cuts in, and the total elimination of, nuclear weapons. It also reaffirmed the importance of the application by nuclear-weapon States of the principles of transparency, irreversibility and verifiability in all measures related to the fulfilment of their nuclear disarmament obligations. Full compliance by nuclear-weapon States with their undertakings was imperative and would enhance confidence in the non-proliferation and disarmament regime. Each article of the Treaty was binding on all States parties at all times and in all circumstances.

67. Improvements in existing nuclear weapons and the development of new types of nuclear weapons, as provided for in the military doctrines of some nuclear-weapon States, not only violated their legal obligations regarding nuclear disarmament and their commitments to diminish the role of nuclear weapons in their military and security policies but also contravened the negative security assurances that they had provided. Any use or threat of use of nuclear weapons would be a crime against humanity and a violation of the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and international law, in particular international humanitarian law.

68. Nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation were mutually reinforcing and essential for strengthening international peace and security. It was counterproductive and unsustainable to pursue non-proliferation alone while ignoring nuclear disarmament obligations. Proliferation concerns were best addressed through multilaterally negotiated, universal, comprehensive and non-discriminatory agreements. Moreover, non-proliferation policies should not undermine the inalienable rights of States to acquire, have access to, import or export nuclear material, equipment and technology for peaceful purposes. States parties also had an inalienable right to develop research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination, and to participate in the fullest possible exchange of equipment, material and scientific and technological information for the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

69. IAEA was the sole competent authority for verification of compliance with obligations under the respective safeguards agreements of its member States. The Group was confident in the Agency's impartiality and professionalism, and strongly rejected any attempts to politicize or interfere with its work.

70. The Group underlined the importance of universal adherence to the Treaty and called upon all States that were not parties to the Treaty to accede to it as non-nuclear-weapon States and to place all their nuclear facilities under IAEA comprehensive safeguards. All States parties should make every effort to achieve the universality of the Treaty and refrain from taking any actions that could negatively affect prospects for its universality. Strict observance of and adherence to comprehensive IAEA safeguards and to the Treaty were conditions for any cooperation in the nuclear area.

71. The Heads of State and Government of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, at their XVII Conference Summit held in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela in September 2016, had reiterated their full support for the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear and all other weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems. In that connection, the Group reiterated its serious concern over the protracted delay in the implementation of the resolution on the Middle East adopted at the 1995 Review and Extension Conference and called for its full implementation without any further delay.

72. Pending the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, Israel must renounce any possession of nuclear weapons, accede to the Treaty without preconditions or further delay and promptly

place its nuclear facilities under comprehensive IAEA safeguards. The nuclear capability of Israel posed a serious and continuing threat to the security of neighbouring and other States. The Group condemned Israel for continuing to develop and stockpile nuclear arsenals and called for a total prohibition on transfers to Israel of any nuclear-related equipment, information, material, facilities and resources or devices, including assistance in the nuclear-related scientific or technological fields.

73. The action plan contained in the Final Document of the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons represented an outcome that regrettably had not been built upon by the 2015 Review Conference. The Group was however determined to engage with partners to achieve its objectives, in particular the urgent commencement of negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament for the early conclusion of a comprehensive convention on nuclear weapons as called for in General Assembly resolution 71/71.

74. **Mr. Bylica** (Observer for the European Union), speaking also on behalf of the candidate countries Albania, Montenegro, Serbia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Turkey; the stabilization and association process country Bosnia and Herzegovina; and, in addition, Andorra, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine, said that the Non-Proliferation Treaty remained the cornerstone of the global non-proliferation regime, the essential foundation for the pursuit of nuclear disarmament and an important element in the future development of nuclear energy applications for peaceful purposes. The Treaty had made a crucial contribution to international peace, security and stability over the past half century.

75. The priority at the start of the new review cycle was to maintain the Treaty as a key multilateral instrument, to promote its universality and to strengthen its implementation. Those States that had not yet done so should join the Treaty as non-nuclear-weapon States. The European Union would resolutely continue to support all three pillars of the Treaty, which were equally important and mutually reinforcing and could contribute to a safer world. It called on all States parties to implement all obligations and commitments assumed under the Treaty or undertaken at previous Review Conferences. The important and mutually reinforcing steps contained in the action plan of the 2010 Review Conference remained valid and would contribute to the objective of a world without nuclear weapons.

76. It was of the utmost importance that all States parties contributed to improving the strategic context for arms control and disarmament. The European Union would continue to create the conditions for a world without nuclear weapons in accordance with the goals of the Treaty, in a way that promoted international stability and based on the principle of undiminished security for all.

77. The European Union remained committed to the pursuit of nuclear disarmament, in accordance with article VI of the Treaty. Concrete progress was needed towards the full implementation of that article, especially through an overall reduction in the global stockpile of nuclear weapons while taking into account the special responsibility of the States that possessed the largest nuclear arsenals. In that regard, the European Union encouraged the United States and the Russian Federation to seek further reductions to their strategic and non-strategic, deployed and non-deployed nuclear weapons, and to pursue further discussions on confidence-building, transparency, verification activities and reporting. It also called on all parties to preserve the Treaty between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the Elimination of Their Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles (Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty), which was vital for the security and stability of Europe and other regions, and to ensure full and verifiable compliance with that Treaty.

78. The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty was of crucial importance to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, and its entry into force and universalization remained top priorities for the European Union. Pending the entry into force of that Treaty, the European Union called on all States to uphold their moratoria on nuclear-weapon-test explosions or any other nuclear explosions, and to refrain from any action that would defeat the object and purpose of the Treaty. All States that had not yet done so should also sign and ratify the Treaty. The European Union would continue to promote that objective diplomatically and financially, including through support to strengthen the verification capabilities of the international monitoring system.

79. The European Union remained committed to treaty-based nuclear disarmament and arms control, and reiterated its call to overcome the long-standing deadlock in the Conference on Disarmament. To that end, the first step should be the immediate commencement and early conclusion of a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, on the basis of document [CD/1299](#) and the mandate contained

therein. In addition, all States possessing nuclear weapons that had not yet done so should declare and uphold an immediate moratorium on their production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. In that context, the European Union welcomed the establishment of a high-level fissile material cut-off treaty expert preparatory group.

80. The European Union supported General Assembly resolution [71/67](#) on nuclear disarmament verification and welcomed the establishment of the group of governmental experts to consider the role of verification in advancing nuclear disarmament. Further development of multilateral nuclear verification capabilities would be required to achieve a world without nuclear weapons.

81. Negative security assurances strengthened the nuclear non-proliferation regime. The European Union therefore called on all nuclear-weapon States to reaffirm existing security assurances, as noted by relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions, and expressed its readiness to pursue further discussions on negative security assurances.

82. The world continued to face serious proliferation crises which threatened international peace, security and the global non-proliferation regime. The European Union underlined the primary responsibility of the United Nations Security Council to address cases of non-compliance and to respond effectively to a State party's intention to withdraw from the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

83. The European Union condemned, in the strongest terms, the nuclear tests and ballistic missile launches carried out by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, in flagrant violation of multiple United Nations Security Council resolutions. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea must comply with all its international obligations fully, unconditionally and without delay, and thus abandon its nuclear and ballistic missile programmes in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner. The nuclear and missile programmes of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea posed critical and increasing challenges which required a strong and timely international reaction before that country acquired an operational nuclear weapons capability.

84. The European Union called on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to return at an early date to the Non-Proliferation Treaty, to accept IAEA safeguards, to ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and to refrain from any further action that would only increase regional tensions. It urged the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to re-engage in

a credible and meaningful dialogue with the international community and called on all States Members of the United Nations to fully implement all Security Council resolutions adopted with regard to that country.

85. The continued non-compliance by Syria with its safeguards agreement was deeply regrettable. The European Union therefore once again urged that country to resolve all outstanding issues in full cooperation with IAEA and also to conclude an additional protocol with the Agency as soon as possible.

86. The joint comprehensive plan of action agreed with Iran had demonstrated that it was possible to find peaceful and diplomatic solutions, even to the most pressing proliferation challenges. While welcoming the progress made to date in that regard, the European Union underlined the need to continue ensuring the full and effective implementation of that plan of action, as verified by IAEA. It also called on Iran to promptly ratify an additional protocol and to refrain from activities such as ballistic missile tests, which were inconsistent with Security Council Resolution 2231 (2015).

87. The European Union supported strengthening the effectiveness and efficiency of IAEA safeguards, which played an indispensable role in implementing non-proliferation obligations under the Treaty. Comprehensive safeguards agreements, together with additional protocols, constituted the current verification standard that should be universalized without delay.

88. The European Union reaffirmed its strong commitment to the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. It considered the resolution on the Middle East adopted at the 1995 Review and Extension Conference valid until its goals and objectives had been achieved and deeply regretted the fact that the conference on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction (Helsinki conference) had not been convened in 2012. The European Union continued to call on all States in the region that had not yet done so to take the following steps: accede to, and abide by, the Non-Proliferation Treaty, the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction, and the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction; sign and ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty; and conclude

comprehensive safeguards agreements, additional protocols and, as applicable, modified small quantities protocols with IAEA.

89. The European Union was gravely concerned about the risk of State or non-State actors acquiring weapons of mass destruction or their delivery systems. Security Council resolution 1540 (2004), complemented by Security Council resolution 2325 (2016), remained a key part of the international non-proliferation architecture in that regard. High importance was also attached to such multilateral export control regimes as the Zangger Committee, the Nuclear Suppliers Group, the Australia Group, the Wassenaar Arrangement on Export Controls for Conventional Arms and Dual-Use Goods and Technologies, and the Missile Technology Control Regime. All States should adhere to their guidelines as well as those contained in the International Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation (The Hague Code of Conduct).

90. The European Union recognized the right of State parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, in accordance with article IV of the Treaty. The responsible development of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy must take place under the best safety, security, safeguards and non-proliferation conditions.

91. The European Union was also committed to promoting the highest standards of nuclear safety in Europe and around the world. In that regard, IAEA played a central role in strengthening the capacity of States to ensure that the development and use of nuclear energy took place under the most rigorous safety conditions for the protection of people and the environment. It urged all States with nuclear facilities to become contracting parties to the Convention on Nuclear Safety and the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and Radioactive Waste, and to actively participate in review processes and meetings.

92. While nuclear security remained the responsibility of States, international cooperation was of the utmost relevance to prevent illicit nuclear and radiological trafficking and terrorist access to nuclear and radiological materials, including radioactive sources. In that regard, IAEA also played a central role in coordinating international efforts and strengthening the international nuclear security architecture. The European Union welcomed the entry into force of the Amendment to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material and would continue to work for its universalization.

93. In the area of peaceful uses of nuclear energy, the European Union had allocated funds to promote nuclear safety, the safety of radioactive waste and spent nuclear fuel management, radioactive protection and the application of efficient and effective safeguards in third countries. It was also the second largest donor to the IAEA Nuclear Security Fund and to the IAEA Technical Cooperation Programme.

94. **Mr. Recinos Trejo** (El Salvador), speaking on behalf of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), said that the commitment of CELAC towards the elimination of nuclear weapons had been further strengthened by recent high-level political declarations and by the historical proclamation of the region as a zone of peace.

95. Recalling the advisory opinion of 8 July 1996 of the International Court of Justice, CELAC reaffirmed that the threat or use of nuclear weapons would constitute a crime against humanity and a violation not only of international law, including international humanitarian law, but also of the Charter of the United Nations. CELAC remained deeply concerned by the threat to humanity posed by the existence, use and threat of use of nuclear weapons and strongly emphasized that such weapons must not be used under any circumstances. The only effective guarantee against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons was their total prohibition and elimination in a transparent, verifiable and irreversible manner within a clearly defined time frame.

96. The humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons was a matter of grave concern that should be raised by all States whenever nuclear weapons were discussed, including in the context of the Preparatory Committee. CELAC particularly commended the contribution to the global discourse on achieving a nuclear-weapon-free-world made by the conferences on the humanitarian impacts of nuclear weapons held in Oslo, in Nayarit, Mexico, and in Vienna.

97. CELAC was committed to the commencement of negotiations on a legally binding instrument for the prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons in a transparent, irreversible and verifiable manner, within an agreed multilateral time frame. Such an instrument would fulfil the obligation of States parties pursuant to article VI of the Treaty. However, pending the complete prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons, CELAC called for the negotiation and adoption of a universal and legally binding instrument on negative security assurances as soon as possible.

98. CELAC reaffirmed its commitment to the Non-Proliferation Treaty and to the full

implementation of its three pillars. It urged those States that had not yet done so to accede to the Treaty as non-nuclear-weapon States and called on nuclear-weapon States to comply with their commitments pursuant to article VI of the Treaty.

99. While CELAC had taken note of previous reductions of nuclear arsenals by some of the nuclear-weapon States, further and accelerated reductions were needed towards the elimination of all nuclear weapons in a transparent, verifiable and irreversible manner, and under strict international controls, in order to build confidence. There was an urgent need to develop adequate and efficient nuclear disarmament verification capabilities and legally binding multilateral verification arrangements. In view of its mandate, IAEA was best placed to play a leading role in that process.

100. CELAC reaffirmed the inalienable right of States parties to the Treaty to develop research, production and use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination or double standards and in accordance with the Treaty. It also reiterated the commitment of all parties to the Treaty to facilitate and participate in the fullest possible exchange of equipment, materials and scientific and technological information for the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

101. The establishment of internationally recognized nuclear-weapon-free-zones, on the basis of arrangements freely entered into by the States of the region concerned, strengthened both international peace and security and the non-proliferation regime. Such zones made an important contribution to the achievement of nuclear disarmament.

102. Both the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (Treaty of Tlatelolco) and the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean, as the specialized body in the region for articulating common positions and joint actions on nuclear disarmament, were important assets of the international community as well as political, legal and institutional points of references for the establishment of other nuclear-weapon-free zones. CELAC called on the nuclear-weapon States that had issued interpretive declarations to Additional Protocols I and II to the Treaty of Tlatelolco to revise them, in conjunction with the Agency, in order to provide full and unequivocal security assurances to the States that comprised the nuclear-weapon-free-zone in Latin America and the Caribbean.

103. The establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East would be a crucial step in the peace

process. CELAC therefore regretted the failure to hold the Helsinki conference as an important part of the Final Document of the 2010 Review Conference and called for it to be convened as soon as possible.

104. CELAC urged all States whose ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty was necessary for its entry into force to take that action without further delay. All States should refrain from carrying out nuclear tests and other nuclear explosions, including any simulations aimed at improving nuclear weapons. Such actions were contrary to the obligations contained in the Non-Proliferation Treaty and against the spirit and letter of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty.

105. Lastly, CELAC reiterated its call for all States, particularly nuclear-weapon States, to eliminate the role of nuclear weapons in their doctrines, security policies and military strategies. It also urged those countries that had joined extended nuclear deterrence policies, as part of military alliances based on nuclear weapons, to implement policies that allowed them to eliminate their reliance on the nuclear weapons of other States.

106. **Mr. Pastor Morris** (Ecuador) said that the Constitution of Ecuador proclaimed peace and universal disarmament, and condemned the development and use of weapons of mass destruction. The use or threat of use of nuclear weapons constituted a crime against humanity and a threat to collective security. Ecuador was concerned by the resurgence of security policies based on nuclear weapons and nuclear deterrence policies, and wished to reiterate that the only effective guarantee against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons was their total prohibition and elimination.

107. His country was firmly in favour of the full implementation of the three pillars of the Non-Proliferation Treaty in a balanced manner, without discrimination or double standards. In that regard, while the objectives of the Treaty had been implemented with respect to non-proliferation and the right to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, it was a matter of concern that no progress had been made in achieving the objective of nuclear disarmament. Ecuador was committed to negotiations on a legally binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons, which was a necessary measure to meet the obligation of States parties as established in article VI of the Treaty.

108. The minimal reductions in nuclear stockpiles to date demonstrated the failure of the nuclear-weapon States to meet the commitments that they had already undertaken. It was a source of concern that those States

remained committed to developing and modernizing new types of nuclear weapons. Ecuador reiterated the urgent need for the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and urged the remaining Annex 2 States to ratify that instrument without further delay.

109. In order to increase trust and cooperation among the States parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty, the nuclear-weapon States and those States hosting such weapons in their territories must commit to providing the Preparatory Committee with a comprehensive transparency report on all nuclear weapons in their territories.

110. Any action aimed at securing nuclear non-proliferation must be made in strict accordance with international law and the Charter of the United Nations, in particular the requirement of prior authorization from the United Nations for the use of force.

111. Ecuador acknowledged the excellent work undertaken by IAEA in the field of technical cooperation and also in the monitoring and verification of nuclear activities. In view of the special contribution made by nuclear technology in such areas as health, food, agriculture and industry, Ecuador expected the Agency to become a key player in supporting States in their efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030.

112. **Mr. Wood** (United States of America) said that the 2020 Review Conference would mark the fiftieth year since the Non-Proliferation Treaty had entered into force, which provided an opportunity to recall its incalculable benefits. For example, thanks to concerted international non-proliferation efforts, the vast majority of States had foresworn and deeply opposed the spread of nuclear weapons. That remarkable achievement had helped to pave the way for progress on disarmament and on the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. In addition, the United States' stockpile of nuclear warheads had fallen by more than 85 per cent since the height of the Cold War. The United States had also ended production of fissile material for weapons and had removed hundreds of tons of fissile material from weapons programmes.

113. However, global security conditions had worsened in recent years, with renewed tensions and growing nuclear stockpiles in some regions. Non-compliance with non-proliferation and arms reduction agreements had endangered progress while also undermining confidence. Work would be needed to address those problems and lay the groundwork for the future.

114. The nuclear non-proliferation regime built on the Treaty had made possible the nuclear cooperation and commerce that provided clean and reliable energy for hundreds of millions of people. All States parties to the Treaty benefited from the peaceful uses of nuclear science and technology to meet their sustainable development needs in such diverse areas as energy, health, agriculture, industry and natural resource management. Those gains had been achieved only because international safeguards, export controls and other measures had been put in place to provide confidence in the safe, secure and peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

115. IAEA played a key part in helping States parties to realize the practical benefits of the Treaty and the United States was the leading supporter of its work across the board, including its Technical Cooperation Programme. However, as proliferation remained an area of vulnerability, it was important to remain vigilant for any signs of nuclear weapons ambitions. The time had come to recognize IAEA additional protocols as the de facto standard for ensuring that States were meeting their safeguards obligations, and for States parties to reaffirm their shared responsibility to respond to cases on non-compliance.

116. Over the past 15 years, the United States had redoubled its efforts to prevent terrorists from acquiring the means to launch a nuclear attack and to protect nuclear material from theft and nuclear facilities from sabotage. It was the responsibility of all States enjoying the benefits of nuclear energy to adhere to international nuclear security instruments and standards. However, it was also a collective responsibility to establish high standards that States were in a position to meet, in part by supporting the IAEA Nuclear Security Fund.

117. Universal adherence to the Treaty must continue to be a long-term goal and, in several regions, progress depended on addressing long-standing security challenges. In that context, the United States remained ready to work with the States of the Middle East to support practical steps towards the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. Fundamentally, however, that outcome would depend on the willingness of the States in the region to engage with one another directly.

118. The world currently faced no greater security challenge than that posed by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. That country had resumed its reprocessing activities, had admitted to enriching uranium for nuclear weapons and had carried out five nuclear tests and numerous ballistic missile launches,

in open defiance of multiple Security Council resolutions. Well-intentioned diplomatic efforts over the last 20 years to halt the proscribed nuclear programmes of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea had failed. Its stated objective was to be able to attack cities in the United States and allied countries with nuclear weapons. The threat of a North Korean nuclear attack on Seoul or Tokyo was real. It was only a matter of time before the Democratic People's Republic of Korea developed the capability to strike the mainland of the United States. However, the goal of the United States was not regime change. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea, for its own sake, must abandon its nuclear and missile programmes if it wished to achieve security, economic development and international recognition.

119. The time had come to retake control of the situation and for all members of the international community to do their share to place increased diplomatic and economic pressure on North Korea to change course, including by implementing all relevant Security Council resolutions. In view of the gravity of the situation, determining how to mitigate the nuclear threat from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea should be the central issue of the Preparatory Committee's discussions.

120. Since North Korea had announced its withdrawal from the Treaty, three Review Conferences had been unable to reach a consensus on the need to hold a withdrawing State accountable for any violations committed while still a party to the Treaty. Allowing States parties to violate the Treaty and then withdraw from it without consequences ignored the basic principle of international law. Conversely, vigorous enforcement of that principle would preserve the integrity of the Treaty itself. Furthermore, it was important to ensure that a withdrawing State could not escape its obligations to other States parties not to misuse the benefits of peaceful nuclear cooperation.

121. All States parties, irrespective of their differences, recognized that the Treaty served their individual and shared national security and development interests. Through genuine dialogue, they should build on areas of long-standing consensus and set aside proposals when consensus could not be reached. Recalling common interests was the best way to re-establish the culture of consensus-building and consensus-based decision-making that had worked so well over the decades. All States parties must work together to ensure that the Treaty remained strong and vibrant, that it continued to serve their core interests and that it helped to fulfil their highest aspirations for a safe, secure and peaceful future together.

122. **Ms. Mikan** (Colombia) said that the Non-Proliferation Treaty remained the cornerstone of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. Universal adherence to the Treaty and effective implementation of its three pillars were of vital importance to safeguard international peace and security. The Treaty had entered into force in Colombia in 1986 and her country had a long-standing commitment to the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime as a principle of its foreign policy. At the national level, article 81 of the Constitution prohibited the manufacture, import, possession and use of weapons of mass destruction.

123. The current year provided an historic opportunity to make progress in the areas of nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy through existing instruments and also new initiatives. Synergies and complementary processes should be harnessed with a view to freeing the world of the threat posed by nuclear weapons.

124. The first session of the Preparatory Committee provided nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear-weapon States alike with an opportunity to strengthen the effective implementation of the Treaty, particularly with respect to article VI on nuclear disarmament and also regarding the convening of the Helsinki conference. As the member of a nuclear-weapon-free zone itself, Colombia would continue to advocate for the establishment of more such zones.

125. Colombia would actively participate in the forthcoming negotiations on a legally binding instrument for the prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons. Parallel initiatives to address nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation represented an opportunity to revitalize and complement the work of existing instruments in that area, especially with regard to the Treaty.

126. Colombia regretted the failure of the 2015 Review Conference to adopt a final document and reiterated its support for the 2020 Review Conference to adopt a consensus outcome on the basis of the action plan of the 2010 Review Conference.

127. **Mr. Castellanos Lopez** (Guatemala) said that his country was firmly committed to compliance with the Non-Proliferation Treaty. It attached particular importance to nuclear disarmament and the process for the adoption of a legally binding instrument on the prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons, in accordance with article VI of the Treaty. Unfortunately, the lack of political will on the part of some nuclear Powers to fulfil commitments agreed at previous Review Conferences had become an obstacle to

achieving that noble goal. Added to that was the failure to bring the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty into force and the inability of the Conference on Disarmament to adopt a programme of work for 21 consecutive years. The planet now faced an increased threat that nuclear-weapon States would not only increase their arsenals but also perfect them, based on the false pretext of their own national security. The only way to achieve collective security, and indeed to ensure the ultimate survival of humanity, was the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

128. Guatemala was aware of the grave humanitarian consequences that could arise from the testing and detonation of nuclear weapons and was one of the 127 nations that had formally endorsed the humanitarian pledge presented by Austria at the 2014 Vienna Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons. The conferences on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons held in Oslo, in Nayarit, Mexico, and in Vienna had irrefutably demonstrated that the use of nuclear weapons would have catastrophic consequences for life on the planet, and that their use was utterly incompatible with the central principles of international humanitarian law. Guatemala would continue to work with the other States that had signed the pledge to ensure that those elements were incorporated into the final document of the 2020 Conference. Nuclear weapons must never be used again, under any circumstances.

129. Given that the ultimate goal envisaged under the provisions of the preamble and article VI of the Non-Proliferation Treaty was the elimination of nuclear weapons, a future instrument on their prohibition was fully in keeping with the Treaty. A new treaty prohibiting nuclear weapons would fill the existing legal gap and ensure that the three pillars were implemented in a balanced manner. It was clear that the non-nuclear-weapon States had complied with their obligations under the Treaty and the nuclear-weapon-States should not be allowed to delay compliance with theirs.

130. Nuclear-weapon-free zones were an essential component of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. Guatemala strongly supported the establishment of such a zone in the Middle East and regretted the failure to convene the Helsinki conference agreed in the action plan of the 2010 Review Conference. That conference should be held as soon as possible.

131. In view of the importance of the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, Guatemala urged the Annex 2 States that had not yet

ratified the Treaty to do so. It condemned in the strongest terms the recent nuclear tests undertaken by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Those actions were detrimental to international peace and security, increased regional tensions and hindered multilateral efforts to foster dialogue and build trust, with a view to the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula.

132. Lastly, Guatemala, which had a safeguards agreement, an additional protocol and a small quantities protocol in place with IAEA, reaffirmed the inalienable right of States parties to the Treaty to use and develop nuclear technology for peaceful purposes, in accordance with article IV of the Treaty.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.