Statement by

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at the

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

Cluster 11

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Check against delivery
Mr Chairman,

Ireland aligns itself with the statement by the European Union under this cluster. Ireland has consistently argued for a balanced implementation across all three pillars of the NPT and attaches equal importance to its non-proliferation provisions. We must protect this pillar. The Treaty has stemmed the wide-scale horizontal proliferation which would undoubtedly have ensued in its absence, and we are strongly committed to furthering the objectives of the non-proliferation pillar - both on its own merits, as a means of reducing risk and as a contribution to the goal of disarmament.

Together with our fellow members of the Vienna Group of Ten, Ireland has proposed a number of working papers to this Preparatory Committee on compliance and verification; on the CTBT; on export controls; on nuclear safety and on nuclear security. We hope these submissions will contribute to the work of the conference and more generally to our joint efforts to implement this pillar of the Treaty.

Mr Chairman,

At the outset, Ireland wishes to underline that it is a collective obligation and responsibility on all State parties to promote universal adherence to the NPT, as set out in Action 23 of the Action Plan. We wish to reaffirm the central importance of the IAEA’s safeguards system to the nuclear non-proliferation regime. We urge those states which have yet to do so to bring into force Comprehensive Safeguards Agreements and the Additional Protocol as soon as possible.

Ireland fully supports the on-going work of the IAEA in strengthening the effectiveness and improving the efficiency of the IAEA safeguards systems. In particular, we wish to commend the on-going discussions among IAEA member states and policy-making bodies about implementing safeguards at the state level, as recommended in Action 32 of the 2010 Action Plan.

Mr Chairman,

Ireland and our EU partners are subject to a comprehensive Code of Conduct on military and dual use exports. We believe that the Code of Conduct represents one of the strongest export control regimes in the world. Like many states present, Ireland is an active participant in a number of export control regimes, the aim of which is to counter, curb and prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons technology, material or know-how. These arrangements are important, practical elements of the non-proliferation regime built around the NPT.
It is also important however that our export control arrangements continue to facilitate transfers of technology and equipment for peaceful uses. To do this, however, and as Action 35 stipulates, we must be in a position to ensure that such exports do not directly or indirectly facilitate the development of nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices.

Mr Chairman,

In autumn 2015, Ireland will host an IAEA Peer Review Mission. This will be an Integrated Regulatory Peer Review Mission (IRRS) and will look at Ireland’s regulatory framework governing safety. Ireland is a party to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material and actively participates in meetings of the Convention in Vienna, where we have chaired one of the working groups. As regards the amendment to the Convention, Ireland is already acting in accordance with the objectives and the purpose of the amendment, as recommended in Action 42. We expect that to give statutory expression to the amendment this summer.

Mr Chairman,

We strongly support the outcome of the 2010 NPT Review Conference on the Middle East and reaffirm our full support for the establishment of a zone free of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery in the Middle East. We regret that it has not been possible so far to convene a Conference on the establishment of such a zone and strongly support the continuing, tireless efforts of the Facilitator and co-convenors to bring this about. As a small contribution to the discussion on this most vital of issues, we have provided support for the work of the Canadian NGO – Atomic Reporters – in encouraging journalists from the region to report on nuclear-related issues. Ireland’s support will help run a workshop in Vienna later this year.

Mr Chairman,

The DPRK represents the most serious nuclear proliferation challenge facing the international community today. Ireland deplores all DPRK satellite launches using ballistic missile technology and nuclear tests in blatant violation of the DPRK’s international obligations. We call upon the DPRK to desist from any further provocative actions and to return to full compliance with its obligations under the NPT and its IAEA safeguards agreements. The international community must continue to urge the DPRK to re-engage in talks on the de-nuclearisation of the Korean peninsula, immediately and without prior conditions.
We deplore Syria’s undeclared steps towards a nuclear reactor, as set out in a succession of IAEA reports since 2010. We call on Syria to cooperate fully with the IAEA and the UN, and, in particular, to comply with their commitments under their NPT Safeguards Agreement, to cooperate fully and transparently with the IAEA and to sign and ratify the Additional Protocol as soon as possible.

Mr Chairman,

Turning to Iran, Ireland fully respects the rights of all State parties to the NPT to the peaceful uses of nuclear technology. Such rights also come with obligations. Since the meeting in Geneva in May 2013, we have seen significant and positive developments with regard to Iran - specifically the Framework for Cooperation signed between the IAEA and Iran on 11 November 2013 in Tehran and also the Joint Plan of Action signed between the E3 / EU + 3 and Iran on 24 November 2013 in Geneva. As has been recently noted by the IAEA Director General: “the measures implemented by Iran, and the further commitments it has undertaken, represent a positive step forward, but much remains to be done to resolve all outstanding issues.”

In conclusion, Mr Chairman,

Ireland has always put particular emphasis on disarmament as the critical element in any concerted effort towards a world free of nuclear weapons. The conviction that there is an inseparable link between the goals of disarmament and non-proliferation was one of the reasons behind the formation of the New Agenda Coalition. In common with our partners in the New Agenda Coalition, we remain convinced that moves on disarmament and in the area of non-proliferation are mutually reinforcing.

The failure to act on disarmament undermines the NPT’s undoubted achievements on non-proliferation. The international community – including the State parties present here – need to move both processes forward urgently, if we are to succeed in lessening the ever-present and increasingly known risks to life on this planet represented by nuclear weapons. ENDS