

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

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Nuclear naval propulsion

Working paper submitted by Indonesia

1. The issue of the nuclear naval propulsion programme presents a unique case that deserves serious attention, be it from the perspective of the disarmament, non-proliferation and peaceful uses pillars of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons or safeguards measures.
2. This issue prompts some concerns, such as:
 - (a) The uranium enriched to fuel naval propulsion reactors is above levels used in civilian power reactors, near-weapons-grade levels, and even weapons-grade, which poses a growing risk to achieving the non-proliferation goals of the Treaty;
 - (b) The exclusion of the production, use and disposition of highly enriched uranium for nuclear naval propulsion from the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards could be exploited to provide a shield for diversion of that material to nuclear weapons programmes;
 - (c) The use and sharing of nuclear technologies and materials for military purposes could run counter to the spirit and objectives of the Treaty, as it could potentially set precedence for other similar arrangements and complicate safeguards mechanisms needed to prevent risks arising from such arrangements, including, but not limited to, leading to the emergence of new types of weapons of mass destructions derived from the combination of nuclear materials and conventional weapons;
 - (d) The application of nuclear materials for nuclear naval propulsion possesses safety risks, considering the possibility of accidents and exposure, which may occur during transportation, maintenance and use. Such accidents and exposure may cause humanitarian and environmental consequences.
3. Against that backdrop, there is a driving urgency for the Review Conference and beyond to address such a raising challenge that would impact the global effort on advancing the disarmament, non-proliferation and safeguards agenda under the Treaty.
4. Indonesia reaffirms the importance of article I and article II of the Treaty in the context of not transferring and not receiving the transfer from and to any recipient whatsoever of nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices or control over such weapons or explosive devices.



5. Indonesia views any cooperation involving the transfer of nuclear materials and technology for military purposes from nuclear-weapon States to any non-nuclear-weapon States as increasing the associated risks and the catastrophic humanitarian and environmental consequences, as well as navigation risks posed by potential proliferation and conversion of nuclear material to nuclear weapons, particularly highly enriched uranium, in the operational status of nuclear naval propulsion.
6. Indonesia recognizes that IAEA is the sole competent authority responsible for verification of the fulfilment of safeguards obligations assumed by States parties under the Treaty, with a view to preventing the diversion of nuclear energy from peaceful uses to nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices.
7. Indonesia emphasizes the significance of article IV of the Treaty on the inalienable right of all the parties to the Treaty to develop research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination and in conformity with article I and article II of the Treaty. The realization of that article constitutes one of the fundamental objectives of the Treaty.
8. Indonesia underscores that economic and technological development of the parties or international cooperation in the field of peaceful nuclear activities, including the international exchange of nuclear material and equipment for the processing, use or production of nuclear material for peaceful purposes, should be implemented in a manner designed to comply with article IV of the Treaty.
9. Indonesia reaffirms that, in conformity with article VI of the Treaty, nuclear disarmament remains the highest priority, and the continued lack of progress in the implementation of nuclear disarmament obligations by the nuclear-weapon States could undermine the objective and purpose of the Treaty and the credibility of the non-proliferation regime.
10. Against this backdrop, Indonesia notes with concern the potential consequences of sharing nuclear-powered submarine capability with the global non-proliferation regime.
11. Indonesia calls for strict observance of article III of the Treaty and reaffirms that under the Treaty all parties must accept IAEA strict observance by concluding and adhering to the IAEA comprehensive safeguards agreements and applicable additional measures related to the safeguards, such as the Additional Protocol.
12. Indonesia calls upon all States parties to the Treaty to garner political will and create opportunities for IAEA member States to develop a constructive approach on verification and monitoring arrangements of the nuclear naval propulsion programme, with a view, among others, to enhancing safeguards agreements that tighten monitoring measures for uranium designated for naval propulsion reactors in non-nuclear-weapon States to prevent diversion of that material for use in a nuclear weapons programme.
13. Indonesia urges all States parties to the Treaty to fully implement their commitment as faithful partners in achieving a world free of nuclear weapons by addressing the three pillars of the Treaty in a balanced manner.
14. Indonesia also urges all States parties to the Treaty to refrain from actions that create an environment that is not conducive to nuclear disarmament and that would increase the risk of nuclear conflict, including by avoiding the dual use of nuclear and conventional military installations and weapon platforms that can be armed with nuclear and conventional weapons.