Non-Proliferation Treaty – Review Conference 2015

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Main Committee II

4 May 2015
At the outset, I would like to congratulate you on your election as Chairman of Main Committee II. We assure you of our full support as you guide us in our work over the coming weeks. The Netherlands fully aligns itself with the statement made by the EU and would in addition like to make the following remarks.

[Non-compliance] The Netherlands considers the proliferation of nuclear weapons one of the gravest threats to international peace and security. The current proliferation challenges need to be dealt with in a resolute way by the international community. We see both positive and negative developments.

[Iran] On the positive side we welcome the recent framework agreement between the E3 + 3 and Iran. The Netherlands fully supports the ongoing efforts by the E3+3 and Iran to seek a comprehensive, long-term settlement which would restore international confidence in the exclusively peaceful nature of Iran’s nuclear programme. We welcome recent progress and urge the parties to reach a full agreement by 30 June. Verification of the implementation of the future agreement will be key in restoring the international confidence needed. We call on Iran to cooperate fully with the IAEA and to address all outstanding issues, including those relating to a possible military dimension.

[DPRK] Developments in DPRK are still a cause of deep concern to the Netherlands. The Netherlands strongly condemns all nuclear tests and launches using ballistic missile technology by the DPRK. These acts are a blatant violation of the DPRK’s international obligations under relevant Security Council resolutions. We urge the DPRK to return to full compliance with the NPT and to comply with all its international obligations swiftly and unconditionally. We also urge the DPRK to refrain from any further provocative actions.

[Syria] The Netherlands calls on Syria to fulfil its obligations in restoring non-compliance with its safeguards agreement and to respond positively and without delay to the IAEA’s request to resolve all outstanding questions and to provide the IAEA with the necessary cooperation.

[Safeguards] Mr Chairman,

The IAEA’s system of safeguards is a fundamental component of the nuclear non-proliferation regime and plays an indispensable role in the implementation of the NPT. In order to obtain full confidence in the peaceful nature of State nuclear programmes, all States parties must apply both a Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement AND the Additional Protocol. We welcome progress on application of the Additional Protocol since the 2010 Review Conference and we call for this verification standard to be recognized in the outcomes of this conference.

At this point, I would also like to draw attention to the working paper of the NPDI on the application of Safeguards in Nuclear Weapon States. Among many other recommendations, the paper proposes that NWS, when identifying certain specified nuclear material as excess for military uses, make further efforts to placing such excess under IAEA verification as soon as practicable in a manner to make it irreversible.

[Export controls] The Netherlands underlines the responsibility that all States parties have to ensure that their nuclear-related exports do not directly or indirectly assist the development of nuclear weapons. Effective export controls are central in enabling cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, which depends on a climate of confidence. This topic – as well as many others – is also elaborated in the Working Paper of the Vienna Group of 10 which I recommend to you, Mr Chairman, and to all delegations.
And last but not least, [ME Zone] The Netherlands continues to support the establishment of a zone free of weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. We regret that the Conference could not take place as foreseen, but we continue to support the ongoing efforts by the convenors, the Facilitator and States of the region. We are impressed by the 300 plus meetings held as well as the 5 meetings in Glion. Here, we would like to thank Ambassador Laajava for his tireless efforts. We call upon all States of the region to engage in a spirit of constructive cooperation that will lead to an inclusive, substantive and goal-oriented conference. In this regard we take note of the four working papers that have been submitted, which we hope will contribute to a constructive discussion over the days and weeks to come.

Mr. Chairman,

In addition to my prepared statement, I would like to respond to questions raised about the nuclear sharing arrangements of the Alliance that the Netherlands is a part of. I would like to reiterate that this issue was addressed when the NPT was negotiated. At that time, basing arrangements existed and were made clear to negotiating delegations and were made public. NATO’s basing arrangements are fully compatible with the NPT obligations of NATO allies. Relevant NPT articles do not prohibit nuclear basing or planning arrangements. These arrangements have been in place within NATO since the NPT entered into force in 1970. Weapons assigned to NATO remain under national control of a nuclear weapon state at all times and are never transferred.