

Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative (NPDI)

Joint Statement to the first session of the NPT PrepCom

(Vienna, 2 -12 May 2017)

1. On behalf of Australia, Canada, Chile, Germany, Japan, Mexico, the Netherlands, Nigeria, the Philippines, Poland, Turkey and the United Arab Emirates, member states of the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative, or NPDI, I would like to express my heartfelt congratulations to you, Ambassador van der Kwast, on your assumption of the chairmanship of the first session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2020 NPT Review Conference. I assure you of the utmost support of the NPDI for your leadership in making this PrepCom a success.

Mr. Chairperson,

2. As we start the 2020 NPT Review Cycle, we, the members of the NPDI, renew our determination to strengthen the NPT and to achieve the goal of a world free of nuclear weapons.

3. The NPDI acknowledges that differences exist with regard to the ongoing negotiations of a legally-binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons. Indeed, those differences are also reflected within the NPDI membership. They will not, however, affect our undertaking to continue working towards the implementation of the 2010 NPT Action plan. The NPDI remains absolutely united in our commitment to the NPT and trusts that these negotiations do not negatively impact the current NPT Review Cycle.

4. The NPT remains the essential foundation for the achievement of nuclear disarmament, as the cornerstone of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime and as the indispensable basis for the development of the peaceful uses of nuclear technology. The pursuit and achievement of these shared goals, and the strengthening of the NPT regime, benefit all NPT members, stressing the importance of common and inclusive approaches.

Mr. Chairperson,

5. The NPDI is a cross-regional group, bringing together a diverse alignment of non-nuclear-weapon states. This diversity is our strength. We will continue to leverage this to play a constructive and proactive role in bridging positions during the 2020 NPT Review Cycle and maintain our signature approach to strengthening the NPT on the basis of the 2010 NPT Action Plan.

6. The NPDI is pleased to submit for consideration at this PrepCom several working papers on: North Korea; a Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty; the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty; transparency; negative security assurances; disarmament education; IAEA additional protocols; and peaceful uses. As our diverse, cross-regional membership was able to reach consensus on these papers, we hope this language will be acceptable to all States.

Mr. Chairperson,

7. With a view to achieving the unequivocal undertaking by all nuclear-weapon states to eliminate their nuclear arsenals in accordance with article VI, we call for greater progress on **disarmament**.

We call upon the nuclear-weapon states to agree on a standard reporting form and to use this to provide regular reports to the NPT on implementation of their nuclear disarmament obligations; noting that reporting is an effective instrument both for increasing transparency on nuclear disarmament activities and for greater accountability as a part of the strengthened review process.

8. The NPDI also welcomes the establishment of the high-level Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty expert preparatory group, and calls upon the group to strive for an ambitious outcome that clearly advances the work already carried out by the FMCT Group of Governmental Experts. We remain strongly committed to its goal of working towards the commencement of negotiations on an FMCT.

9. We urge all states that have yet to ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty to do so without delay and without conditions, in particular the remaining eight Annex 2 states whose ratification is necessary for the Treaty to enter into force.

10. The NPDI also supports the establishment of the Group of Governmental Experts on nuclear disarmament verification. Work on meeting the challenges of verification is a priority that should bring together all supporters of nuclear disarmament. Verification, along with transparency and irreversibility, constitute the underlying principles of disarmament as outlined in the 2010 NPT Action Plan. As such, we highlight the importance of initiatives such as the International Partnership for Nuclear Disarmament Verification and its significance as a cooperative disarmament effort between nuclear-weapon states and non-nuclear weapon states.

11. On **non-proliferation**, we are committed to strengthening the effectiveness and efficiency of the IAEA safeguards system. We consider the IAEA Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement, in combination with an Additional Protocol, to be the current international verification standard and call upon all States that have not yet done so to conclude and implement an Additional Protocol without delay. The NPDI recognises the role of the IAEA in the context of the further development of safeguards to maintain and increase their effectiveness and efficiency. Furthermore, we underscore the crucial role of **export controls** to support the fulfilment of nuclear non-proliferation obligations under Articles I, II, and paragraph 2 of Article III of the NPT

12. The NPDI strongly condemns **North Korea's** continued development of its nuclear weapons and ballistic missile programs. These undermine the NPT and the global non-proliferation regime, and pose a grave and increasing threat to both regional stability and international peace and security. We strongly urge North Korea to take concrete steps to honour its commitments under the 2005 Six-Party Talks Joint Statement; to fully comply with its obligations under all relevant UN Security Council resolutions; to return to a meaningful dialogue with the international community; to abandon all nuclear weapons and existing nuclear programs in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner; and to return to compliance with its IAEA safeguards agreement and the NPT.

13. The NPDI supports the **Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA)**. The JCPOA is a valuable success of diplomacy in the Middle East. It is a testimony to the continued relevance of the NPT on which it is built. We commend the IAEA for its ongoing efforts to monitor and verify Iran's implementation of its commitments under the JCPOA. Full and transparent implementation of the JCPOA will strengthen the non-proliferation regime.

14. The NPDI remains a staunch supporter of the right of all States Parties who meet their non-proliferation obligations to have unfettered access to the full benefits of nuclear science and technology, and particularly calls upon those states with the most nuclear expertise to share it, particularly with those states facing the most urgent developmental needs. The NPDI underlines the importance of increased accessibility and broader application of nuclear science and technology in

the context of Article IV of the NPT. We emphasize the central role of the IAEA in the **peaceful uses of nuclear energy** and in safeguards verification. States must also commit to the ongoing implementation of safeguards as well as appropriate and effective levels of safety and security.

15. In order to foster further momentum for achieving a world free of nuclear weapons, the NPDI stresses the significance of spreading awareness of the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons across borders and generations. Through disarmament and non-proliferation education, and translation of *Hibakushas'* testimonies into multiple languages, messages have been sent to the world about the consequences of the nuclear weapons use. Such endeavours should continue, including practical steps to implement the recommendations contained in the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations study on disarmament and non-proliferation education (A/57/124), as per action 22 of the 2010 NPT Action Plan

Mr. Chairperson,

16. With no consensus outcomes document coming out of the 2015 NPT Review Conference, it is more important than ever that all States party work together to fulfil their commitments and obligations under the NPT and to strengthen the Treaty. The NPDI is ready to work with you and with all delegations to make this PrepCom a successful beginning for the coming NPT Review Cycle.

Thank you