



**STOCKHOLM INTERNATIONAL  
PEACE RESEARCH INSTITUTE**

## **2015 Review Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT):**

**UN Headquarters: 27 April – 22 May 2015**

### **New York: 28 April 2014**

The 2015 NPT Review Conference opened at UN headquarters on 27 April and will continue till 22 May 2015.

The General Debate continued on the second day of the review conference with some 28 States delivering their opening statements: Kyrgyzstan, H.E. Mr. Askar Beshimov, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs; Romania, H.E. Mr. Daniel Ionita, State Secretary for Strategic Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs; Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons (Austria, on behalf of) H.E. Mr. Sebastian Kurz, Federal Minister for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs; Canada, H.E. Ms. Lynne Yelich, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs; Poland, H.E. Mr. Leszek Soczewica, Undersecretary of State, Ministry of Foreign Affairs; Serbia, H.E. Mrs. Roksanda Nincic, State Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs; Czech Republic, H.E. Mr. Jakub Kulhánek, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs; Germany, H.E. Mr. Michael Roth, Minister of State for Europe; Namibia, H.E. Ms. Maureen Magreth Hinda, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Deputy Minister of International Relations; Liechtenstein, H.E. Mr. Christian Wenaweser, Permanent Representative; ASEAN, H.E. Mr. Kyaw Tin, Permanent Representative of Myanmar; CARICOM, H.E. Mr.

E. Courtenay Rattray, Permanent Representative of Jamaica; Panama, H.E. Ms. Laura Elena Flores Herrera, Permanent Representative; Mongolia, H.E. Mr. Och Od , Permanent Representative; Arab Group, H.E. Mr. Jamal Fares Alrowaiei, Permanent Representative of Bahrain; New Zealand, H.E. Ms. Dell Higgie, Ambassador for Disarmament, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade; European Union, H.E. Mrs. Federica Mogherini, High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Vice-President of the European Commission; United Arab Emirates, H.E. Dr. Sultan Ahmed Al Jaber, Minister of State; Cyprus, H.E. Mr. Andreas Mavroyiannis, Ambassador, Special Envoy of the Minister of Foreign Affairs; Argentina, H.E. Mrs. María Cristina Perceval, Permanent Representative; Belgium, H.E. Ms. Bénédicte Frankinet, Permanent Representative; Brazil, H.E. Mr. Antonio de Aguiar Patriota, Permanent Representative; Turkey, H.E. Mr. Y. Halit Çevik, Permanent Representative; Luxembourg, H.E. Ms. Sylvie Lucas, Permanent Representative; Philippines, H.E. Ms. Lourdes O. Yparraguirre, Permanent Representative; Dominican Republic, H.E. Mr. Francisco Antonio Cortorreal, Permanent Representative; Uruguay, H.E. Mr. Gonzalo Koncke, Permanent Representative; France, H.E. Mr. Jean-Hugues Simon-Michel, Permanent Representative to the Conference on Disarmament; Lesotho, H.E. Mr. Kelebone Maope, Permanent Representative; and Denmark, H.E. Ms. Susanne Rumohr Haekkerup, Ambassador, Undersecretary for Disarmament, Non-proliferation and Arms Control, Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The statement on behalf of the **Member States of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)**, namely, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam was delivered by Myanmar. ASEAN stated that it was fully aware of the fact that the humanitarian focus on the consequences of nuclear weapons was increasingly gaining widespread recognition and support. ASEAN welcomed the Conferences on

the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons held in Oslo, Nayarit, and Vienna, as well as the recently concluded Regional Roundtable on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons and Prospects for a Ban Treaty in Bangkok, the third such roundtable held in the region and the ninth globally. It stated that efforts to achieve nuclear disarmament would be challenging, but the goal of achieving nuclear disarmament was possible when concrete and practical steps to dismantle the world's remaining nuclear weapons were implemented, as soon as possible, and in a transparent, irreversible and verifiable manner. At the same time, the continued qualitative improvement of technologies to the existing nuclear weapons systems must be ended and all nuclear weapons test sites closed.

ASEAN reaffirmed the inalienable right of States to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, in particular for economic and social development. To seek to accelerate and enlarge the contribution of atomic energy to peace, health, and prosperity throughout the world through the peaceful uses of nuclear energy was one of the core objectives enshrined in the Statute of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). ASEAN recognized the central role of the IAEA in nuclear non-proliferation and the promotion of peaceful uses of nuclear energy. In this context, ASEAN considered it important to strengthen IAEA's mandate and capacity in this area.

ASEAN stated that it had enhanced cooperation to ensure that high standards of safeguards and safety measures were adhered to in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. In this connection, the ASEAN Network of Regulatory Bodies on Atomic Energy (ASEANTOM) was established in 2013. This network would facilitate the sharing of best practices, exchange of views and information as well as discussion on safety, security, and safeguards in the use of nuclear energy among the nuclear regulatory bodies or relevant authorities in the region.

**A Joint Statement on the Humanitarian Consequences of Nuclear Weapons** was delivered by H.E. **Sebastian Kurz, Federal Minister for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs of Austria** on behalf of more than 150 countries including: Afghanistan, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belize, Benin, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cabo Verde, Cambodia, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Cook Islands, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Cyprus, DR Congo, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Gabon, Gambia, Georgia, Ghana, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Holy See, Honduras, Iceland, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Ireland, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kiribati, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao PDR, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libya, Liechtenstein, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Federated States of Micronesia, Republic of Moldova, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nauru, Nepal, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Niue, Norway, Oman, Palau, State of Palestine, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Rwanda, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Somalia, South Africa, South Sudan, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Tadjikistan, Tanzania, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Tuvalu, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, Uruguay, Vanuatu, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia and Zimbabwe. This

reflected the growing momentum behind the Humanitarian Initiative on Nuclear Weapons (HINW).

The statement noted that these countries were deeply concerned about the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons. Past experience from the use and testing of nuclear weapons had amply demonstrated the unacceptable humanitarian consequences caused by the immense, uncontrollable destructive capability and indiscriminate nature of these weapons. The fact-based discussion that took place at the Conferences on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons, convened respectively by Norway in March 2013, Mexico in February 2014 and Austria in December 2014, had allowed them to deepen their collective understanding of those consequences. A key message from experts and international organisations was that no State or international body could address the immediate humanitarian emergency caused by a nuclear weapon detonation or provide adequate assistance to victims.

The broad participation at those Conferences, with attendance most recently in Vienna by 158 States, the ICRC, a number of UN humanitarian organisations and civil society, reflected the recognition that the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons were a fundamental and global concern. These States firmly believed that it was in the interests of all States to engage in discussions on the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons, which aim to further broaden and deepen understanding of this matter.

The appalling humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons became evident from the moment of their first use, and from that moment had motivated humanity's aspirations for a world free from this threat, which had also inspired this statement. The humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons had been reflected in numerous UN resolutions, including the first resolution passed

by the General Assembly in 1946, and in multilateral instruments including the NPT. The world's most eminent nuclear physicists observed as early as 1955 that nuclear weapons threatened the continued existence of mankind and that a war with these weapons could quite possibly put an end to the human race. The First Special Session of the General Assembly devoted to Disarmament (SSOD-1) stressed in 1978 that "nuclear weapons pose the greatest danger to mankind and to the survival of civilisation." These expressions of profound concern remained as compelling as ever. In spite of this, the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons had not been at the core of nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation deliberations for many years.

These States therefore were encouraged that the humanitarian focus was now well established on the global agenda. The 2010 Review Conference of the NPT expressed "deep concern at the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of any use of nuclear weapons". That deep concern informed the 26 November 2011 resolution of the Council of Delegates of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, and the decision in 2012 of the General Assembly to establish an open-ended working group to develop proposals to take forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations. It underpinned the Special Declaration of the 3rd Summit of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States' in January 2015 on the urgent need for a nuclear weapons free world.

In September 2013, at the High-Level Meeting on Nuclear Disarmament, numerous leaders from around the world again evoked that deep concern as they called for progress to be made on nuclear disarmament. More than three quarters of all countries supported the Joint Statement on the Humanitarian Consequences of Nuclear Weapons delivered at the 2014 First Committee of the UN General Assembly. Today's statement again demonstrated the growing political support for the humanitarian focus.

The statement concluded that the only way to guarantee that nuclear weapons would never be used again was through their total elimination. All States shared the responsibility to prevent the use of nuclear weapons, to prevent their vertical and horizontal proliferation and to achieve nuclear disarmament, including through fulfilling the objectives of the NPT and achieving its universality.

The Statement of Brazil was delivered by **H.E. Antonio de Aguiar Patriota, Ambassador, Permanent Representative to the United Nations**. The strengthened review system had led to the adoption of important commitments, most notably the thirteen practical steps towards nuclear disarmament, in 2000, and the adoption of the 2010 Action Plan. However, implementation of these commitments had been poor, at best, including with regard to the failure to convene the Conference on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction. Notwithstanding unilateral and bilateral arsenal reductions and increased coordination among the nuclear weapons States, Brazil was concerned by a lack of real irreversible progress on disarmament. Attempts to reinforce commitments on non-proliferation without previous concrete progress on nuclear disarmament could only further erode the NPT edifice.

Brazil stated that arsenal reductions, especially when carried out in the context of modernization programmes and vertical proliferation, did not equal nuclear disarmament. On the contrary, in recent years, all information available on nuclear-weapons States plans for their nuclear weapons programmes signalled that there was no intention to get rid of these weapons in the foreseeable future. Such actions run counter to the commitment of the five nuclear-weapon States under Article VI of the NPT to pursue negotiations in good faith on a Treaty on general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control – which the ICJ had emphasized as a legal obligation in its

landmark 1996 Advisory Opinion on the Legality of the Threat or Use of Nuclear Weapons.

Brazil stated that was clear that the so-called “step-by-step” approach advocated by nuclear weapons States had failed to deliver on initial expectations. The Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty finalized almost twenty years ago was not yet in force. The beginning of negotiations on a fissile material treaty had been stalled for over a decade.

Brazil noted that the international community found itself in a stalemate akin to Zeno's paradox. The ancient Greek philosopher claimed that movement was impossible, because before walking a certain distance, first one would have to walk half that distance, and before that, a quarter, and so on indefinitely. To achieve progress in nuclear disarmament within the “step-by-step” approach, conversely, the international community had been told that, before taking any first step, half of the first step needed to be taken, and before that, half of half a step, and so on.

It is high time to challenge the worn-out notion that one must wait for all stars to align in order to move ahead with nuclear disarmament. In fact, the opposite is true. Only decisive action towards the fulfillment of nuclear disarmament commitments can bring about the conditions for a more stable and less dangerous world.

Full texts of statements are available on the 2015 NPT conference web site: <http://www.un.org/en/conf/npt/2015/statements.shtml>.

## **Looking Ahead**

The General Debate will continue on Wednesday, 29 April. The mood in the Conference continues to be subdued but cordial.



Argentina and the United Kingdom continue to exchange verbal barbs regarding the Falklands Islands (Malvinas). Efforts continue to find Chairs for the subsidiary bodies (SB) for each of the three main committees – while a candidate apparently is available for SB-1 (disarmament), there continue to be some challenges in finding chairs for SB-2 (Middle East) and SB-3 (elements of peaceful uses).

Tariq Rauf

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