Preparatory Committee for the 2014 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
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General Debate
H.E. Ms. Tine Mørch Smith
Ambassador
Deputy Permanent Representative

Mr Chair,

Allow me to join the others in congratulating you on taking on this important task. We were at a critical juncture at the 2010 Review Conference, but succeeded in reinforcing the NPT with an extensive action plan that sets out a common commitment to accelerate concrete progress towards the next Review Conference in 2015. This is our last opportunity to jointly take stock of our progress before the Review Conference next year.

The 2010 Action Plan provided us with effective tools, and we look forward to, and would encourage, reporting on its implementation. We need to ensure that all procedural questions are resolved before the 2015 conference, and we expect the PrepCom to be made use of, to ensure the best possible procedural and substantive preparations. At the same time, our preparations must be guided by a spirit of compromise.

Our primary task at next year’s Review Conference will be to achieve progress based on a broad-based understanding of how to address nuclear threats, and how to facilitate the peaceful application of nuclear technology in a more secure world.

(Check against delivery)
Mr Chair,

The 2010 Review conference recognized catastrophic humanitarian consequences of any use of nuclear weapons and reaffirmed the need for all States at all times to comply with applicable international law, including international humanitarian law. The broad and active participation of many states and the wide range of stakeholders at the Oslo and Nayarit conferences reflects the recognition that the catastrophic effects of a nuclear detonation makes this an issue of concern and relevance to us all.

What has become clear is that no state or international body could address the immediate humanitarian emergency that would follow a nuclear detonation in any meaningful way. No existing national or international emergency system would be able to provide adequate assistance to the victims.

While the number of nuclear weapons in the world has been significantly reduced since the end of the Cold War, some 17,000 weapons still remain. As long as nuclear weapons exist, the humanitarian perspective will remain relevant. This perspective has attracted renewed interest in the disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. Austria’s initiative to host a conference in Vienna will facilitate further discussions on the humanitarian perspective as we prepare for the 2015 Review Conference.

Mr Chair,

The Russian Federation’s illegal annexation of the Crimean peninsula has created a serious impediment to our work to prevent nuclear proliferation. The violation of the Budapest Memorandum of 1994 could have significant consequences with regard to negative security assurances, and represents a major setback in the work for global non-proliferation.

Mr Chair,

Nuclear disarmament depends on full confidence that no one can circumvent the non-proliferation regime. It is therefore vital to resolve all outstanding proliferation concerns. The ongoing P5+1 negotiations with Iran on the Iranian nuclear programme are promising. In parallel, the IAEA and Iran have reached an agreement with a view to resolving all outstanding issues. The relevance of the IAEA is clear from its role in verifying that the intermediate agreement between the P5+1 and Iran is abided by. The IAEA will also play a key role in verifying a future long-term agreement.

We urge Iran to resolve the outstanding issues, past and present, related to its nuclear programme, so that it fully lives up to its NPT obligations. At the same time, Norway strongly condemns the nuclear and missile tests carried out by the DPRK.

Mr Chair,

Our vision for a world without nuclear weapons remains firm. Therefore, Norway remains a staunch supporter of bilateral disarmament measures such as the New START. We welcome president Obama’s Berlin address in June last year where he highlighted the need for further
disarmament steps. The New START should be the first step of an intensified disarmament process, covering all categories of weapons, and involving all nuclear weapons states. The total number of warheads should be substantially reduced. Disarmament must be pursued on the principles of transparency, verification and irreversibility.

Verification is a crucial factor for the future arms reduction process. Norway will continue to actively support the development of sound and trustworthy verification systems. The UK–Norway Initiative is a good example in this context.

Verification is also essential for sustaining the nuclear non-proliferation regime. We urgently need to reach a common understanding of the fact that the IAEA Comprehensive Safeguards Agreements and Additional Protocols protect our collective security and such agreements should be used for all states, not least because they also facilitates peaceful uses.

In addition, we must intensify efforts to sustain existing regional nuclear weapons free zones. And it is also essential to make real progress in securing the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT).

Norway supports the aim of the Nuclear Security Summit to secure all sensitive nuclear materials. Practical measures have been implemented since the first summit in Washington in 2010. The recent Hague summit succeeded in addressing common challenges, which were highlighted through concrete case studies and exercises, and new commitments were made. We must continue efforts to secure all sensitive nuclear materials and to develop international cooperation on nuclear fuel cycles. We should intensify the work towards a treaty banning the production of fissile material for weapons purposes and start a process of reducing existing stocks.

Strengthened non-proliferation efforts must go hand-in-hand with the facilitation of peaceful use, and we must reaffirm the right to civilian applications. These include areas such as health, agriculture, water management and the environment, all of which are essential for economic and social development.

Finally, we must seek full implementation of UN Security Council resolution 1540.

Mr Chair,

All countries have a responsibility do their part in solving present challenges. We need to move forward on all three pillars of the NPT, and, ultimately, create conditions for a world without nuclear weapons. This is a joint responsibility. We all have to do our part. In doing so, we must also fully engage civil society. We should view NGOs and academia as key partners in this endeavour.

Our expectation is that this PrepCom will continue to reinforce the implementation of the NPT. Let us seize the opportunity that it represents.

Thank you.