2nd Session of the Preparatory Committee
of the 2010 Review Conference of the States Parties to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT)

(Nuclear proliferation)

Statement by

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Geneva, 5 May 2008
Mr President,

The plain truth is that since the first session of the 2007 Preparatory Committee, nuclear proliferation has continued to be a matter of major concern for the international community.

- Without doubt, this period has been characterised by the contrasting nuclear developments in Iran. The last report of the IAEA, which focuses on the so-called "alleged studies", revives the concerns expressed by the international community about the nature of the Iranian nuclear programme. In addition, the security council, by adopting resolution 1803, has sent, for the 4th time, a clear message to Iran.

Switzerland takes the view that closer cooperation between Iran and the IAEA – although extremely urgent – is no longer enough. After more than five years, we now find ourselves in a situation where we are simply following an endless series of measures and counter measures that are leading nowhere. Moreover, we think that this situation will continue for as long as the parties involved do not have the conviction that this issue could be resolved by diplomatic means.

It is therefore a matter of great urgency that this trend be reversed! To achieve this, Iran must adopt as soon as possible a new approach that includes confidence-building measures – such as those asked for by the IAEA, which could potentially also open up the way for an initiative to enter into discussions with other parties involved in this matter. Concerning the latter, Switzerland wishes them the same political courage and hopes they will be able to provide without further delay a diplomatic perspective, within a broader context, that takes into account the fears and needs of everyone.

- The uncertainties that have re-emerged on the Korean Peninsula are also regrettable, all the more so since there were some encouraging developments in the context of the Six-Party Talks in 2007.

Switzerland therefore appeals to the parties involved to do everything possible to ensure that the measures adopted at the Six-Party Talks are implemented as soon as possible. We also take the view that the IAEA must be fully involved in this process, in particular with regard to the verification process where its
presence is the only guarantee of impartiality. Moreover, my country urges the DPRK to rejoin the NPT and to re-implement a safeguards agreement with the IAEA.

Mr President,

My delegation would like to mention the various effective instruments that already exist for combating horizontal proliferation. These include:

- Article III of the NPT, which requires the States Parties conclude a safeguards agreement with the IAEA; the Additional Protocol to these safeguards agreements; the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material - in the revision of which Switzerland was actively committed in 2005; the Convention on the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism; the Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources.

My country urges those States-Parties that have not already done so to accede to these instruments.

- Switzerland belongs to the group of States that have adopted guidelines on the periodic publication of information on their management of plutonium (IAEA INFCIRC/549). My country encourages all States that possess plutonium for civilian purposes to adopt measures to ensure transparency in the management of plutonium and to envisage extending this transparency to the management of highly enriched uranium.

- Switzerland participates in the Proliferation Security Initiative, the Global Initiative To Combat Nuclear Terrorism, and the G8 Global Partnership Against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction. In the context of the Partnership, my country, in collaboration with the United States, organised in 2007 a new multilateral meeting in Switzerland with the aim of facilitating the financing of projects to dismantle the last remaining Russian nuclear power stations producing plutonium.

- Export controls are an essential instrument for allowing cooperation for peaceful purposes while avoiding the risks of proliferation. Switzerland welcomes the different initiatives which have been proposed with a view to the possible
multilateralisation of the nuclear fuel cycle. However, my country cannot accept proposals which are contrary to the right to the use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes as contained in Article IV of the NPT. It believes that this would create a new form of discrimination by failing to distinguish between those States that offer the best guarantees of non-proliferation and those for which the IAEA is unable to determine the true nature of their nuclear programmes.

Mr President,

An adequate number of measures to diminish the risks of nuclear proliferation already exist. Problems arise in their implementation because the philosophy of compromise which has characterised the NPT since its inception seems to have reached its limits. As result, too many States Parties are expressing legitimate frustration, arguing that the promises made at crucial stages in the history of the NPT are a long way from being fully kept in each of the Treaty's three pillars.

Switzerland encourages all States Parties to implement as quickly as possible the results of the previous review conferences, and recalls the importance of achieving the universality of the NPT. In our view, real progress on these two objectives is the best guarantee against the risk of proliferation.

Mr President, thank you for your attention.