Non-Proliferation Treaty – Preparatory Committee 2017

Cluster III, 9 May 2017

Statement by Ambassador Marco Hennis
Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to the UN Organisations in Vienna
Mr. Chairman,

The Netherlands fully aligns itself with the statement made by the representative of the EU. On a national basis, I would like to make the following additional remarks.

The Netherlands fully recognizes the inalienable right of all States Parties under article IV of the NPT to undertake research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination and in conformity with articles I, II and III of the Treaty. The Treaty provides a fundamental and indispensable framework of security and confidence through disarmament and non-proliferation, establishing the necessary conditions under which peaceful uses and the transfer of nuclear technology and knowledge can take place. In this regard we believe that adherence to and compliance with the relevant requirements of the Treaty are essential. The highest levels of safety and security must be taken into account and will facilitate the use of nuclear energy - which embraces both power and non-power applications - including at all stages of the nuclear fuel cycle.

The Netherlands underlines the pivotal role of the IAEA in enabling and facilitating the peaceful use of nuclear energy by States in accordance with the NPT. The Netherlands is a strong supporter of the IAEA Technical Cooperation Programme, which can play an important role in realizing the goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. We loyally pay our full target share to the Technical Cooperation Fund and intend to continue this practice in the coming years. We call on all Member States of the IAEA to do the same. In addition, we note the potential of regional organizations and centers of excellence to further contribute to peaceful uses and technical cooperation, a potential that could be further utilized in the coming years. In this regard we support the IAEA in promoting interregional cooperation and welcome initiatives like the meeting on Small Island Developing States, organized in November last year, which identified opportunities for capacity building in areas such as food security, cancer treatment and radiation safety.

In furthering technical cooperation and nuclear technology transfer the Netherlands attaches great importance to strengthening nuclear safety and security worldwide, as they are enablers of peaceful uses of nuclear energy and essential for maintaining public support.

As regards nuclear safety we encourage all States that have not yet done so to become party to the Convention on Nuclear Safety, to the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management. Furthermore we call on all States to implement the principles of the Vienna Declaration. We are strong supporters of the central role of the IAEA in enhancing the global nuclear safety regime and in promoting the lessons learned from the accident at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant.

In the field of nuclear security we regard the entry into force of the Amendment to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material as a crucial development that will greatly enhance our ability to combat the threat of nuclear terrorism. As such, it is essential...
that parties effectively implement the provisions of the amended convention. We also encourage all States that have not yet done so to become party to the amended CPPNM.

We acknowledge the key role of the IAEA in strengthening the nuclear security framework globally and in coordinating international nuclear security activities. In this regard we would like to draw your attention to the initiative to ‘strengthen nuclear security implementation,’ otherwise known as INFCIRC/869. Domestic regimes will be strengthened by reflecting the Nuclear Security Fundamentals and Nuclear Security Series recommendations in national rules and regulations. Periodic advisory missions and demonstrable competence of persons with nuclear security responsibilities are also important elements to that end. We invite and encourage all member States to sign on to INFCIRC/869, and thereby demonstrate their commitment to improving nuclear security.

The Netherlands continues to support multilateral approaches to the nuclear fuel cycle as they may offer ‘assurance of non-proliferation’ as well as ‘assurance of supply and services’. We look forward to the establishment and the secure management of a Low Enriched Uranium Bank under the control the IAEA now that the process of acquisition and subsequent delivery of LEU nears its final stages.

Mr. Chairman,

In conclusion, the Netherlands is highly committed to fostering the fullest possible exchange of equipment, material, services and scientific and technological information among States Parties to the NPT for the peaceful uses of nuclear energy in a safe and secure environment. Last but not least, as a member of both the Vienna Group of Ten and the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative and being part of the European Union, my delegation encourages you and other delegations to read the working papers on behalf of the VG10, NPDI and the EU as they contain important notions and valuable recommendations on Cluster III issues.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.