General Statement of the Republic of Estonia

Third Preparatory Committee for the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) New York, 29 April -10 May 2019

Mr. Chairman,

Allow me to congratulate you on the assumption of your duties and assure you our full support in achieving a successful outcome of the meeting. We align ourselves with the statements of the European Union and would like to emphasize some points of particular importance to Estonia.

Mr. Chairman,

At the time of increasing international pressure on the non-proliferation, arms control and disarmament architecture, it is essential that all parties contribute to improving the overall security environment and avoid further erosion of the rules-based international system. The Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons Treaty (NPT) is the foundation of global efforts to pursue nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and peaceful uses of nuclear energy. We have to do our utmost to uphold this major non-proliferation global regime and further strengthen its role as a core multilateral instrument of international security and stability.

Mr Chairman,

Estonia shares the ultimate goal of a world without nuclear weapons to be pursued in a practical, realistic and responsible way. To this end, we support comprehensive, balanced and full implementation of the 2010 Review Conference Action Plan. Its concrete steps in all NPT pillars remain valid and provide a basis for the work also in the current review process.

We reiterate our endorsement for the commencement of negotiations of a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons in the Conference of Disarmament. In this connection, we welcome the recommendations by the High Level FMCT Expert Preparatory Group where an Estonian expert also actively participated.

Estonia calls on all States that have not yet done so, to sign and ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) without further delay. We urge the Democratic People’s Republic of
Korea (DPRK) to engage seriously in the negotiations with a view to abandoning all its nuclear weapons programmes as well as its delivery systems in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner. It is crucial that the DPRK maintains its declared suspension of nuclear tests and ballistic missile launches and complies with its obligations under the UN Security Council resolutions. Until then, the existing sanctions must be strictly enforced.

The continued full and effective implementation of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) is a key element of the nuclear non-proliferation global architecture and essential for the security of the region and beyond.

We regret continued non-compliance by Syrian Arab Republic with its Safeguards Agreement under the NPT. We strongly urge Syria to resolve all outstanding issues in full cooperation with the IAEA and to adhere to the Additional Protocol as soon as possible.

Mr. Chairman,

Estonia recognises the legitimate interest of non-nuclear weapon States in receiving security assurances from nuclear weapon States as part of binding and agreed security arrangements. We recall that Russia has violated its commitment to refrain from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Ukraine under the Budapest Memorandum of 1994.

The Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty has contributed to European and broader international security and stability for decades. We urge Russia to address its violation of the Treaty in a substantial and transparent manner and return to the compliance of the Treaty as soon as possible.

We encourage the US and Russua to extend the New START Treaty and pursue discussions on Confidence Building Measures and further reductions of their arsenals.

Mr Chairman,

Estonia values the role of the IAEA's system of safeguards in strengthening the nuclear non-proliferation regime. In order to ensure the safe use of nuclear energy, it is important for all NPT States Parties to follow the highest safety and security standards. Estonia is committed to support the IAEA Nuclear Security Fund.
Estonia also contributes to the IAEA's Technical Cooperation Programme and appreciates the Agency's role in promoting the responsible development of peaceful applications of nuclear technology.

Mr. Chairman,

We believe that 2019 Preparatory Committee should reflect on progress of the 2010 NPT Action Plan and pragmatic measures such as starting negotiations of the FMCT, achieving the early entry into force of the CTBT, developing further cooperation on nuclear disarmament verification and increasing transparency measures. We are convinced that focusing on common goals and engaging constructively in advancing realistic and achievable objectives, will enable us to achieve a successful outcome in 2020 to mark the 50th anniversary of the NPT.

Thank you.