

NEW ZEALAND MISSION to the UNITED NATIONS



Te Māngai o Aotearoa

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**2005 REVIEW CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE TREATY ON THE
NON-PROLIFERATION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS**

PLENARY DEBATE

**STATEMENT BY
AMBASSADOR TIM CAUGHLEY**

On behalf of

**THE NEW AGENDA COALITION – BRAZIL, EGYPT, IRELAND, MEXICO,
SOUTH AFRICA, SWEDEN AND NEW ZEALAND**

18 MAY 2005

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Mr President,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the seven members of the New Agenda Coalition, which are Brazil, Egypt, Ireland, Mexico, South Africa, Sweden and my own country, New Zealand.

The Principles and Objectives for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament agreed in 1995 included a "programme of action" towards implementation of Article VI; the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice in 1996 which concluded unanimously that, "There exists an obligation to pursue in good faith and bring to a conclusion negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament in all its aspects under strict and effective international control"; and the Final Document of the 2000 Review Conference consensus agreement on the practical steps for the systematic and progressive efforts to implement Article VI - are the agreements and decisions that form the basis of the international community's expectations, both in legal and moral terms, that the nuclear-weapon states would make meaningful progress towards nuclear disarmament.

Mr President,

The purpose of this statement is to outline the New Agenda Coalition's proposals for taking forward these courses of action on nuclear disarmament as set out in working paper NPT/CONF.2005/WP.27. In looking forward, it will be necessary to reflect on the lessons learnt and challenges posed to the goals of nuclear disarmament to secure implementation of Article VI.

The New Agenda calls on India, Pakistan and Israel to accede to the Treaty as non-nuclear weapon States, promptly and without condition. They should reverse clearly and urgently all policies pursuing nuclear weapons development or deployment.

If we see the NPT as the cornerstone of international peace and security, then another vital part of the foundation is the ban on nuclear testing. The conclusion of the Comprehensive-Test-Ban Treaty heralded the start of a new era in which States Parties responded to the call in the preamble of the NPT for the "*discontinuance of all test explosions of nuclear weapons for all time*" and to more decisively put an end to the nuclear arms race. It remains a major frustration for States and the international community that the CTBT, which was central to the agreement on the NPT's indefinite extension, has not entered into force.

Despite this frustrating situation, the determination of States to have the CTBT enter into force has been demonstrated by the work that has been carried out in building the unprecedented network of monitoring stations, laboratories and International Data Centre in Vienna that will, when completed, have the ability to detect nuclear explosions anywhere. In the meantime, we call on all States to reaffirm and respect the moratorium banning nuclear testing and for those nuclear-weapon States that have not yet done so to follow the example of France and close their nuclear testing sites. Furthermore, we call on the United States to reconsider its approach to the CTBT and

for China to deliver on its statements of support and bring forward its process of ratification

The Conference on Disarmament (CD) has in the past served as the negotiating forum for disarmament and non-proliferation treaties. It can and must do so again. The rule of consensus that is enjoyed by the CD's sixty-five members and provides an important safety net for entering into negotiations, has unfortunately also been used to block agreement on a programme of work for eight years. Given the numerous efforts that have been made to overcome the deadlock, the increasing impatience of the majority of the CD's membership and the current threats to security, the CD's continued inaction is not sustainable.

While many States have regarded the negotiation of a treaty banning the production of fissile material for non-peaceful uses as the next logical step for the CD and an issue that is ripe for negotiation, we have yet to see such commitments being translated into the necessary political will to drive this issue forward. Given the concerns regarding the possibility of non-state actors gaining access to fissile material, the absence of political drive for a treaty banning the production of fissile material is all the more difficult to understand. Even modest proposals for a group of experts to begin exploring the issues involved in such a treaty have not been seized upon. Recent shifts in policy that contest the proposal for a verifiable treaty banning the production of fissile material overlook the considerable knowledge and experience that has been acquired in developing the verification regime for the International Atomic Energy Agency's safeguards systems.

There has only been limited action towards placing fissile material, no longer needed for military purposes, under the authority of the IAEA and only France has closed its fissile material production facilities. The nuclear-weapon States that have not yet done so need to close down their fissile material production facilities. It is also crucial that China follows the example of the other nuclear-weapon States and declares a moratorium on the production of fissile material.

The New Agenda has continued to call for the CD to address nuclear disarmament. We have remained flexible as to how those discussions would take place and what would be the end result. However, our flexibility has not been reciprocated.

Before taking up the issues of reducing the operational status and the numbers of nuclear weapons, we will first comment on the problematic perception that nuclear weapons continue to be associated with security and political power. We believe that the starting point for changing perceptions is to address the central role that nuclear weapons continue to occupy in the military doctrines of the nuclear-weapon States. We need to see a move away from the belief that nuclear weapons are needed to sustain a country's political importance. By amending their strategic doctrines and abandoning plans to develop new types of nuclear weapons and rationalisations for their use, the nuclear-weapon States would be making a significant contribution to the principle of irreversibility and thus signalling their intent on making progress towards nuclear disarmament.

One step towards nuclear disarmament that was identified at the 2000 Review Conference was "concrete agreed measures to further reduce the operational status of nuclear weapons systems" and in this context we welcome the Moscow Treaty. While de-alerting is not recognised as a nuclear disarmament measure, it is an encouraging and meaningful step towards that goal. It also diminishes the risk that those nuclear weapons could be used. Concrete measures could include confidence-building measures for de-alerting, removing nuclear warheads from delivery vehicles and withdrawing nuclear forces from active deployment.

The potential of the Moscow Treaty as a nuclear disarmament measure will be fully realised if it is supplemented with provisions for irreversibility, transparency and verification. Irreversibility in this instance would mean the complete destruction of nuclear weapons. For the purposes of verifying further reductions, we would like to see the verification provisions of the START I Treaty extended beyond 2009.

The key principles for nuclear disarmament agreed to at the 2000 Review Conference were irreversibility, transparency and verification. Irreversibility entails destruction, elimination and it necessarily means verification because non-nuclear weapon States must be assured that the destruction of nuclear weapons has actually been carried out. We have already indicated actions that can be undertaken to implement the principle of irreversibility – amending military doctrines, closing nuclear testing sites and fissile production facilities.

We acknowledge that significant reductions in the numbers of nuclear weapons have been made. Nonetheless these fall short of our expectations for the implementation of Article VI. If there is to be real momentum towards fulfilling those obligations, then the nuclear-weapon States must continue to make systematic and progressive efforts towards the elimination of their nuclear arsenals.

While all nuclear weapons must obviously be eliminated, over the past five years the New Agenda has paid close attention to the issue of non-strategic nuclear weapons. It remains deeply troubling to the New Agenda that Russia continues to contemplate the use of non-strategic weapons as a possible defence against conventional weapons. Non-strategic nuclear weapons pose a particular danger due to the likelihood that they are deployed away from central control and therefore are less secure. The removal of non-strategic weapons would not only represent significant financial savings in terms of security and storage costs, but also constitute a valuable contribution to nuclear disarmament and improve regional and international security.

Full acknowledgement for the progress that the nuclear-weapon States assert they are making towards nuclear disarmament requires greater transparency. A first step towards transparency is the regular submission of Article VI reports in accordance with Step 12 as agreed at the 2000 Review Conference. We acknowledge that it might not be possible to achieve full transparency. However, that does not mean that enhanced transparency could not be developed collectively or within the framework of the NPT.

In all facets of disarmament and non-proliferation, we demand processes that are verifiable. Nuclear disarmament is no exception to this rule. The working papers presented by the United Kingdom on the issue of verification for nuclear disarmament suggested a number of useful proposals. We would welcome similar information from the other nuclear-weapon States.

The commitment made at the 1995 NPT Review Conference for further steps on security assurances, including an internationally legally binding instrument remains unfulfilled. There have been a number of proposals on negative security assurances, including the New Agenda's own working paper NPT/CONF.2005/PC.II/WP.11 as well as the New Agenda's resolution contained in A/RES/58/51. Our goal is to ensure that this issue is taken forward in line with our collective commitments in 1995.

The New Agenda's recommendations have been tabled and circulated. We bring these recommendations forward to engage in negotiation, to see that real progress is made towards nuclear disarmament and that the objectives of the NPT are fulfilled.