

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**

GENERAL DEBATE

**STATEMENT BY
HON MARIAN HOBBS
MINISTER FOR DISARMAMENT AND ARMS CONTROL, NEW ZEALAND**

On behalf of

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

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CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Nevertheless, we are willing to give credit where credit is due. We acknowledge the reductions in non-strategic and strategic nuclear arsenals over the last decade, that three of the nuclear-weapon States have ratified the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), one nuclear-weapon State has taken all its nuclear weapons off high-alert and another has closed down all of its fissile material production facilities. Towards the practical end of disarmament, collective efforts are being made by the nuclear-weapon States and others to secure the vast amounts of nuclear material that remain world-wide.

But, we have yet to realise “the cessation of the manufacture of nuclear weapons, the liquidation of all existing stockpiles, and the elimination from national arsenals of nuclear weapons and the means of their delivery”, the desire expressed so resoundingly in the Preamble to the NPT. Indeed, according to the latest estimates the number of existing nuclear warheads today amount to upwards of 30,000. This is a figure that is almost as high as the estimated number of warheads that existed when the Treaty entered into force in 1970. Even today’s stocks of fissile material are enough to produce thousands more nuclear warheads.

We continue to be far from the implementation of the “programme of action” towards implementation of Article VI contained in the Principles and Objectives for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament agreed in 1995 and the “practical steps for... systematic and progressive efforts to implement Article VI” agreed in the year 2000.

The CTBT has not yet entered into force, negotiations for a treaty banning the production of fissile material have not begun, a subsidiary body on nuclear disarmament has not been established, the majority of weapons reductions are not irreversible, transparent, or verifiable, and the role of nuclear weapons in security policies has not been diminished - to give but a few examples of the lack of implementation of the 1995 and 2000 agreements.

When we highlight current realities, we do so because in foregoing the development of such weapons we have a right to do so. Indeed, given the horrendous devastation of which these armaments are capable, we have a duty to do so.

We believe that the broad support for the Coalition’s UN General Assembly Resolution A/Res/59/75 entitled “Accelerating the implementation of nuclear disarmament commitments” reflects increasingly widespread concern and impatience with the unsatisfactory progress being made towards nuclear disarmament.

In the Final Document of the 2000 Review Conference all States Parties agreed to the unambiguous statement that: "...the total elimination of nuclear weapons is the only absolute guarantee against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons." In the current climate of high concern about the risks of nuclear proliferation to States as well as non-state actors, this has become a truism.

In the same way that we look to the nuclear-weapon States to set the example in disarming, so we equally expect all other States Parties to fulfil their own obligations under the Treaty.

In addressing proliferation concerns, we must not overlook long-standing tensions that remain unresolved. The New Agenda believes that transparent and verifiable disarmament processes both facilitate and expedite the resolution of regional conflicts. It cannot be the case that disarmament must await the resolution of tensions, for if such a proposition was always followed then a peaceful settlement more often than not might never come about.

In spite of recent positive efforts, tensions remain high in the Middle East Region. In this regard, we recall the resolution on the Middle East that was an integral part of the outcome of the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the NPT. The New Agenda renews its support for the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. We call on Israel to accede to the NPT promptly, without conditions and to place all of its nuclear facilities under comprehensive IAEA safeguards.

The New Agenda has also called for the establishment of a nuclear weapon free zone in South Asia. While we have welcomed the recent warming of relations between India and Pakistan, we call on those two States to remain engaged in meaningful dialogue, to pull back from their nuclear weapon programmes and accede unconditionally to the Treaty.

Turning now to more recent threats, the New Agenda is concerned by the possibility that terrorists could acquire nuclear weapons, and by activities such as those of the A.Q. Khan network. The United Nations Security Council's deliberations on weapons of mass destruction have proved to be salutary for nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear weapon States alike.

The New Agenda welcomes the efforts that have been made in the context of the Six Party Talks. It is our hope that those talks will continue and address peace and stability in the Korean Peninsula. We call on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to reconsider its proclaimed nuclear weapons programme and re-engage in the Six Party Talk process.

We welcome the negotiations that are taking place between France, Germany and the United Kingdom, supported by the High Representative of the European Union, and Iran on a long-term arrangement to provide objective guarantees that Iran's nuclear programme is exclusively for peaceful purposes.

Such developments underscore the importance of the International Atomic Energy Agency's (IAEA) work in contributing to the effective functioning of the NPT regime. The New Agenda congratulates the Director General and his staff for the professional manner in which they have undertaken their work.

Nuclear-weapon-free zones demonstrate the determination of countries that nuclear weapons have no place in their regions. We welcome the recent initiative of Mexico in hosting the Conference of Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones. The entry into force of the Treaties of Tlatelolco, Rarotonga and Bangkok are valuable developments that we hope will provide impetus to the entry into force of similar treaties in other regions such as the Treaty of Pelindaba. Furthermore, we support the ongoing efforts by the five Central Asian States to establish a nuclear weapon free zone in that region, and Mongolia's international nuclear-weapon-free status.

We welcome Libya's decision to abandon its programmes for developing weapons of mass destruction and its cooperation with the IAEA and other relevant international organisations.

Despite the many efforts by the vast majority of States Parties to support the NPT, it is a Treaty that faces significant challenges. Those challenges underscore the importance of the New Agenda's objectives. We believe that a climate of nuclear disarmament, where effective measures are pursued in good faith to that end, would be more conducive to international peace and security than one in which nuclear weapons are aspired to.

The strength of this Treaty is dependent on the will of States Parties to engage in dialogue, listen to each other's concerns and take the necessary action to move forward together. If the Treaty's obligations are not met, it is not the Treaty's provisions that have failed, but it is rather a failure of collective will and leadership to implement them effectively.

The New Agenda at this Review Conference will address the increasing concerns about the lack of compliance and implementation of all commitments made in the context of the NPT regime. In particular, we will address the troubling development that some nuclear-weapon States are researching or even planning to develop new or significantly modify existing nuclear weapons. These actions have the potential to create the conditions for a new nuclear arms race and would be contrary to the Treaty.

We are determined to see that the strengthened review process finally fulfils its objectives. We are calling for a subsidiary body on nuclear disarmament, in which to take forward the past commitments to nuclear disarmament and the promise made by the nuclear-weapon States through the "unequivocal undertaking" to the total elimination of their nuclear weapons in the 2000 Final

Document. Our specific proposals will be set out in greater detail later in this Conference. Let me leave you in no doubt about our resolve to pursue them.

Thank you, Mr President.