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**Preparatory Committee for the 2010 Review  
Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the  
Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons**

7 May 2007

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**First session**

Vienna, 30 April-11 May 2007

**Other provisions: institutional reform, article X  
and withdrawal****Working paper submitted by Canada**

1. In looking at other provisions of the Treaty, we should look closely at ways to improve the functioning of the NPT, most notably through establishing a mechanism whereby States parties can meet collectively to discuss pressing issues. At present we lack the ability to send clear messages, in a timely fashion, on subjects of critical importance to the NPT. Rather, we must wait until the quinquennial review, although even then, as we saw in 2005, these subjects may not be adequately addressed. If States parties can react rapidly to challenges, this in turn will bolster the credibility of the NPT and create additional disincentives for States to violate its norms and provisions.

**Institutional reform**

2. At the 2005 Review Conference, Canada submitted a working paper (NPT/CONF.2005/WP.39) that called for a series of institutional reforms beginning with the establishment of a small standing bureau of the NPT. This bureau would convene extraordinary sessions in the event that a State party submits a notification of intent to withdraw from the treaty, or if other situations arise that threaten the integrity or viability of the NPT. Its members would also act as stewards of the Treaty and provide much-needed continuity throughout the review cycle. They could also interact with other diplomatic entities or processes relevant to the Treaty's purposes (e.g. with respect to the six-party talks on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea).

3. The Canadian working paper also recommended annual meetings of the NPT, which could consider and decide on any issues covered by the Treaty. This would ensure an annual authoritative meeting of the NPT membership and bring our Treaty in line with contemporary practice of the other major conventions related to weapons of mass destruction. Such an arrangement would also serve to take some pressure off the Review Conferences. The paper demonstrated how annual one-week meetings could be organized without an increase in overall meeting time, while still



leaving sufficient space for necessary preparatory work to be undertaken in the two years preceding a Review Conference.

4. Other elements espoused by the paper included the importance of annual reporting on implementation and a fuller participation of civil society in NPT meetings. These contributions, taken together, would lead to a major increase in accountability and transparency within the NPT. We look forward to further discussion of these ideas here and in the future, leading, we would hope, to appropriate action being taken at the 2010 Review Conference.

#### **Article X and withdrawal**

5. It is important that we address this issue adequately during the present NPT review cycle in order to establish a common understanding before we are faced with new challenges on this front. In this respect, there are a few principles upon which it is crucial that the Preparatory Committee should agree:

(a) No State should be allowed to withdraw from the NPT in a way that enables it to retain the fruits of its adherence to the Treaty while abandoning its obligations;

(b) A State party needs to be in compliance with its NPT obligations prior to exercising its right to withdraw under article X;

(c) Violations committed while a State is party to the NPT are neither erased nor absolved upon withdrawal.

6. We further reiterate the point made in Canada's working paper noted above, that any notification of intent to withdraw from the NPT should be considered as an extraordinary situation that threatens the integrity and viability of the Treaty and that merits a commensurate response.

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