Conférence d'Examen du Traité sur la non-prolifération des armes nucléaires (TNP)
New York, 2.-27.5.2005

Grande Commission 3 - Utilisation pacifique de l'énergie nucléaire

Déclaration de la Suisse

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2005 Review Conference
of the Parties to the Treaty on the
Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT)
New York, 2.-27.5.2005

Main Committee 3 - Peaceful Use of Nuclear Energy

Statement of Switzerland
Madam Chairperson,

Almost 40% of the electricity consumed in Switzerland is generated by nuclear power. This fact explains the great importance my country attaches not only to the inalienable right to develop research, cooperation, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, as stipulated in Article IV of the NPT, but also to the safety and security of civilian use.

This said, the right stipulated in Article IV is limited with respect to the non-proliferation commitments contained in Articles I, II and III of the NPT. Nuclear cooperation requires guarantees concerning the peaceful nature of the nuclear programmes of recipient States. The international community has appropriate instruments in this respect, and my delegation mentioned them in its declaration to Main Committee 2 on May 20. For the sake of brevity, I will forgo repeating what has already been said, nevertheless, Switzerland would like to mention some other relevant tools in the context of the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

Switzerland underlines the importance of instruments such as the Convention on Nuclear Safety, the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and the Safety of Waste Management and the Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources. My country calls on all States parties to adopt and comply with these instruments.

Madam Chairperson,

Parallel to the development of the normative field, it is our view that efforts need to be made in the technical field. In this context, Switzerland supports and follows with great interest the project on so-called "Generation-4" reactors as an open door to more effective and secure civilian use of nuclear energy.

Madam Chairperson,

Switzerland is also aware that some sensitive areas of the nuclear fuel cycle - such as enrichment and reprocessing - require special attention, and that initiatives should be developed which address both the concern not to be deprived of the peaceful use of nuclear energy and that to prevent proliferation. From our point of view, it will be necessary to define precise restrictions on access to sensitive nuclear technologies. This possibility moreover is stated in Article IV itself with the wording "fullest possible exchange".

In this context, Switzerland welcomes the substantive work which has been carried out for more than one year by the Nuclear Suppliers Group as well as by the Director General of the
IAEA. Switzerland considers that the proposals for converting existing national enrichment and reprocessing facilities into multilateral facilities, as set out in the Expert Group Report on Multilateral Approaches to the Nuclear Fuel Cycle (INFCIRC/640) established by the Director General, constitute an interesting basis for discussion.

By contrast, Switzerland would not endorse proposals that are fundamentally contrary to the right to the peaceful use of nuclear energy as set out in Article IV of the NPT. For this reason, my country does not favour the general ban on the export of sensitive enrichment and reprocessing technologies to States not yet in possession of this technology. A proposal of this kind discriminates further and in an unjustifiable way against non-nuclear-weapon States parties, since it does not make the distinction between those already offering the best records of non-proliferation and those for whom the IAEA is not able to determine the exact nature of their nuclear programmes.

Switzerland proposes that this Review Conference aim to find a fair balance between a set of regulations to ensure the prevention of abuses and the risk of new and unjustified discrimination. It should do this by clearly establishing that access by a State to sensitive nuclear technologies is conditional upon accession to the NPT and respect for all the provisions of the Treaty, in particular the link between Article IV and Articles I, II and III of the NPT. If disarmament and non-proliferation are to be coherently combined, the peaceful use of nuclear energy must also be linked to non-proliferation.

Madam Chairperson,

Finally, the DPRK case has shown that the appropriate instruments in our possession are not sufficient to give the international community all the guarantees concerning the peaceful nature of a State's nuclear programme after it has withdrawn from the NPT. My country therefore takes the view that the modalities allowing a State party to withdraw from the NPT pursuant to Article X need to be defined more precisely in order to avoid possible abuses. We would therefore like this Review Conference to adopt recommendations on this issue, using the working papers submitted on this matter as a reference.

Madam Chairperson, thank you for your attention.