



**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: 29 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 third day of the review conference with some 34 States delivering their opening statements: **Ukraine:** H.E. Mr. Pavlo Klimkin, Minister of Foreign Affairs; **Norway:** H.E. Mr. Bård Glad Pedersen, State Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs; **Austria:** H.E. Mr. Alexander Kmentt, Director for Disarmament, Arms Control and Non-proliferation, Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs; **Estonia:** H.E. Mr. Margus Kolga, Permanent Representative; **Slovenia:** H.E. Mr. Andrej Logar, Permanent Representative; **Tunisia:** H.E. Mr. Mohamed Khaled Khiari, Permanent Representative; **Viet Nam:** H.E. Mrs. Nguyen Phuong Nga, Permanent Representative; **Belarus:** H.E. Mr. Andrei Dapkiunas, Permanent Representative; **The Holy See:** H.E. Archbishop Bernadito C. Auza, Permanent Representative; **Malta:** H.E. Mr. Christopher Grima, Permanent Representative; **South Africa:** H.E. Mr. Nozipho Mxakato-Diseko, Deputy Director-General, Multilateral Branch, Department of International Relations and Cooperation; **Bangladesh:** H.E. Mr. Shameem Ahsan, Permanent

Representative; Singapore: H.E. Ms. Karen Tan, Permanent Representative; Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (**CELAC**) - (Ecuador, on behalf of): H.E. Mr. Xavier Lasso Mendoza, Permanent Representative; **Bulgaria**: H.E. Mr. Rayko Raytchev, Director-General for Global Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs; **Costa Rica**: H.E. Mr. Juan Carlos Mendoza-García, Permanent Representative; Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (**CTBTO**): Dr. Lassina Zerbo, Executive Secretary; **Uruguay**: H.E. Mr. Gustavo Álvarez; Latvia: H.E. Mr. Jānis Mažeiks, Permanent Representative; **Samoa**: H.E. Mr. Ali'ioaiga Feturi Elisaia, Permanent Representative; **Iraq**: H.E. Mr. Mohamed Ali Alhakim, Permanent Representative; **Senegal**: H.E. Mr. Fodé Seck, Permanent Representative; **Tanzania**: H.E. Mr. Ramadhan Mwinyi, Deputy Permanent Representative; **Indonesia**: H.E. Mr. Desra Percaya, Permanent Representative; **Benin**: H.E. Mr. Jean-Francis Régis Zinsou, Permanent Representative; **Cambodia**: H.E. Mr. Ry Tuy, Permanent Representative; **Myanmar**: H.E. Mr. Kyaw Tin, Permanent Representative; **Libya**: H.E. Mr. Ibrahim O. Dabbashi, Permanent Representative; **Syrian Arab Republic**: H.E. Mr. Bashar Ja'afari, Permanent Representative; **Cuba**: H.E. Mr. Rodolfo Benítez, Permanent Representative; **Paraguay**: H.E. Mr. Federico González, Permanent Representative; **Greece**: H.E. Mrs. Catherine Boura, Permanent Representative; **State of Palestine**: H.E. Dr. Riyad Mansour, Permanent Observer; **Lao People's Democratic Republic**: H.E. Dr. Khiane Phanhsourivong, Permanent Representative; and **Colombia**: H.E. Ms. María Emma Mejía Vélez, Permanent Representative.

H.E. Mr. Alexander Kmentt (**Austria**) stated that Austria was gravely concerned about the crisis in Ukraine and its potential negative repercussions for the NPT and the entire international nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime. He recalled that Ukraine had received security assurances and assurances of respect for its territorial integrity under the Budapest Memorandum in

direct connection to its accession to the NPT as a non-nuclear weapon States. Moreover, there was much talk again in Europe about nuclear weapons in the context of the Ukraine crisis and referred to rhetoric that could only be called nuclear brinkmanship. He noted that certain voices wished to reemphasize the role of nuclear weapons or that claim that this crisis should be a reason to halt nuclear disarmament and arms control efforts all together. Austria strongly opposed such views and was convinced that the current tensions in Europe, which unfortunately remained the continent most affected by the presence of nuclear weapons, made the focus on nuclear disarmament and the full implementation of all NPT obligations and commitments all the more important. Nuclear weapons and nuclear deterrence were not the answer to Europe's security concerns.

Kmentt stated that the Review Conference was taking place at a critical juncture for the NPT and the entire nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime. Meeting five years ago to review the status and operation of the NPT, States had worked together to achieve the 2010 Action Plan, which was heralded as a significant success. Agreeing on a set of 64 concrete actions across 3 pillars and particularly the 23 actions on nuclear disarmament, was supposed to make progress measurable and provide a road map for the achievement of the goals of the Treaty. The agreement in 2010 was essential also to restore credibility of the NPT as a framework for nuclear disarmament in light of the disappointing degree of implementation of the 1995 principles and objectives and the 13 practical steps for nuclear disarmament that had been agreed to in 2000.

Kmentt noted that Austria had looked upon the 2010 Action Plan as an expression of urgency and setting a clear course towards the achievement of a world without nuclear-weapons. In this context, Austria acknowledged the continuing implementation of the new START and some positive developments in individual nuclear

weapon States, such as proposals for further nuclear arms reductions and steps with respect to transparency. Overall, however, after five years of working with the 2010 Action Plan, it must be concluded that the implementation of NPT Article VI and the disarmament part of the Action Plan were not sufficiently credible and were a cause of serious concern. Contrary to expectations and hopes, there had not been a determined move away from reliance on nuclear weapons in the past years. There had been statements by political leaders in nuclear weapon States declaring the clear intention to retain nuclear weapons for several decades as being necessary for their national security. This was further evidenced by plans and very large budget allocations to modernize nuclear weapons and the respective infrastructure in nuclear weapon States.

Austria was very concerned about these developments and the obvious credibility problem this causes for the NPT. The modernization and long term plans to retain nuclear weapons may not be in direct violation of the letter of the NPT. However, these decisions certainly were contrary to the spirit and purpose of Article VI of the NPT and the commitments undertaken in 1995, 2000 and 2010. This was a dangerous development for the global nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime and indeed for international law as a whole. The permanent members of the UN Security Council have a special responsibility for the maintenance of peace and security in the world, including in efforts to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons. Such efforts were undermined and suffered from a credibility deficit if the same States promoted the concept and supposed value of nuclear weapons for their own security.

Austria had worked with other States to establish an Open Ended Working Group on Taking forward Multilateral Nuclear Disarmament Negotiations (A/RES/67/56) which met successfully in 2013 and adopted a final report by consensus based on the very

productive and substantive discussions and recommendations on how to achieve and maintain a world without nuclear weapons. Most importantly, Austria was strongly invested into promoting the humanitarian imperative in all efforts and negotiations related to nuclear weapons. The focus on this aspect and the fact that the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons was now firmly established in the international agenda was, in Austria's assessment, the single most positive and important development of the past review cycle.

Austria had co-initiated the joint declarations on the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons together with the so-called "Group of 16". The latest version of this statement was delivered only yesterday by Austria's Foreign Minister Sebastian Kurz on behalf of 159 States. Last December, Austria organized and hosted the Vienna Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons. It was the third international conference of this kind following two previous meetings in Norway and Mexico. The Vienna Conference was attended by 158 States, a broad spectrum on international organizations from the UN system, the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, many academics and experts and several hundred representatives of civil society. The discussions and findings with respect to the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons, the risks associated with the existence of these weapons, as well as the legal and moral dimension of this weaponry constituted a powerful set of arguments that should lead to an urgent and profound change in the nuclear weapons debate. Moreover, the conclusions that emerged from the humanitarian initiative demonstrated the interest and responsibility for nuclear disarmament that all States must act upon. In light of these conclusions the arguments for the retention of nuclear weapons must be considered a high risk and ultimately irresponsible gamble based on an illusion of security and safety.

Austria also issued a national pledge which highlighted the conclusions that need to be drawn from this new evidence, *inter alia* that (...) all states parties to the NPT to (should) identify and pursue effective measures to fill the legal gap for the prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons (...), and the wish to cooperate with all relevant stakeholders (...) in efforts to stigmatize, prohibit and eliminate nuclear weapons in light of their unacceptable humanitarian consequences and associated risks. Austria was grateful that nearly 80 States had formally supported and/or endorsed this pledge to date.

Ecuador delivered the statement on behalf of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (**CELAC**) and stated that as part of the first densely populated area in the world to be established as a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone through the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean, the Treaty of Tlatelolco, the 33 Member States of CELAC participate in this timely Review Conference with a great desire for meaningful progress towards achieving the objective of a world free of nuclear weapons. Since the 2010 Review Conference, Latin American and Caribbean States, as a region, had made further strides in strengthening their commitment towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons, including at the highest political level.

At the Founding Summit of CELAC in December 2011, held in Caracas, Venezuela, the Heads of State and Government adopted a Special Communiqué on the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons, in accordance with the region's long-standing position supporting a world free of nuclear weapons. The Declaration reaffirmed that complete and verifiable nuclear disarmament was of the highest priority and also reiterated commitment to nuclear non-proliferation. In each subsequent Summit, 2013 in Santiago, Chile, 2014 in Havana, Cuba, and 2015 in Belen, Costa Rica, the Heads of State and Government had reiterated this same

commitment to a nuclear weapons free world through Special Declarations.

CELAC recalled the 1996 Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice and reaffirmed that the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons constituted a crime against humanity and a violation of international law, including international humanitarian law, and of the Charter of the United Nations. The Community reiterated that the only effective guarantee against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons was their complete prohibition and total elimination.

CELAC noted that the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons raised grave concerns in the Community. CELAC called on all States to address this issue whenever nuclear weapons were discussed, including at this Review Conference. CELAC therefore commended the organization of the Conferences on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons held in Oslo, Nayarit and Vienna for their deliberations and contributions to the global discourse in achieving a nuclear weapons free world. As demonstrated by the testimonies of survivors, evidence and scientific data, nuclear weapons constituted a serious threat to security, the development of peoples and to civilization in general. Furthermore, it had been ascertained that no State or international organization had the capacity to successfully address and provide humanitarian assistance and protection in case of a nuclear blast. These conferences also highlighted the ongoing risk of the detonation of nuclear weapons, either by accident or design.

CELAC strongly supported the message by His Holiness Pope Francis to the Vienna Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons in the sense that “Spending on nuclear weapons squanders the wealth of nations. To prioritize such spending is a mistake and a misallocation of resources which would be far better

invested in the areas of integral human development, education, health and the fight against extreme poverty”.

CELAC emphasized that the Treaty of Tlatelolco and the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (OPANAL) had been and remained a political, legal and institutional reference point in the establishment of other nuclear-weapon-free zones in different regions of the world. OPANAL’s experience, together with that of the other four existing Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones and Mongolia, as a single state unilaterally declared free of nuclear weapons, constituted an important legacy of the international community for the inspiration of new nuclear-weapon-free zones. In this context, the Community urged nuclear-weapon states to withdraw all interpretative declarations to the Protocols of the Treaty of Tlatelolco, which constituted factual reservations prohibited by the Treaty, and to respect the denuclearized nature of the Latin American and Caribbean region, thus helping to eliminate the introduction, presence or possible use of nuclear weapons against the countries of the region. Therefore, the Community reiterated its commitment to continue working, including through OPANAL, with the Nuclear Weapon States Parties to the Protocols to the Treaty, in order to achieve the removal of these interpretative declarations.

Dr Lassina Zerbo, Executive Secretary of the CTBTO, noted that the CTBT was a “stepping stone” for strengthening the NPT and for reinforcing the non-proliferation and disarmament regime. A legally binding test ban represented one key area where all NPT States Parties were already in agreement. “We must ask ourselves, why is it that we have failed to bring the CTBT into full legal standing? It has been nearly twenty years since the opening for signature, and yet the Treaty is still not in force. Let me state the facts: Your efforts and those of the States you represent have not been in vain; it is indisputable that the Treaty has strengthened the international norm against nuclear testing; every nuclear test

conducted since its adoption has been met with universal condemnation”.

Zerbo noted that it had been demonstrated beyond a doubt that the CTBT was internationally and effectively verifiable, with 90% of its International Monitoring System completed. This significant element of the Treaty’s verification regime already provided a detection capability far better than what was thought to be attainable 20 years ago. When considered along with national technical means and national facilities that contributed to the Treaty’s verification, the deterrent value of the monitoring system was such that no State could confidently carry out a clandestine test. Furthermore, the Treaty’s monitoring technologies had a proven value in civil and scientific areas, as was demonstrated by the essential role played by the noble gas network in the aftermath of the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear accident.

Zerbo noted that the CTBTO had worked closely with the remaining Annex 2 States to facilitate their respective ratifications. China had taken the important step of connecting its monitoring stations to the system. The US administration was engaged in an education campaign with CTBT ratification as the end goal. Zerbo said that his recent visit to Israel had reconfirmed his opinion that it could be the next Annex 2 State to ratify the Treaty. He remained committed to engaging with other non-ratifying Annex 2 States. Zerbo said his contacts with all actors had continued, taking him last week to the Vatican, where he was blessed with an audience with His Holiness Pope Francis during which the Pope reaffirmed his personal commitment to a nuclear weapon free world. Zerbo also was pleased that Russia had shown its commitment to the CTBT by pledging to complete the IMS stations on its territory within two years, and by promoting the Treaty at the highest political levels. And, the United Kingdom had been a staunch advocate of the CTBT, providing vital support for the CTBTO’s

efforts to universalize the Treaty and secure the ratifications from the remaining Annex 2 States.

Zerbo concluded that bringing the CTBT into force was the responsibility of all NPT States Parties. And just as importantly, if action was not taken, States would bear the responsibility for letting the Treaty fail. With continued support for the CTBT and the full development of its verification regime, Zerbo was confident that this outcome would be avoided.

H.E. Mr. Bashar Ja’afari delivered the Syria’s statement. He quoted extensively from the book by the former IAEA Director General, Mohamed ElBaradei, *Diplomacy in an Age of Deception: Nuclear Diplomacy in Treacherous Times*, regarding the bombing in 2007 by Israel of the Dair Al’zour site in Syria alleging it to be an under construction nuclear reactor not declared to the IAEA and that following the bombing the IAEA was unable to secure any commercial satellite imagery of the site. He also cited from the book regarding the fact that the IAEA could not conclude one way or the other whether the bombed site was in fact a reactor. Ja’afari then criticized the current IAEA Director General Yukiya Amano for the Agency’s conclusion in 2011 that the bombed site at Dair Al’zour “was very likely a reactor”. Ja’afari called upon Israel to join the NPT and to place of its nuclear activities under full scope IAEA safeguards.

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 Thursday, 30 April. The mood in the Conference continues to be subdued and cordial, and delegations have started quiet lobbying and side discussions on garnering support for their preferred positions and text in the

outcome document of the conference. The Chair for the subsidiary bodies three for SB-3 (peaceful uses) was announced – Kazakhstan; while consultations continue on finding a chair for SB-2 (Middle East).

Tariq Rauf
