

# Preparatory Committee for the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

3 April 2013

Original: English

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## Second session

Geneva, 22 April-3 May 2013

### Nuclear-weapon-free zones

#### Working paper submitted by Mongolia

1. The establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones is an effective regional measure to promote nuclear disarmament and prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons and, as such, promotes regional and international confidence and security. Nuclear-weapon-free zones are also widely recognized as practical regional measures towards a world free of nuclear weapons.

2. Mongolia supports the strengthening of existing nuclear-weapon-free zones. In this regard it welcomes the steps taken since the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons to address the outstanding issues that would allow the five nuclear-weapon States to sign and/or ratify the protocols to the relevant treaties on nuclear-weapon-free zones. It also supports the establishment of new zones, wherever possible, through the constructive application of the goal and essence of establishing nuclear-weapon-free zones without excluding any State or group of States owing to their geographical location or political affiliation.

3. Bearing all of this in mind, Mongolia strongly supports the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones in the Middle East, North-East Asia and other regions of the world. It believes that the full implementation of the 1995 resolution on the Middle East can open prospects for moving towards such a zone, vital for international security and stability, in that region. The Conference would yield practical results only if all States of the Middle East region participate in it. Likewise, it believes that a comprehensive approach to the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in North-East Asia would address realistically and resolve through diplomacy the issue of the nuclear weapons programme on the Korean peninsula.

4. In 1992 Mongolia, a country bordering two nuclear-weapon States, declared its territory a nuclear-weapon-free zone, and it has since been working to have that status internationally recognized and institutionalized. In 1998 the General Assembly adopted resolution 53/77 D, entitled “Mongolia’s international security and nuclear-weapon-free status”, in which the Assembly welcomed Mongolia’s initiative and invited Member States, including the five nuclear-weapon States, to



cooperate with Mongolia in taking the necessary measures to consolidate and strengthen its independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity, the inviolability of its borders, its economic security, its ecological balance and its nuclear-weapon-free status, as well as its independent foreign policy. This was the first resolution in which the Assembly addressed a Member State's initiative to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the context of its broader security interests and challenges, mindful of the fact that the viability of a State's single-State nuclear-weapon-free zone status would depend to a great extent on its actual location and the broader security environment.

5. Although the five nuclear-weapon States, which were expected to provide the necessary security assurances, agreed that Mongolia constituted a unique case, they were reluctant to support the concept of single-State nuclear-weapon-free zones lest that set a precedent. After some talks in 2000, they issued a joint statement regarding Mongolia's nuclear-weapon-free status saying that their unilateral declarations issued on 5 and 6 April 1995, referred to in Security Council resolution 984 (1995), applied to Mongolia.

6. Not totally discouraged by the joint statement of the five nuclear-weapon States, Mongolia has welcomed the statement as a step towards eventually institutionalizing its status. Subsequent talks between Mongolia and the five nuclear-weapon States resulted on 17 September 2012 in their signing of parallel declarations, in which the five nuclear-weapon States not only reiterated their intent to cooperate with Mongolia in implementing resolution 53/77 D but also affirmed their intent, as long as Mongolia maintained its nuclear-weapon-free status, to respect that status and not to contribute to any act that would violate it.

7. A unique case needs an equally unique approach. At this stage the five nuclear-weapon States are still not prepared to provide a legally binding assurance and are restricting themselves to "a political commitment" regarding Mongolia's status. Mongolia would have preferred to have a legally binding assurance from the five nuclear-weapon States, as is the case with other nuclear-weapon-free zones. However, since Mongolia maintains good-neighbourly relations with its two immediate neighbours, China and the Russian Federation, with which it does not have any territorial, border or other political dispute, it believes that it need not insist, at this stage, on assurance in treaty form, but rather on the practical rather than perceived effect of its status on its actual security.

8. On the other hand, the five nuclear-weapon States, in their joint declaration, reiterated their commitment to resolution 53/77 D, which takes a broad approach to Mongolia's security, and made reference to Mongolia's 2000 law regarding its nuclear-weapon-free status, pledging not to contribute to any act that would violate it. The law prohibits, as Mongolia's declaration points out, the dumping or disposing of nuclear-weapons-grade radioactive material or nuclear waste on the territory of Mongolia. Hence Mongolia welcomes the fact that the five States' declaration addresses the possible future nuclear security challenges that Mongolia could face. In Mongolia's context, addressing its economic security-related and ecological challenges, as explicitly pointed out in resolution 53/77 D, is important in making its status more effective and viable.

9. Mongolia looks forward to working with the international community, including the five nuclear-weapon States and other nuclear-weapon-free zones, in fully implementing resolution 53/77 D. That would contribute not only to enhancing

stability and confidence in the region but also to promoting nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

10. Mongolia's experience demonstrates that, in promoting the goals of nuclear-weapon-free zones, the diverse issues involved in the spirit of achieving practical results would need to be addressed through greater mutual understanding and accommodation, bearing in mind the basic concept of nuclear-weapon-free zones. In this spirit Mongolia is prepared to work with other States in promoting the goals and objectives of nuclear-weapon-free zones, including by sharing information and its experience.

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