NEW ZEALAND

PREPARATORY COMMITTEE FOR THE 2010 REVIEW CONFERENCE OF
THE PARTIES TO THE TREATY ON THE NON-PROLIFERATION OF
NUCLEAR WEAPONS

CLUSTER THREE DEBATE

STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR JENNIFER MACMILLAN
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE TO THE UNITED NATIONS IN VIENNA

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY
Mr Chairman,

New Zealand recognises the right of all States party to the Treaty to be able to develop research, production and the use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes in conformity with Articles I, II and III of the Treaty. We acknowledge the many benefits that can come from the balanced and responsible use of nuclear energy.

The International Atomic Energy Agency (the IAEA) plays a key role in preventing the spread of nuclear weapons by verifying and assuring member states that nuclear material is not being diverted from peaceful uses. New Zealand believes that we need to ensure that the IAEA has the tools necessary to carry out its verification mandate stressed. In this context New Zealand continues to call on all Member states that have not yet done so to sign and bring into force Comprehensive Safeguards Agreements and an Additional Protocol without delay. These instruments form the contemporary verification standard and should be a condition of new supply arrangements developed with non-nuclear weapons states.

Mr Chairman,

New Zealand is of the view that multilateral approaches to the nuclear fuel cycle should be developed with due regard to the inalienable right of States Party to the NPT to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, in conformity with the NPT’s non-proliferation provisions. We also believe that safety and security issues should be an integral part of these discussions. In this context we consider that any proposal for a multilateral fuel cycle mechanism should provide for effective physical protection of the associated nuclear material and facilities as well as the highest standards of nuclear, radiation and transport safety and waste management.

New Zealand attaches a high degree of importance to issues of nuclear safety, and in particular to strengthening international co-operation with respect to the maritime and other transport of radioactive material. We are conscious of the potential for an accident or incident during the transport of radioactive materials by sea, and stress the importance of the protection of people, human health and the environment as well as protection from actual economic loss as defined in international law due to an accident or incident. It is important that shipments of radioactive material adhere to the highest possible safety and security practices and that timely information on such shipments is provided. We welcome the progress that has been made in this area as a result of constructive dialogue between shipping and coastal states and look forward to further progress towards understanding the concerns of both coastal and shipping states in the period ahead.
Mr Chairman,

I would also like to highlight New Zealand's strong support for the continued work of the International Experts Group on Nuclear Liability (INLEX), particularly in its examination of gaps in the nuclear liability regime. Having an effective liability regime in place to insure against harm to human health and the environment, as well as possible economic loss due to an accident or incident during the maritime transport of radioactive materials, is a key priority for New Zealand. This has particular significance to our region given the potential fragility of communities in the South Pacific that are dependent on the environment for their economic livelihoods.

INLEX's work continues to be of enormous benefit to all member states as we address questions related to nuclear liability; and look at identifying gaps in existing nuclear regimes and comprehensively addressing them. The work of this group makes a key contribution to nuclear safety, and we look forward to further work in these areas.

Thank you Mr Chairman.