
**Preparatory Committee for the 2020 Review
Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the
Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons**

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Chair: Mr. van der Kwast (Netherlands)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

General debate on issues related to all aspects of the work of the Preparatory Committee (*continued*)

1. **Ms. Angell-Hansen** (Norway), speaking on behalf of the Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden), said that the preparatory process for the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons was taking place in a particularly challenging international security landscape: the Democratic People's Republic of Korea was carrying out tests of nuclear weapons and launching ballistic missiles in defiance of the international community; there was growing concern that nuclear weapons might gain more prominence in security doctrines; and the prospects for new arms control achievements were discouraging.

2. The 2020 Review Conference would commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the entry into force of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and the twenty-fifth anniversary of its indefinite extension. The Non-Proliferation Treaty had established a fundamental global pact and there could be no doubt that it had served the international community well as it remained the first line of defence against the spread of nuclear weapons and also provided the framework for disarmament efforts. The stakes were therefore too high to allow failure to become a pattern. Every effort must be made to safeguard the continued relevance of the Treaty.

3. In March 2017, negotiations had begun in New York at the United Nations conference to negotiate a legally binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons, leading towards their total elimination. While the Nordic countries had differing views on that particular process, they were all in agreement about the fundamental value of the Non-Proliferation Treaty as the cornerstone for international peace and security. As they embarked upon a new review cycle, their focus would be on what united, rather than divided, them. Accordingly, they would seek a constructive dialogue and exchange of views with others in order to identify points of convergence.

4. The current review cycle should reaffirm the nuclear disarmament obligations of States parties pursuant to article VI of the Treaty and also the outcomes of the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, as well as the 2000 and 2010 Review Conferences, including the undertakings of nuclear-weapon States to eliminate

their arsenals. In particular, there was a need to implement actions 1, 2, 5 and 19 of the action plan contained in the Final Document of the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. While any possible proliferation loopholes must be closed, it was important to reaffirm the right of States parties to enjoy the peaceful uses of nuclear energy safely and securely.

5. The Nordic countries welcomed the establishment of a high-level fissile material cut-off treaty expert preparatory group, which included a Swedish expert, and stressed that a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices must be negotiated and concluded as soon as possible. Such a fissile material cut-off treaty could also identify ways to include a phased approach to the elimination of existing stockpiles.

6. The Nordic countries firmly condemned the nuclear tests carried out by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, which must comply with its Treaty obligations, permit the return of inspectors from the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and allow for the introduction of IAEA safeguards.

7. The failure to convene the conference on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction (Helsinki conference) in 2012 was regrettable. It was highly important to establish nuclear-weapon-free zones, which provided an avenue for legally binding negative security assurances, and the resolution on the Middle East adopted at the 1995 Review and Extension Conference remained valid.

8. The Nordic countries were providing practical and financial support for the implementation of the joint comprehensive plan of action agreed with Iran and, in that respect, highly valued the role played by IAEA in monitoring and verifying compliance. It was important now for all parties to live up to their commitments while acting in a way that built mutual confidence. Doing so could help to facilitate progress on a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East while further strengthening the global non-proliferation regime.

9. A credible non-proliferation regime was a precondition for achieving and maintaining a world without nuclear arms. IAEA safeguards agreements, in conjunction with additional protocols, constituted the current verification standard that enabled the Agency to conclude that all declared and undeclared nuclear activities were solely for peaceful purposes. The full implementation of the obligations contained in an

additional protocol was therefore in the interest of collective as well as individual security. Through an additional protocol, a State party improved confidence in the peaceful nature of its nuclear activities and was therefore much better placed to reap the benefits of article IV of the Treaty.

10. IAEA was indispensable not only for upholding the non-proliferation regime but also for its key contributions in such areas as nuclear safety and security, as well as the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and technology. It was vital, therefore, to provide the Agency with the necessary political and financial support to enable it to carry out its mandate.

11. While the Nordic countries had adopted different approaches to nuclear energy, they recognized that peaceful nuclear applications went far beyond the generation of nuclear power. Isotopes were crucial in such sectors as health, food production, water management, environmental monitoring and cultural preservation. They also shared the view that nuclear safety and security were essential, including as enablers of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

12. Lastly, the Nordic countries were actively contributing to several initiatives to prevent nuclear terrorism. All States must work and act together to eliminate that threat.

13. **Mr. Benedejčič** (Slovenia) said that his country strongly advocated in favour of universal adherence to and full implementation of all non-proliferation and disarmament treaties and conventions. The common goal of a world free of nuclear weapons must be achieved progressively through the full implementation of the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

14. Slovenia was committed to the action plan of the 2010 Review Conference and supported activities focused on delivering tangible results related to progressive disarmament. However, effective, verifiable and irreversible nuclear disarmament would require not only appropriate technical and security conditions, but also the active engagement of the nuclear-weapon States. Consequently, immediate negotiations on a legally binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons would not contribute towards achieving that noble goal, to which his country was also fully committed.

15. As one of only 30 States with an operating nuclear power reactor, Slovenia attached great importance to the work of IAEA and welcomed its significant contribution to the implementation of the Treaty. The Agency was also to be commended for ensuring that Iran continued to fulfil its commitments

under the joint comprehensive plan of action, which was essential in order to maintain international confidence in the exclusively peaceful nature of the Iranian nuclear programme.

16. The international community should continue its efforts to engage the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in a constructive dialogue with a view to achieving the complete and verifiable denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. Slovenia strongly condemned that country's illegal nuclear tests and ballistic missile launches and called for it to comply immediately with its international obligations.

17. Syria should also resolve all outstanding issues related to its safeguards agreement and conclude an IAEA additional protocol, which, together with a safeguards agreement, provided an effective verification standard.

18. Slovenia was concerned by the risk of non-State actors acquiring weapons of mass destruction and had therefore been supporting the work of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution [1540 \(2004\)](#). Furthermore, as nuclear security remained the responsibility of States, his country had been strongly supporting international cooperation through other initiatives, such as membership of the Nuclear Security Contact Group, and Slovenian experts had been deeply engaged in the preparatory work on the Amendment to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material. He welcomed the recent entry into force of that Amendment and underlined the importance of its universalization and full implementation.

19. Slovenia supported the technical assistance provided by IAEA, was always open to share its experience with others and was also interested in building its own capacities in the field of nuclear technology. It also appreciated the contribution being made by the Agency to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

20. **Ms. Wijsekera** (Sri Lanka) said that it was important to begin the current review process with a constructive and inclusive dialogue geared towards a successful outcome in 2020. The Treaty was the cornerstone of the global nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament regime and Sri Lanka was in favour of a balanced and non-discriminatory approach to its three pillars — nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and the peaceful use of nuclear energy. During the current review cycle it was essential to strengthen those pillars not only by safeguarding the world from the devastation of nuclear weapons but also by contributing to economic development and prosperity

through the promotion of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

21. Disarmament and non-proliferation were mutually reinforcing and absolutely essential for international peace and security. It was therefore crucial to address the slow pace of progress in reducing and eliminating nuclear weapons, and related proliferation concerns, through multilaterally negotiated agreements that were universal, comprehensive and non-discriminatory. At the same time, non-proliferation policies should not undermine the inalienable rights of States parties to the Treaty to acquire, have access to, import or export nuclear material, equipment or technology for peaceful purposes, as provided for in article IV of the Treaty.

22. The commitment of Sri Lanka to the achievement of nuclear disarmament was reflected in the international treaty obligations that it had undertaken in that field. Nuclear weapons posed an existential threat to humanity and their potential use would have catastrophic humanitarian consequences. Indeed, at the 2015 Review Conference a group of 159 States, including Sri Lanka, had supported the view that an awareness of those consequences must underpin all approaches and efforts towards nuclear disarmament.

23. The threat posed by the possibility of nuclear material falling into the hands of non-State actors or terrorists further highlighted the need for international action. Accordingly, Sri Lanka advocated for the widest possible adherence to the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism.

24. However, the total elimination of nuclear weapons was the only absolute guarantee against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. States therefore had an obligation to negotiate in good faith to achieve that objective, as provided for in article VI of the Treaty. In that context, Sri Lanka welcomed the convening in 2017 of a United Nations conference to negotiate a legally binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons, leading towards their total elimination. Such an instrument would build on the existing disarmament framework, including the Treaty.

25. **Ms. Baumann** (Germany) said that the international community was facing many disarmament and non-proliferation challenges, which would need to be resolved swiftly and decisively. For example, Europe was facing major challenges to its security architecture, especially since the illegal annexation of Crimea by Russia and the ongoing conflict in Eastern Ukraine. The disastrous civil war in Syria had also sadly shown that even the long-standing taboo against

the use of weapons of mass destruction could be repeatedly broken. The international community must make every effort to hold the perpetrators to account for their use of chemical weapons. However, the main global challenge was the relentless quest for nuclear weapons being pursued by North Korea, which threatened regional stability and international peace and security. Germany condemned the illegal nuclear and ballistic missile activities of that country in the strongest possible terms and called for it to comply fully with its obligations under all relevant Security Council resolutions. Ultimately, a comprehensive solution that fully addressed all concerns about those illegal activities would require talks that were based on the Treaty, as the cornerstone of the international disarmament and non-proliferation architecture.

26. There were no easy solutions to the current major security challenges. In 2016 the Open-ended Working Group taking forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations, among other forums, had held intensive debates on whether nuclear weapons should immediately be prohibited in their entirety in order to make the world a safer place to live. While many States parties to the Treaty had embarked on negotiations for a legally binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons, others, like Germany, were convinced that real security gains could not be achieved by that means. Only concrete, verifiable and irreversible steps involving the active participation of the nuclear-weapon States themselves would lead to the goal of a world without nuclear weapons. Germany was fully committed to achieving that goal and, together with its partners from the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative, was therefore actively promoting the implementation of the action plan of the 2010 Review Conference in order to strengthen the Non-Proliferation Treaty. For the same reason, Germany also wished to see the swift entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty.

27. While substantial reductions had been made in global stockpiles of nuclear warheads since the end of the Cold War, there were still too many nuclear weapons in existence and much more could be done to increase transparency about the remaining nuclear arsenals. Germany called for a renewed understanding between the two largest nuclear-weapon States, which should engage in new disarmament talks, including regarding the future of the Treaty between the United States of America and the Russian Federation on Measures for the Further Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms (New START Treaty).

28. Negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty were long overdue. In an effort to overcome the lasting

stalemate on that issue in the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva, Germany, together with Canada and the Netherlands, had sponsored a General Assembly resolution for the establishment of a high-level fissile material cut-off treaty expert preparatory group. That approach had already led to substantive discussions being held in New York in March 2017.

29. All nuclear disarmament measures presupposed trust among partners and a cooperative setting based on reciprocity. The same was true with regard to negative security assurances, which had suffered a heavy blow after the breach by Russia of the Memorandum on Security Assurances in Connection with Ukraine's Accession to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (Budapest Memorandum). The current review cycle should be used to strengthen the existing security guarantees that were meant to protect non-nuclear-weapon States. Negative assurances should become part of a binding treaty regime, thereby contributing even more to improving the security environment of an overwhelming number of countries.

30. The Non-Proliferation Treaty had been very successful at strengthening the principle of non-proliferation and preventing many countries from pursuing nuclear options. The best example was the diplomatic solution agreed with Iran under the joint comprehensive plan of action, which was built upon the Treaty and its rigorous verification mechanisms exercised by IAEA. The best way to address the international community's concerns about the exclusively peaceful nature of the Iranian nuclear programme was for all parties to ensure that the plan continued to be fully implemented.

31. All three pillars of the Non-Proliferation Treaty were interrelated and mutually reinforcing. The inalienable right of States parties to enjoy the peaceful uses of nuclear energy was guaranteed in article IV of the Treaty. Germany commended IAEA for its crucial verification role in that regard, including through its safeguards system, and called on all States that had not yet done so to adopt IAEA additional protocols.

32. Maintaining satisfactory levels of nuclear security was a truly global challenge because the threat of nuclear terrorism had reached that scale. No one should assume that the threat only concerned those countries that actually used nuclear energy because terrorism did not respect borders. So-called failed States added to the risk of nuclear material falling out of regulatory control. However, the Nuclear Security Summit process had drawn global attention to those challenges and Germany had made its contribution in such fields as improving the security of radioactive

sources and protecting nuclear facilities against cyberattacks. Nevertheless, much more work remained to be done.

33. While the current challenges to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation were difficult to address, they certainly clarified the areas where the Non-Proliferation Treaty needed to be strengthened and perhaps even reformed in order to increase its effectiveness. The Preparatory Committee should therefore make recommendations on those areas where further action was required.

34. **Mr. Van De Voorde** (Belgium) said that there was scope for greater progress in achieving the objectives of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. On the one hand, near universal adherence to the Treaty had led to the agreement with Iran on the joint comprehensive action plan, which bore witness to the strength of multilateral diplomacy when guided by a shared vision and underpinned by collective action. The continued implementation of that agreement by all sides remained imperative. On the other hand, ongoing provocations by North Korea demonstrated that proliferation risks still existed. In responding to that test of its resolve, the international community would need to work together to enforce strict compliance with United Nations sanctions and close all external sources that might finance North Korean nuclear programmes. At the same time, the path towards a negotiated settlement must remain open.

35. Belgium shared the frustration experience by most States parties at the slow pace of progress towards nuclear disarmament and wished to recall the primary responsibility of nuclear-weapon States to take effective action in that regard, in accordance with article VI of the Treaty. The action plan of the 2010 Review Conference provided an array of measures to accelerate such progress. However, frustration should not become the main driving force for action. It was mutual trust and confidence that would be crucial for revitalizing the Treaty.

36. As part of its national contribution to the global non-proliferation regime, Belgium had agreed to act as co-coordinator of the Conference on Facilitating Entry into Force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and intended to work towards that goal through a series of focused initiatives. More than ever, clear support for that Treaty would illustrate the resolve of the international community to uphold the tenets of the global non-proliferation regime. Belgium would also continue its efforts to reinforce the credibility of the verification regime of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban-Treaty.

37. Belgium was in favour of a progressive and pragmatic approach to bring about a world free of nuclear weapons, based on a number of mutually reinforcing building blocks. As disarmament did not operate in a vacuum, the international security context would dictate what was realistically achievable. Tensions would not be reduced, for example, by the expansion and modernization of nuclear arsenals, the development of new nuclear capabilities or non-compliance with existing disarmament treaties. Confidence could also not be decreed. Transparent, verifiable and irreversible reductions were the key to successfully negotiated agreements. As a member of the International Partnership for Nuclear Disarmament Verification, Belgium offered its nuclear expertise to help increase knowledge about effective verification methods. In the same vein, it trusted that the work of the high-level fissile material cut-off treaty expert preparatory group would make a constructive contribution to the negotiations on a treaty banning the production of such material for nuclear weapons.

38. With respect to the third pillar of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, Belgium wished to reiterate that safety, security and safeguards were the basic underpinnings of any responsible nuclear programme. The peaceful use of the atom could serve energy needs, contribute to human health worldwide and also assist in the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. For its part, Belgium was a major producer of radioisotopes, which played an indispensable role in cancer diagnosis and therapy, and the Belgian Nuclear Research Centre, among its other activities, developed innovative research infrastructure and provided training services to IAEA.

39. **Mr. Rojas Samanez** (Peru) said that the current session of the Preparatory Committee was being held in an international context marked by regional tensions, some of which threatened to escalate into armed conflict. Unfortunately, for as long as nuclear weapons continued to exist, humanity would also remain subject to their devastating consequences. It was therefore more important than ever for the international community to fully and effectively implement the Non-Proliferation Treaty and to conclude a legally binding instrument for the prohibition of nuclear weapons, leading towards their total elimination.

40. Nuclear-weapon States undoubtedly had the prime responsibility for achieving the shared goal of nuclear disarmament. While Peru welcomed their efforts to date to make progress in that regard, it called on them to take further concrete and verifiable steps

towards the ultimate goal of a world without nuclear weapons.

41. Peru urged those States that had not yet acceded to the Non-Proliferation Treaty to do so as non-nuclear-weapon States and also called on the nuclear-weapon States to meet their disarmament commitments pursuant to article VI of the Treaty. Peru had been actively participating in the Open-ended Working Group taking forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations and had also sponsored General Assembly resolution [71/258](#), entitled “Taking forward multilateral disarmament negotiations”, in which it was decided to convene a United Nations conference to negotiate a legally binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons, leading towards their total elimination.

42. The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty was an essential non-proliferation instrument. Peru supported its universalization, emphasized the importance of its swift entry into force and urged the Annex 2 States that had not yet ratified that Treaty to do so.

43. Peru shared the concerns that had been expressed by many countries about legal loopholes in the Non-Proliferation Treaty that could allow nuclear technology to be acquired by non-State actors. Given the real threat of radioactive material being acquired illegally, Peru supported proposals to increase the security of nuclear facilities and materials by further strengthening existing international obligations in that area. It was also essential to strengthen the verification regime. To that end, all States should conclude and implement additional protocols to their safeguards agreements.

44. As a State party to the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (Treaty of Tlatelolco), which had established the first nuclear-weapon-free zone in the world, Peru deeply regretted the failure to convene the Helsinki conference and called for that outstanding mandate to be fulfilled as soon as possible.

45. Lastly, Peru supported strengthening the work of IAEA, including through its regular budget. Furthermore, the resources allocated to the IAEA Technical Cooperation Programme must be increased, and also be predictable, sufficient and secure, in order to effectively assist developing countries in capitalizing on the potential of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes.

46. **Mr. Sadleir** (Australia) said that the international community should be realistic but not unduly

pessimistic as it embarked on a new review cycle. Comprehensive and constructive outreach across regions had confirmed the centrality and enduring relevance of the Non-Proliferation Treaty to global peace and security. In the current multipolar, fluid and challenging geopolitical environment, the stability and near universality provided by the Treaty were increasingly important. Australia maintained its strong and long-standing commitment to the elimination of nuclear weapons, an objective pursued by all States parties, and it shared the concern of many that some 15,000 nuclear warheads still existed.

47. Repeated breaches by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea of its international obligations posed a notable challenge to the Treaty. States parties must collectively condemn that country's nuclear and ballistic missile programmes and urge it to cease them and avoid any further destabilizing or provocative actions. Nevertheless, the implementation of the joint comprehensive plan of action agreed with Iran was a testament to the determination of the broader international community to ensure that commitments made under the Treaty were upheld. General Assembly resolution [71/259](#), establishing a high-level fissile material cut-off treaty expert preparatory group, and General Assembly resolution [71/67](#), establishing a group of governmental experts to consider the role of verification in advancing nuclear disarmament, constituted other important steps forward. Good progress had also been made on the nuclear security agenda.

48. The Treaty had been remarkably successful in relation to non-proliferation. It had curtailed the number of countries with nuclear weapons and had strengthened the taboo against their use. IAEA additional protocols, in particular, provided a striking example of the evolution of the effectiveness of non-proliferation under the Treaty. All States that had not yet done so should conclude an additional protocol without delay.

49. As a result of the Treaty, many countries had been able to enjoy the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. That had brought important developmental, welfare and economic benefits in such areas as human health, agriculture and the environment. Australia remained a strong supporter of IAEA efforts to share the peaceful benefits of nuclear technology.

50. However, important work remained to be done across the three pillars. In the area of disarmament, concrete steps must be prioritized, including: the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty; the development of robust verification

techniques; and improved reporting arrangements for nuclear-weapon States parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty. Safeguards regimes, which underpinned the international community's non-proliferation efforts, must remain strong and adequately resourced. National export controls also made a crucial contribution to the non-proliferation objectives of the Treaty. Australia therefore encouraged all States parties to adhere to the export control guidelines of the Zangger Committee and the Nuclear Suppliers' Group.

51. Processes that heightened divisions would not yield results. The only realistic path to achieving tangible outcomes on nuclear disarmament was for all States parties to work together inclusively to make progress on their commitments pursuant to article VI of the Treaty. That meant addressing the security concerns that might lead a State to develop and maintain nuclear weapons; engaging with nuclear-weapon States to persuade them to eliminate their arsenals; and undertaking the practical steps agreed upon in the action plan of the 2010 Review Conference.

52. **Mr. Ericsson** (Sweden) said that the backdrop to the current meeting was a security environment that continued to deteriorate. The stakes had rarely been higher: the catastrophic humanitarian consequences that would arise from the intentional or accidental use of nuclear weapons had become part of the global security challenge. Disarmament and non-proliferation diplomacy must now be conducted with a very clear sense of urgency. The new review cycle provided an indispensable opportunity not only to preserve but also to strengthen the Non-Proliferation Treaty. Constructive engagement by the nuclear-weapon States on Treaty-related issues, including the commitments contained in the action plan of the 2010 Review Conference, would greatly enhance the prospects for success.

53. Over the years the Non-Proliferation Treaty had been reinforced by commitments made at previous Review Conferences. It was more essential than ever for all three pillars to be upheld through concrete action by all States. Progress would not be possible unless it was broadly perceived as balanced. The basic logic of mutually reinforcing pillars, at the very heart of the Treaty, continued to apply.

54. The apparent renaissance of nuclear weapons was a disconcerting trend because it made the prospect of a world without such weapons more remote. Sweden called on the nuclear-weapon States to make further deep reductions to their arsenals and strongly encouraged the United States and Russia, in particular,

to take the lead by undertaking further cuts, building on the progress achieved under the New START Treaty. It also recalled the importance of full compliance with the Treaty between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the Elimination of Their Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles (Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty).

55. Sweden was actively promoting the negotiations on a legally binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons. The purpose was not to undermine the Non-Proliferation Treaty but rather to facilitate the fulfilment of commitments pursuant to article VI thereof.

56. There was no shortage of issues to be discussed by the Preparatory Committee that could be described as overdue, including the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and the adoption of a fissile material cut-off treaty. In that connection, his country was looking forward to participating in the high-level expert preparatory group, which should pave the way for actual negotiations on such a treaty.

57. The current review cycle would be heavily influenced by non-proliferation concerns related to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea as well as efforts to ensure full compliance with the joint comprehensive plan of action by Iran. The latter agreement further underlined the crucial role played by IAEA in upholding non-proliferation obligations under the Treaty. In that context, it was high time for States that had not already done so to conclude additional protocols to their safeguards agreements.

58. Lastly, all States parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty were entitled to develop and use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes and Sweden wished to underline the important contribution made by IAEA with respect to the implementation of article IV of the Treaty.

59. **Mr. Fu Cong** (China) said that, over the years, the Treaty had played a crucial role in containing the proliferation of nuclear weapons, reducing the risk of nuclear war and promoting the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. However, despite the historical contribution of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, the international community's resolve to uphold it was being tested: the international security situation remained worrisome, particularly owing to sporadic outbreak of conflicts, the spread of non-traditional security threats and the persistence of Cold War mentalities and power politics. In pursuit of absolute security, some countries continued to build and deploy global anti-missile systems at the expense of strategic balance and

stability. How nuclear disarmament could be advanced under such circumstances was a pressing issue to be addressed at the current review cycle. Furthermore, the viability of the non-proliferation system had been affected by the fact that several countries remained outside the Treaty, some countries were employing double standards that weakened its authority and the expected establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East had long been delayed.

60. The Treaty was nevertheless indispensable and irreplaceable as the cornerstone of the international arms control and non-proliferation regime. With a view to enhancing the authority, universality and effectiveness of the Treaty during the current review cycle, it would be important to learn from previous successes and setbacks. The focus must therefore be placed on helping States parties to overcome their differences in order to take joint action to promote the three pillars in a balanced manner.

61. To create a security environment favourable to the goals of the Treaty, China called on all States parties to make further efforts to eradicate the roots of conflict and unrest, to fully respect and accommodate each other's legitimate security concerns, and to foster international relations based on mutual understanding and trust.

62. The complete prohibition and destruction of nuclear weapons was in the interest of all humanity. In that regard, China fully understood the aspirations and expectations of all non-nuclear-weapon States and supported the eventual achievement of general and complete nuclear disarmament. However, a key task was how to find practical and gradual ways to promote that process. In view of the current strategic security environment, existing multilateral disarmament mechanisms should be revitalized, full use made of the Conference on Disarmament and other platforms, and international consensus sought as widely as possible, with the full, equal and effective participation of all stakeholders guaranteed.

63. Pending the achievement of general and complete nuclear disarmament, those countries with the largest nuclear stockpiles should continue to shoulder special and primary responsibilities. Nuclear-weapon States should also take practical intermediate steps, including legal commitments not to use nuclear weapons first and unconditional undertakings not to use or threaten to use such weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States or nuclear-weapon-free zones. Countries that had not yet joined the Treaty should do so as non-nuclear-weapon States as soon as possible.

64. The international community must address the security concerns of different countries equally through political and diplomatic means and avoid the use of any double standards. For its part, China had put forward a dual-track approach to promote progress in the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula, to which it urged all concerned parties to give serious consideration. In addition, China urged all parties to continue to faithfully fulfil their obligations with respect to the joint comprehensive plan of action agreed with Iran, and also encouraged all relevant parties to undertake flexible and pragmatic steps to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East.

65. Non-proliferation efforts should not undermine the legitimate rights of developing countries to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and States parties should give their continuous support to IAEA, owing to the central role that it played in providing assistance and support in that regard. Lessons learned from the Fukushima nuclear accident should help to improve global nuclear safety, which must also be strengthened to combat the threat of nuclear terrorism.

66. China consistently supported the nuclear disarmament process, firmly upheld the non-proliferation regime and vigorously promoted the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. It was also making steady progress towards the domestic implementation of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. During the current review cycle the Preparatory Committee should conclude a feasible roadmap on institutional arrangements and lay a good basis for States parties to make constructive advances forward.

67. **Mr. Ulyanov** (Russian Federation) said that review cycle had begun in rather difficult circumstances and that the Non-Proliferation Treaty was facing increasingly pressing challenges. Approaches to nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and even the peaceful uses of nuclear energy had become ever more radicalized. Issues relevant to the Treaty were now being discussed at alternative forums, where simple votes were taken rather than relying on mutually respectful dialogue and consensus. The current situation did not contribute to the integrity and viability of the Treaty, which did not bode well for its future. Nevertheless, the Treaty continued to be a pillar of global strategic stability and rightly deserved to be called the cornerstone of the modern system of international security. The joint comprehensive plan of action on the Iranian nuclear programme had clearly confirmed that the Treaty could respond effectively to modern challenges. All relevant parties should now implement that agreement carefully.

68. Strengthening the global nuclear non proliferation regime had always been one of the priorities of Russian foreign policy and a balanced approach by States parties to all three pillars of the Treaty was the key to its effective functioning. Unfortunately, in recent years that balance had not been respected. In the context of review cycles, for example, disarmament issues had been prioritized while non-proliferation and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy had been marginalized. It was high time to address that imbalance. To that end, his delegation wished to highlight the peaceful uses of the atom, especially because it had become a tradition to start new review cycles in Vienna, where the IAEA headquarters were located. According to the IAEA statute, the Agency sought to accelerate and enlarge the contribution of atomic energy to peace, health and prosperity throughout the world. For its part, the Russian Federation had consistently supported IAEA efforts in that field. The Agency's unique experience and best practices, as well as its unprecedented results, made it an authority on the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. His delegation attached particular importance to further strengthening the Agency by providing it with the necessary expertise and material resources. The Russian Federation supported the broad access of States parties to the benefits of peaceful uses.

69. The full-fledged development of nuclear energy was impossible without a reliable nuclear non-proliferation regime whose effective implementation was ensured by IAEA safeguards. Efforts to improve that system should remain impartial, technically credible, non-politicized and based on the rights and obligations of the parties under their safeguards agreements. The development of new approaches to the implementation of IAEA safeguards should therefore be transparent and any political decisions regarding IAEA safeguards should be taken by the General Conference and the Board of Governors as the Agency's policymaking bodies.

70. The establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East remained a central issue of the review process. It was in the common interest for progress to be made on that objective as soon as possible, including agreement on all organizational modalities and substantive issues to be discussed at the expected conference. As one of the sponsors of 1995 resolution, the Russian Federation was willing to fully support that process. His delegation also called on all relevant States to take the necessary action for the swift entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty.

71. Unfounded claims were often made that nuclear disarmament was at a stalemate or had even ceased. However, over the last 30 years, objective statistics showed that immense progress had been made towards a world free on nuclear weapons thanks to concerted actions by Russia and the United States. Such impressive results, which had required the work of thousands of experts and billions in expenditure, must not be overlooked. Despite the fact that the international climate could be more favourable, Russia continued to take specific steps to reduce its nuclear arsenals. For example, the New START Treaty was being implemented as planned and the agreed levels would be reached by 5 February 2018.

72. Many States parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty were tempted to try to achieve complete nuclear disarmament overnight. While understanding the motivations that had driven those countries to start negotiations aimed at the prohibition of nuclear weapons, his delegation believed that they had mistakenly taken a path that would endanger the viability of the Treaty. His delegation would explain its position in greater detail in that regard during the current session.

73. **Mr. Hanney** (Ireland) said that the only way to achieve security for all was by making progress on the mutually supporting commitments to disarmament and non-proliferation contained in the Treaty, which had become more important as an instrument than at any time in its history. His delegation therefore welcomed the intention of the Preparatory Committee to give equal weight and time on its agenda to each of the three inextricably linked pillars of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. The outcome of the current review cycle should include recognition of the devastating humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons. Progress would also need to be made on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, among other matters.

74. Ireland was strongly committed to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. It was therefore deeply concerned by the ballistic and nuclear tests carried out by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, which posed a real threat to peace and security in the Korean Peninsula and the wider region. Such actions were a flagrant violation of that country's international obligations not to produce or test nuclear weapons, as well as a major challenge to international efforts to advance global nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. The current grave situation drew into sharp focus the urgent need not only for engagement on nuclear disarmament by all stakeholders, but also for the immediate entry into force of the

Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and for continued efforts geared towards the universalization of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. His Government had repeatedly called on the North Korean authorities, immediately and without preconditions, to cease all nuclear testing and to re-engage with the Six-Party Talks on the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula.

75. Ireland was working to facilitate cooperation on the peaceful uses of nuclear energy in such areas as health, safety, security and environmental protection, including through voluntary contributions to the IAEA Peaceful Uses Initiative. It was also active, as a member of the Vienna Group of Ten, in ongoing discussions aimed at balancing the requirements of nuclear safety and security in the broadest sense.

76. The original drafters of the Non-Proliferation Treaty had known that their work was not finished and that effective measures still needed to be elaborated on nuclear disarmament. Hence, the negotiations on a treaty prohibiting nuclear weapons, leading to their elimination, were complementary to and supportive of the Treaty. Over 130 States were already engaged in those negotiations and his delegation looked forward to a successful outcome with the widest possible support.

77. The consensus outcome documents that were adopted at previous review cycles carried the same level of obligation as the Treaty itself. However, an unfortunate pattern had recently emerged: ambitious and constructive steps were initially set out, followed by a period with limited progress and, in the absence of an outcome document, the issuance of another list of actions. While the thirteen steps agreed in the Final Document of the 2000 Review Conference and the 64 actions contained in the action plan of the 2010 Review Conference were all important and necessary, they must become more than words on paper in order for them to have a real impact. Credibility required those actions to be measured and assessed. In that regard, as Coordinator of the New Agenda Coalition, his delegation encouraged others to support two working papers submitted by the Coalition: [NPT/CONF.2020/PC.I/WP.9](#) and [NPT/CONF.2020/PC.I/WP.13](#).

78. **Mr. Mati** (Italy) said that Italy was fully committed to disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation as essential components of its foreign policy. The Non-Proliferation Treaty was a multilateral instrument of the utmost importance for maintaining and reinforcing international peace, security and stability. It remained the cornerstone of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime, the essential foundation for the pursuit of nuclear disarmament and

an important element in the further development of nuclear energy applications for peaceful purposes. The three pillars of the Treaty continued to be mutually reinforcing and the action plan of the 2010 Review Conference remained a very good basis to make progress on them all. Italy called upon those States that had not yet done so to join the Treaty as non-nuclear-weapon States, without delay and without conditions. All States parties should also implement all Treaty provisions without delay and in a balanced manner, in addition to the commitments agreed by previous Review Conferences.

79. Italy continued to support the goal of a peaceful and secure world free of nuclear weapons. Through its article VI, the Treaty provided the only realistic legal framework to pursue that objective in a way that promoted international stability and undiminished security for all. However, effective, verifiable and irreversible nuclear disarmament could be attained only if an inclusive and progressive approach was adopted, based on concrete and effective measures. Such measures included the swift entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. To that end, Italy called on all States that had not yet done so, in particular the remaining Annex 2 States, to sign and ratify that Treaty without further delay.

80. Another key priority for Italy remained the immediate commencement within the Conference on Disarmament of negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty. In that regard, it welcomed the establishment of a high-level fissile material cut-off treaty expert preparatory group pursuant to General Assembly resolution 71/259. Pending the entry into force of such a treaty, all relevant States should abide by a moratorium on the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons. The adoption of General Assembly resolution 71/67 on nuclear disarmament verification was also welcome.

81. The nuclear-weapon States bore fundamental responsibilities for the implementation of article VI of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. Italy therefore welcomed the reductions made as a result of the entry into force of the Treaty by most nuclear-weapon States and the continued implementation of the New START Treaty by the United States and Russia. It strongly encouraged them to seek further reductions in their nuclear arsenals, including strategic, non-strategic, deployed and non-deployed weapons. In that context, it underlined the importance of preserving the viability of the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty, a landmark arms-control agreement that remained key to European and international security and stability.

82. The proliferation of nuclear weapons continued to represent a major threat to international security. Italy condemned in the strongest terms the ballistic missile and nuclear tests carried out by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, which clearly violated its international obligations and represented an increasing threat to regional and international security, peace and the global non-proliferation regime. In its current capacity as Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1718 (2006), Italy was supporting global efforts to properly implement the set of restrictive measures adopted by the Security Council. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea must abandon all its existing nuclear and ballistic missile programmes in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner, and return to the Treaty and to IAEA safeguards.

83. As a fundamental component of the nuclear non-proliferation regime, IAEA safeguards played an indispensable role in the implementation of the Treaty. Italy supported strengthening the Agency's safeguards system, including through universal adherence to additional protocols.

84. The work done by the Agency to monitor the joint comprehensive plan of action agreed with Iran was also welcome. Full implementation of the plan, and of Security Council resolution 2231 (2015), could foster international and regional security and encourage mutual trust between the parties involved.

85. Italy highly valued the important role of nuclear-weapon-free zones for peace and security and called on the nuclear-weapon States to sign and ratify the relevant protocols of the treaties establishing such zones. It also supported the convening of the Helsinki conference, as decided by the 2010 Review Conference.

86. Italy was actively involved in international cooperation for the further development of nuclear applications for peaceful purposes. In that regard, it strongly supported the IAEA Technical Cooperation Programme as well as all global and regional initiatives aimed at enhancing the safety and security of nuclear materials, facilities and installations.

87. **Reverend Monsignor Urbańczyk** (Observer for the Holy See) said that, when it had acceded to the Non-Proliferation Treaty in 1971, the Holy See had been inspired to make its contribution to undertakings which promoted security, mutual trust and peaceful cooperation in relations between peoples. By its presence at the current session of the Preparatory Committee, the Holy See sought to lend its moral

authority to efforts to work for a world free of nuclear weapons.

88. The foundation of the Treaty was the recognition by States parties of the devastation that would be visited upon all mankind by a nuclear war. The Holy See could not but lament the fact that the potential danger so clearly identified over 40 years before had not been relegated to history. In other words, the efforts of the international community to use the Treaty to make the world safer had not been sufficient. The Holy See would therefore use the opportunity provided by the current review cycle to urge States parties to make concrete and consensus-based progress towards nuclear non-proliferation and the ultimate goal of abolishing all nuclear weapons.

89. Pope Francis, following in the footsteps of his venerable predecessors, had repeatedly called on the international community, not only to seek the end of war, conflict and strife, but also to advance peace. The value of peace must be recognized as an active virtue, calling for the engagement and cooperation of each individual and society as a whole. Nuclear weapons provided a false sense of security, as did efforts to secure a negative peace through a balance of power. Nations had a right and an obligation to protect their own security, which was strongly linked to the promotion of collective security, the common good and peace. From that perspective, a positive conception of peace was required. Peace must be built on justice, integral human development, respect for fundamental human rights, the protection of creation, the participation of all in public life, trust between peoples, the support of institutions devoted to building peace, and dialogue and solidarity. Ultimately, peace must be grounded in those human values that were present in all individuals, peoples, cultures, religions and philosophies.

90. The Holy See was supportive of the negotiations on a legally binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons. Pope Francis had urged the international community to go beyond nuclear deterrence and to adopt forward-looking strategies that promoted the goal of peace and stability, avoiding short-sighted approaches to problems surrounding national and international security. Growing interdependence required a collective response based on mutual trust, a trust built through dialogue directed to the common good, not the protection of narrow interests. Such a dialogue, as far as possible, should include both nuclear and non-nuclear States, as well as the private sector, religious communities and civil society.

91. The Holy See urged all parties to make progress not only with respect to the Non-Proliferation Treaty, but also the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, the New START Treaty and the fissile material cut-off treaty, in addition to other unilateral initiatives and measures. However, in the light of growing tensions and continuing proliferation, such steps would be limited in themselves. It was therefore vital for nuclear-weapon States parties to renew their arms control and disarmament processes, in conformity with article VI of the Treaty.

92. Lastly, the Holy See viewed the situation on the Korean Peninsula with concern and supported continued efforts by the international community to revive negotiations on denuclearization and peace.

93. **Ms. O'Brien** (Ireland), speaking on behalf of the New Agenda Coalition, said that the Coalition remained fully committed to the Non-Proliferation Treaty and looked forward to working with all States parties to strengthen it. To that end, urgent progress was clearly needed on nuclear disarmament as continued inaction on Article VI of the Treaty, the core of its disarmament pillar, had become unacceptable. The Coalition was also concerned that little progress had been made on the thirteen steps agreed in the Final Document of the 2000 Review Conference and the 64 actions contained in the action plan of the 2010 Review Conference, whereby the nuclear-weapon States had committed to accelerate concrete progress on steps leading to nuclear disarmament.

94. The presumption of indefinite possession of nuclear weapons ran counter to the purposes of the Treaty. The current global security situation could not be used to justify a lack of progress on nuclear disarmament. On the contrary, it reinforced the need for urgent action. It was political will and determination that were lacking rather than conducive conditions. The present review cycle should therefore signal concrete progress towards compliance with the Treaty's nuclear disarmament obligations and commitments by exploring options for strengthening accountability, in particular through enhanced transparency and measurability. In that context, the Coalition had submitted two working papers containing specific recommendations: [NPT/CONF.2020/PC.I/WP.9](#) and [NPT/CONF.2020/PC.I/WP.13](#).

95. It was well known that there was no adequate humanitarian response capable of coping with the devastating effects of a nuclear detonation. The only effective safeguard against the risk posed by the continued existence of nuclear weapons was their total, irreversible and verifiable elimination. Pending that outcome, however, the Coalition remained committed

to pursuing interim measures such as nuclear-weapon-free zones. In that connection, it should be recalled that the 1995 resolution on the Middle East remained valid until fully implemented.

96. With a view to achieving universality of the Treaty, the Coalition urged India, Israel and Pakistan to accede to that instrument as non-nuclear-weapon States promptly and without conditions. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea must also verifiably dismantle any nuclear weapons, return to the Treaty without delay and place all its facilities under comprehensive IAEA safeguards.

97. The Coalition welcomed the convening of the United Nations conference to negotiate a legally binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons, leading towards their total elimination. It encouraged the widest possible participation in those negotiations and invited all States to work together to advance the cause of nuclear disarmament in a multilateral context.

98. **Mr. De Salazar Serantes** (Spain) said that during the new review cycle States parties should aim to renew their commitments to the Non-Proliferation Treaty, work together on issues of common interest and address important outstanding issues. While much had been achieved by the Treaty in preventing worst case scenarios arising from the proliferation of nuclear weapons, there was no room for complacency. Collective efforts were needed to strengthen the Treaty and move towards its universalization. The action plan of the 2010 Review Conference and the thirteen steps agreed at the 2000 Review Conference provided good reference points in that regard. Practical, tangible and gradual disarmament steps should also be taken, including by the nuclear-weapon States.

99. Spain strongly condemned the nuclear and ballistic missile programmes of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, which were in flagrant violation of multiple Security Council resolutions and posed a significant threat to the international non-proliferation regime. The authorities of that country must abandon such programmes in a complete, irreversible and verifiable manner and return to the Treaty.

100. The adoption of the joint comprehensive plan of action agreed with Iran was a clear sign that dialogue was the appropriate means to promote agreements based on commitments. Other welcome initiatives that would facilitate further progress towards a world without nuclear weapons included the following: the swift entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty; the start of negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty; the recognition of a universal

safeguards standard that included the additional protocol; and the convening of the Helsinki conference.

101. The threat of nuclear terrorism highlighted the importance of maintaining high levels of nuclear safety and security. International instruments such as the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism, the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material and the Amendment thereto were crucial in preventing weapons of mass destruction from falling into the hands of non-State actors. Wider access to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, while essential, would only be possible by maintaining and strengthening nuclear safety and security in accordance with IAEA standards.

102. **Mr. Andereya** (Chile) said that the Treaty, as the cornerstone of the nuclear non-proliferation regime, must maintain its credibility and political legitimacy. However, that would only be achieved if, during the latest review cycle, States parties agreed on the measures to strengthen all three pillars of the Treaty in a balanced manner. In that respect, greater progress was needed on the pillars of disarmament and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. The inalienable right of States parties to enjoy the peaceful uses of nuclear energy must also be reaffirmed.

103. Nuclear weapons clearly did not guarantee security for those who possessed them. On the contrary, they impeded the attainment of legitimate security objectives for all States. His delegation therefore condemned the North Korean nuclear and ballistic missile tests, which endangered the national security of that country as well as regional security as a whole.

104. Chile was fully engaged in the process of negotiating a treaty for the prohibition of nuclear weapons, which would be complementary to the Non-Proliferation Treaty. It was high time that States parties to the Treaty fulfilled their disarmament obligations pursuant to article VI. The comprehensive, balanced and substantive implementation of the Treaty, particularly with respect to nuclear disarmament, should be carried out in accordance with the action plan of the 2010 Review Conference and should also take into account the thirteen steps agreed in the Final Document of the 2000 Review Conference.

105. Progress must be achieved on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation during the current review cycle, otherwise the legitimacy of the Treaty would be called into question. To that end, Chile called for the following specific measures to be taken: ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban

Treaty by the Annex 2 States required for its immediate entry into force; the start of serious and consensus-based negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty; the expansion of mutual confidence-building measures, including the adoption of practical transparency measures by nuclear-weapon States and a reduction in the operational readiness of their arms; and, lastly, the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East.

106. **Mr. Shin** Dong-ik (Republic of Korea) said that the lack of consensus on a final document at the 2015 Review Conference should not be seen as a failure of the review cycle or of the Non-Proliferation Treaty itself. Since its entry into force in 1970, the Treaty had been the cornerstone of the non-proliferation regime. While the modest progress made to date on nuclear disarmament fell short of expectations, the achievements on non-proliferation and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy should not be underestimated. For example, the joint comprehensive plan of action stood out as a major recent accomplishment that demonstrated the potential of diplomacy to resolve international concerns peacefully.

107. Nevertheless, tough challenges lay ahead. First and foremost was the flagrant violation of the Treaty by North Korea. While reaping all the benefits permitted to States parties, Pyongyang had acquired a clandestine nuclear weapons programme and then unilaterally announced its withdrawal from the Treaty and IAEA safeguards. Despite repeated warnings from the international community, North Korea had continued its development of nuclear and missile capabilities. No country would be safe from a nuclear-armed North Korea. That prospect could shake the very foundations of the global non-proliferation regime. Indeed, the Security Council had convened a meeting on 28 April 2017 to discuss that very issue and had called for action to prevent such a nightmare scenario from occurring.

108. As continuously reaffirmed by relevant Security Council resolutions and previous Review Conferences, the status of North Korea as a nuclear-weapon State was not acceptable under any circumstances. Pyongyang must therefore realize that the only option was to abandon its weapons of mass destruction programme in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner, return to IAEA safeguards and fully comply with its obligations under the Treaty. In that regard, the Republic of Korea welcomed the readiness of IAEA to return to North Korea and re-establish its safeguards-related activities there.

109. While the Treaty should remain the cornerstone of the non-proliferation regime, a balanced approach to its three pillars was vital for maintaining the credibility, integrity and legitimacy of the Treaty as a whole. In that regard, there was a need for concrete proposals to counter and discourage incidents of non-compliance, in particular withdrawal from the Treaty following violations. As shown by the case of North Korea, the Treaty regime currently lacked effective measures to deal with that issue. A reliable mechanism for identifying non-compliance was also crucial, including by universalizing additional protocols to strengthen safeguards agreements.

110. Nuclear disarmament could only be achieved gradually and not overnight. However, pursuant to article VI of the Treaty, the international community must work together to make further progress. Welcome steps towards a world free of nuclear weapons would include the swift entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and the start of negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty.

111. Lastly, the peaceful use of nuclear energy should be seen as an area of common ground where States parties could further focus their efforts.

112. **Ms. Higgie** (New Zealand) said that the start of a new review cycle provided fresh opportunities to address the many challenges facing the international community in its efforts to implement the Non-Proliferation Treaty in full. Maintaining an optimistic attitude would ensure that no one lost sight of the real benefits that had been derived from the Treaty and, more generally, the clear value of a rules-based approach to international security issues. It should then be possible to take decisive steps forward, most notably pursuant to the disarmament obligations contained in article VI of the Treaty. The agreement reached on the joint comprehensive plan of action was an excellent example of how seemingly intractable nuclear issues could be resolved through diplomacy and dialogue.

113. The Humanitarian Initiative promoted over the last several years had clearly demonstrated the catastrophic reality of the threat posed by nuclear weapons. In that context, New Zealand continued to condemn the nuclear ambitions of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in the strongest possible terms.

114. Like most States parties, New Zealand had supported the launch of multilateral negotiations on a treaty to prohibit nuclear weapons, leading to their total elimination. Her delegation was confident that such an instrument would reinforce the Treaty and be

an important enabler for the full implementation of article VI thereof.

115. **Mr. Grossi** (Argentina) said that while the Treaty remained the cornerstone of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime, the forthcoming Review Conference clearly faced many challenges that the international community would expect to be addressed. Thankfully the first session of the Preparatory Committee had been preceded by broad consultations to identify common areas of concern and possible ways to move forward. Substantive discussions should be held on all three pillars of the Treaty throughout the review cycle.

116. There was a clear and growing demand from global civil society and the international community for concrete progress towards irreversible, verifiable and transparent disarmament. The Treaty review process and the United Nations conference to negotiate a legally binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons provided a suitable environment for the promotion of collective disarmament efforts and a unique opportunity to overcome divisions within the international community.

117. States parties must comply with their non-proliferation obligations under the Treaty and their relevant IAEA safeguards agreements in full and in good faith. Political, legal and other commitments were of relative value unless they were supported by a neutral, professional and robust verification system. It was in the interests of all countries aspiring to realize the full potential of nuclear energy for development, especially developing nations, to do so in a way that was not only irreproachable but which also could be internationally certified and guaranteed.

118. In that context, the diplomatically negotiated solution to the question of the nuclear programme of Iran, following the implementation of the joint comprehensive plan of action, provided grounds for optimism. In stark contrast, however, the repeated and destabilizing launches of ballistic missiles by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea deserved condemnation. It was imperative for that country to return to the Treaty, comply with its obligations pursuant to the relevant Security Council resolutions and allow IAEA to resume its safeguards activities.

119. The lack of progress on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East would need to be addressed. While many sensitive political elements would clearly have to be resolved, it should still be possible to explore ambitious, constructive and realistic options.

120. The Brazilian-Argentine Agency for Accounting and Control of Nuclear Materials, which had recently celebrated its twenty-fifth anniversary, was the only organization that provided a system at the global level enabling two countries to submit all their nuclear facilities for mutual inspections through a quadripartite agreement with IAEA. It was an example of a bilateral cooperative approach on nuclear matters that could be shared with the rest of the world.

121. IAEA continued to play a constructive and pivotal role in promoting the peaceful uses of nuclear energy within the framework of the Treaty. Ongoing discussions about how innovative nuclear power technologies could help achieve the Sustainable Goals, particularly access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all, demonstrated the importance of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy for all countries. International cooperation was a key aspect of the development of the peaceful uses of the atom. In that regard, Argentina supported the work of the Agency and had been actively engaged in technology transfer for peaceful uses for over 50 years.

122. The Vienna Declaration on Nuclear Safety, adopted at the Diplomatic Conference to consider a proposal to amend the Convention on Nuclear Safety held in February 2015, had been successfully implemented and had strengthened the Convention. The international community must continue to work together in that way, as nuclear safety was also instrumental to the pursuit of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

123. IAEA must continue to reaffirm its central role in the field of nuclear security, while taking into account the important work of the Nuclear Security Summits and other international initiatives. In that regard, further efforts were needed to develop nuclear security guidance, support efforts to fulfil relevant responsibilities and ensure effective collaboration among countries to address common challenges.

124. Argentina recognized the efforts already undertaken towards increased transparency, openness and accountability during the review cycle. A greater level of ambition was now required in order to fulfil previous commitments and ensure the success of the 2020 Review Conference.

125. **Mr. Oidekivi** (Estonia) said that the Treaty was the cornerstone of global efforts to pursue nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. Over the past 50 years that unique multilateral instrument had played a vitally important role in making the world a safer place and in creating

the potential conditions for a world free of nuclear weapons.

126. Estonia reaffirmed its full support for all three pillars of the Treaty and fulfilment of the commitments assumed thereunder. It was also committed to working towards the achievement of tangible progress, in accordance with the progressive approach outlined in the action plan of the 2010 Review Conference. Some progress had already been made in that regard through the adoption of General Assembly resolutions [71/259](#) and [71/67](#) on a fissile material cut-off treaty and on verification, respectively. Estonia welcomed the establishment, pursuant to those resolutions, both of a high-level fissile material cut-off treaty expert preparatory group and of a group of governmental experts to consider the role of verification in advancing nuclear disarmament. Effective, verifiable and irreversible nuclear disarmament was the only way to achieve the complete elimination of nuclear weapons.

127. The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban-Treaty was of crucial importance for nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. The States whose signatures and ratifications were required for the entry into force of that Treaty should therefore take the necessary action without further delay. Similarly, Estonia continued to support the universal implementation of the International Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation (The Hague Code of Conduct). It also underlined the important work of international export control regimes and encouraged all States to make use of multilaterally agreed guidelines and principles when developing their own national export controls.

128. The provocative actions of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea showed the urgent need not only to further strengthen the Non-Proliferation Treaty but also to ensure that the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban-Treaty came into force as soon as possible. Estonia condemned in the strongest possible terms the nuclear tests and ballistic missile launches carried out by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, in flagrant defiance of multiple Security Council resolutions, and called on that country to come into compliance without delay and abandon its illegal programmes in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner.

129. The joint comprehensive plan of action demonstrated that it was possible to find peaceful and diplomatic solutions, even to the most pressing proliferation challenges. Estonia remained committed to supporting the full implementation of the plan of action, as verified by IAEA.

130. Estonia valued the role of IAEA safeguards in strengthening the nuclear non-proliferation regime and in providing assurances regarding the peaceful uses of nuclear applications, which made an essential contribution to such areas as socioeconomic development, science, innovation and technology all around the world.

131. In order to ensure the safe use of nuclear energy, it was important for all States parties to follow the highest standards of safety and security. All decisions regarding the peaceful uses of nuclear energy should be made in a transparent manner to promote confidence and cooperation among countries.

132. Lastly, the outcome document of the 2017 Preparatory Committee should reflect the practical progress achieved on many of the items contained in the action plan of the 2010 Review Conference, such as the development of nuclear disarmament verification capabilities and the enhancement of transparency measures. Constructive engagement focused on realistic and common objectives would help to strengthen the Treaty with a view to achieving the shared goal of a world without nuclear weapons.

133. **Mr. Mistrík** (Slovakia) said that it was the shared responsibility of the international community to strengthen the Treaty, which was the cornerstone of the global nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament regime. All three pillars of the Non-Proliferation Treaty were equally important and mutually reinforcing. Slovakia called on all States parties to fulfil all their commitments under the Treaty, in addition to the undertakings that they had assumed at previous Review Conferences. States that were not parties to the Treaty should accede to it as non-nuclear weapon States.

134. The only way to achieve the shared goal of a world without nuclear weapons was through effective, verifiable and irreversible nuclear disarmament. Towards that end Slovakia supported a progressive approach that took into account both the security and humanitarian dimensions of nuclear weapons. Further progress on disarmament could also be made through the implementation of the action plan of the 2010 Review Conference and the thirteen steps agreed in the Final Document of the 2000 Review Conference.

135. Slovakia continued to support the immediate commencement of negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty, which would offer a unique opportunity to create a non-discriminatory regime with equal obligations for both nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear weapon States. In that regard, his delegation welcomed the establishment of a high-level

fissile material cut-off treaty expert preparatory group pursuant to General Assembly resolution 71/259. Slovakia also supported the further development of the multilateral nuclear verification capabilities necessary to achieve and maintain a world without nuclear weapons. In that regard, the adoption of General Assembly 71/67 was also welcome.

136. The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty was a crucial element of the disarmament and non-proliferation architecture. All States that had not yet ratified the Treaty, especially the remaining Annex 2 States, should do so without delay. For its part, Slovakia had been actively helping to build the capacities of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization, including its verification regime.

137. Slovakia categorically condemned the irresponsible and provocative nuclear tests and ballistic missile launches repeatedly carried out by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Such acts constituted a serious threat to regional stability and international peace and security. North Korea must abandon its nuclear weapon and missile programmes in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner.

138. The joint comprehensive plan of action demonstrated the possibility of peaceful and diplomatic solutions to proliferation challenges. His delegation welcomed the progress made thus far and underlined the need to continue ensuring full and effective implementation of the plan of action. Early ratification by Iran of an additional protocol was also essential.

139. Slovakia fully supported the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East and regretted that it had still not been possible to convene a conference for that purpose. It would be necessary to build trust and confidence among all stakeholders in order to move that process forward.

140. IAEA safeguards played a pivotal role in the implementation of non-proliferation obligations pursuant to the Treaty. All States should cooperate with the Agency to facilitate the implementation of their safeguards agreements, including by also adopting additional protocols in order to meet the current verification standard.

141. The Treaty provided a solid framework for cooperation on the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. In that regard, Slovakia appreciated the role played by the Agency in promoting the responsible development of peaceful nuclear applications. For many countries requiring a stable and safe source of energy, nuclear power remained an important option for achieving energy security and reaching the Sustainable

Development Goals. At the same time, the development of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes must go hand in hand with high security standards.

142. Slovakia was concerned by the threat posed by terrorists acquiring nuclear or other radioactive materials. While nuclear security remained the responsibility of States, international cooperation could help to reduce such risks. The entry into force of the Amendment to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material was therefore an essential step in the right direction.

The meeting rose at 6.15 p.m.