



**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: 30 April 2014**

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

The General Debate concluded at the end on the fourth day of the review conference with some 32 statements by States, groupings and intergovernmental organizations: **Humanitarian Consequences Group** - (Australia, on behalf of), H.E. Ms. Gillian Bird, Permanent Representative; **Kuwait**, H.E. Mr. Mansour Ayyad Al-Otaibi, Permanent Representative; **Sri Lanka**, H.E. Dr. Rohan Perera, Permanent Representative; **Malaysia**, H.E. Mr. Ramlan Ibrahim, Permanent Representative; **Palau**, H.E. Dr. Caleb Otto, Permanent Representative; **Papua New Guinea**, H.E. Mr. Robert Guba Aisi, Permanent Representative; **Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela**, H.E. Mr. Rafael Ramírez, Permanent Representative; **Lithuania**, H.E. Ms. Raimonda Murmokaitė, Permanent Representative; **Morocco**, H.E. Mr. Omar Hilale, Permanent Representative; **Peru**, H.E. Mr. Gustavo Meza-Cuadra, Permanent Representative; **Zimbabwe**, Ms. Frederick M. Shava, Permanent Representative; **Qatar**, H.E. Dr. Ahmad Hassen Al Hammadi, Director of Legal Affairs Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs; **Vienna Group of 10** - (Australia, on behalf of),

Mr. Richard Mathews, Director of Nuclear Policy, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade; **Niger**, Mrs. Zinabou Mindaoudou, President of the National High Authority to Nuclear Energy; **Portugal**, H.E. Mr. Álvaro Mendonça e Moura, Permanent Representative; **Montenegro**, H.E. Ms. Ivana Pajević, Chargé d'Affaires, a.i.; **Ghana**, Mr. Philbert Johnson, Chargé d'Affaires/DPR, Permanent Mission; **Nepal**; Mrs. Sewa Lamsal Adhikari, Chargé d'Affaires, a.i.; **Brunei Darussalam**, Ms. Norazlianah Ibrahim, Deputy Permanent Representative; **Oman**, Mr. Mohamed Ahmed Al-Shanfari, Deputy Permanent Representative; **NWS [P-5]** (The United Kingdom, on behalf of); **Guatemala**, Ms. Mónica Bolaños, Deputy Permanent Representative; **Nicaragua**, H.E. Mr. Jaime Hermida Castillo, Deputy Permanent Representative; **Kenya**, H.E. Ms. Koki Muli Grignon, Deputy Permanent Representative; **Maldives**, Mr. Jeffrey Salim Waheed, Chargé d'Affaires, a.i.; **Bosnia and Herzegovina**, Mr. Mirza Pašić, Counsellor to the Permanent Mission; **Zambia**, Brig. Gen. Erick Mwewa, Military Advisor; **Malawi**, Colonel George Jaffu, Military Adviser; and **Yemen**, Mr. Amjad Qaid Ahmed Al-Kumaim, Second Secretary, Permanent Mission; International Governmental Organizations (IGOs): Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (**OPANAL**), Ambassador Luiz Filipe de Macedo Soares, Secretary-General; League of Arab States (**LAS**), H.E. Mr. Ahmed Fathalla, Permanent Observer; and International Committee of the Red Cross (**ICRC**), Mr. Philip Spoerri, Permanent Observer.

**A Statement on the Humanitarian Consequences of Nuclear Weapons was delivered by Australia** [*on behalf of States members of nuclear-armed alliances or so-called “umbrella States”*]: Australia, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, and Turkey.

*[This group is different from the much larger group of States supporting the Humanitarian Initiative, whose statement was delivered by Austria on Tuesday.]* The statement noted that a renewed global focus on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons had reenergised concerns about the horrific consequences for humanity that would result from a nuclear weapon detonation or a terrorist attack involving fissile material. These States expressed concern about the continuing nuclear risks to humanity and a desire for a peaceful future for successive generations, which underpinned their long-standing advocacy for effective progress on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, particularly through the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and its universal application. To create the conditions that would facilitate further major reductions in nuclear arsenals and eventually eliminate them requires the global community to cooperate to address the important security and humanitarian dimensions of nuclear weapons. It will also require effort to further reduce levels of hostility and tension between States – particularly between those possessing nuclear weapons - and to pursue confidence-building measures (CBMs) such as enhanced transparency of existing nuclear arsenals and a reduced role for nuclear weapons in military doctrines. The statement noted with disappointment the current increased tensions between nuclear-weapon States and encouraged them to continue to nevertheless seek to further CBMs and nuclear arsenal reductions.

The statement noted that as agreed in Article VI of the NPT, a multilateral framework or treaty on general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control would have to be negotiated to underpin a world without nuclear weapons. The hard practical work necessary to bring closer to a world free of nuclear weapons must still be done. Work needed to be done methodically and with realism to attain the necessary confidence and transparency to bring about nuclear disarmament. There are no short cuts.

**Palau** stated that it was proud to be the first nation in the world to have adopted a constitution banning nuclear weapons. As a Pacific Island nation, it had a particular interest in realizing a nuclear-weapon-free world, as its region had experienced the catastrophic and ongoing humanitarian consequences of more than 300 nuclear test explosions conducted over the course of five decades. Palau said that it stood in solidarity with the Republic of the Marshall Islands in its legal proceedings before the International Court of Justice aimed at compelling the nuclear-armed States to fulfill, at long last, their legal obligation to disarm. Forty-five years after the entry into force of the NPT, it was unacceptable that more than 15,000 nuclear weapons remained in the world, threatening human survival and the fragile ecosystems of the planet. Even today, Palau was within a striking distance of nuclear warheads from an unfriendly nation.

Palau added that it was clear that the NPT faced major challenges. Whilst it has had been largely successful in preventing the spread of nuclear weapons to new States, very little had been achieved with respect to the Treaty's disarmament obligations, and it was of deep concern that all five NPT nuclear-weapon States continued to invest heavily in programmes to upgrade and modernize their nuclear arsenals. Against this backdrop, three major conferences had been convened to examine the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons and build global support for a treaty banning them completely. Palau commended the Norwegian, Mexican and Austrian governments for hosting these important conferences, which had successfully reframed the discourse on nuclear weapons to focus on their harmful effects on human beings.

Palau stated that it fully endorsed the Pledge delivered at the Vienna conference in December 2014 to launch a diplomatic process to negotiate and adopt a nuclear weapon ban treaty. This would fill the gaps in existing international law and help advance

nuclear disarmament. Negotiations should begin in time for the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversaries of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombings. Palau urged all States to endorse this important Pledge.

Palau stated that nuclear weapons were the deadliest of all weapons of mass destruction, yet they were the only ones not yet outlawed. Palau supported the proposal by the New Agenda Coalition to devote substantial time at this Review Conference, in Main Committee 1, to discussing options for effective measures to ban and eliminate nuclear weapons. A nuclear weapon ban treaty would complement the NPT and other related treaties, including the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and the various regional nuclear-weapon-free zone treaties, including the South Pacific nuclear-free-zone Treaty of Rarotonga.

The negotiations should proceed even if the nuclear-armed States and some of their nuclear-dependent allies refused to participate. It was important to establish a clear legal norm against the use and possession of these weapons. Palau supported a negotiating process that was open to all States and blockable by none.

The **five nuclear-weapon States (NWS)** – the People’s Republic of China, France, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and the United States of America – delivered a **joint statement** read out by the representative of the UK. The NWS reaffirmed their enduring commitment to the NPT, which remained indispensable to the maintenance of international peace and security. For forty-five years, the NPT had served as the cornerstone of the international nuclear non-proliferation regime, a conduit for expanding the peaceful uses of nuclear energy amongst Parties to the Treaty, and the foundation for the collective pursuit of nuclear disarmament.

The NWS stated their commitment to strengthening each of the NPT’s mutually reinforcing pillars—disarmament, non-

proliferation, and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. These were complementary goals and should be pursued together, systematically and with equal determination across all three pillars by all States Parties. The consensus Action Plan from the 2010 Review Conference was unprecedented and a result of the strengthened NPT review process adopted in 1995. The NWS supported the fullest implementation of all Action Plan recommendations and called on all States Parties to continue working toward that end. The 2015 Review Conference presented the opportunity to reaffirm that the Action Plan remained valid as a road-map, to take stock of its implementation, and to consider where consensus may be possible for further measures building upon the 2010 Action Plan.

The nuclear-weapon States reaffirmed the shared goal of nuclear disarmament and general and complete disarmament as referenced in the preamble and provided for in Article VI of the NPT. In this regard, the NWS said they remained steadfast in their commitment to seeking a safer world for all and achieving a world without nuclear weapons, in accordance with the goals of the NPT. They continued to pursue progressive and concrete steps towards this end, including the relevant recommendations of the Action Plan, in a way that promoted international stability, peace and security, and based on the principle of increased and undiminished security for all. The NWS continue to believe that an incremental, step-by-step approach was the only practical option for making progress towards nuclear disarmament, while upholding global strategic security and stability. This goal was what motivated their concerted efforts to pursue practical steps toward nuclear disarmament. All States could help fulfill this goal by creating the necessary security environment through resolving regional tensions, tackling proliferation challenges, promoting collective security, and making progress in all areas of disarmament.

The NWS stated that they were ever cognizant of the severe consequences that would accompany the use of nuclear weapons. They affirmed their resolve to prevent such an occurrence from happening. They each gave the highest priority to ensuring the safety, security, and effective control over nuclear weapons, and they each implemented technical and procedural measures in this area that they continually assessed and improved. The NWS further affirmed that they did not target any State with nuclear weapons. They noted the importance of reducing the role of nuclear weapons in national security strategies. They said that they would continue to pursue dialogue and cooperation in support of such efforts as appropriate.

The NWS noted that since the UK had initiated the “P5” process in 2009, they had held six conferences to foster dialogue, transparency and common approaches to strengthening the NPT. France planned to host the seventh conference. Each conference had built on the last and helped lay the groundwork for further steps. They continued to implement Action 5 of the Action Plan to “further enhance transparency and increase mutual confidence” through “P5” dialogue and action. In this regard, the NWS had agreed on a common reporting framework in 2014 under France’s leadership and had completed a first edition of a Glossary of Key Nuclear Terms under China’s leadership. This edition would be released during the Review Conference and a side event would be held to introduce their efforts in this regard. The NWS intended to revise and update the Glossary as appropriate in due course. Also in this regard, the NWS had increased their engagement with the wider disarmament community, including by meeting with non-nuclear-weapon States as part of the most recent NWS Conference in London and continuing P5 engagement with civil society.

The **International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)** spoke in its capacity as the organization mandated by States to protect and assist the victims of armed conflict and other situations of

violence, and to promote and strengthen international humanitarian law. It was the horrific suffering that the ICRC witnessed in Hiroshima, while supporting the Japanese Red Cross in assisting the victims of the atomic bombing, which led it in September 1945 to call on States to prohibit nuclear weapons, a call repeatedly made since then by the broader International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.

The ICRC reminded that since nuclear weapons were first used 70 years ago, the body of evidence of the devastating human cost of any use of nuclear weapons had continued to grow. In the last three years in particular, the inter-governmental conferences held in Oslo, Nayarit and Vienna on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons had given the international community a much clearer grasp of the effects that a nuclear detonation would have on people and societies around the globe, as well as on the environment. At this pivotal moment of the NPT, it was crucial that States Parties took into account the new research, risks and perspectives on nuclear weapons that had come to light, draw the necessary conclusions and take concrete action to eliminate these horrendous weapons. The evidence today showed: • that nuclear weapons were unique in their destructive power and in the scale of human suffering they cause and that their use, even on a limited scale, would have catastrophic consequences for human health and the environment; • that the effects on human health could last for decades and impact the children of survivors through genetic damage to their parents; • that the humanitarian consequences of a nuclear-weapon detonation would not be limited to the country where it occurred but would impact other States and their populations; • that, in most countries and at the international level, there was no effective or feasible means of assisting a substantial portion of survivors in the immediate aftermath of a nuclear detonation, while adequately protecting those delivering assistance; and finally • that the risk of accidental nuclear-weapon detonation remained a very real danger.



In the view of the ICRC, these findings should prompt all States to reassess nuclear weapons in both legal and policy terms. It urged NPT States Parties to seize the moment of this Review Conference and heed the 2011 appeal of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement for States “to ensure that nuclear weapons are never again used”, and “to pursue in good faith and conclude with urgency and determination negotiations to prohibit the use of and completely eliminate nuclear weapons through a legally binding international agreement, based on existing commitments and international obligations”. Nuclear weapons were the only weapon of mass destruction not explicitly and comprehensively prohibited under international law today. In light of the catastrophic consequences of nuclear weapons, which the NPT States Parties had recognized, filling this gap was a humanitarian imperative.

In its statement, **OPANAL** noted that a major event in the past five years was the creation of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States – CELAC, in 2011. At CELAC Summits, in Havana in 2014 and Costa Rica in 2015, the Heads of State and Government designated OPANAL as the specialized regional body for articulating common positions and joint actions on nuclear disarmament. Special Declarations on Nuclear Disarmament were adopted at those Summits as evidence of the prominence of the matter on the regional agenda. Moreover, OPANAL issued a Declaration on the occasion of the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons (A/C.1/69/2) on 26 September last year, in which, among other matters, Member States committed to “continue to discuss and raise awareness on the multiple and catastrophic humanitarian consequences of any intentional or accidental nuclear detonation.”

OPANAL stated that the NPT Review Process could not be a circular cycle always returning to the point of departure. While there were delays and setbacks, our vision had to be future-oriented and avoid the pessimistic or cynical thought of assuming

that the NPT was here to stay and that the world was not going to end if the Review Conference failed.

OPANAL noted that this Conference was responsible for making decisions to ensure compliance with all NPT undertakings, including Action 5 adopted in 2010, which stated that this Conference must “take stock and consider the next steps for the full implementation of Article VI.” During the last five years new conflicts had emerged in the global scenario. In many regions, the humanitarian and political conditions had seriously deteriorated, as in the case of the Middle East. This was an additional reason to move ahead in implementing the 1995 Resolution on the Middle East and the decision to convene a conference on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of weapons of mass destruction. The Conference and the decisions it adopted depended on the States of that region; however, all NPT States Party had a stake in the matter.

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**

With the conclusion of the General Debate, the Main Committees will commence their work from Friday, 1 May. Main Committee I (disarmament), chaired by Ambassador Enrique Romàn-Morey (Peru), will meet in the morning session on Friday. The Chairs for all three subsidiary bodies (SB) have been agreed – Switzerland for SB-1, Slovenia for SB-2, and Kazakhstan for SB-3. Civil society presentations will be made on Friday afternoon. Starting on Monday, 4 May, the Conference will move into high gear with meetings of all three Main Committees and their respective subsidiary bodies.

Tariq Rauf

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