



HOLY SEE

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**STATEMENT BY H.E. ARCHBISHOP CELESTINO MIGLIORE,
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AT THE THIRD SESSION OF THE PREPARATORY COMMITTEE FOR
THE 2005 REVIEW CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE
TREATY ON THE NON-PROLIFERATION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS
APRIL 26-MAY 7, 2004**

Mr. Chairman,

This third session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2005 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) is called upon to make recommendations for further action in the long struggle to rid the world of nuclear weapons.

The Holy See would like to emphasize at the outset that the recommendations should flow from a common desire to protect the integrity of the Treaty. This Treaty has contributed to international peace and security but still has much to accomplish. It is the integrity of the Treaty and its good faith application that are challenged today and which must be addressed. It must be said, and sadly so, that more than three decades after the advent of the NPT, nine years after its indefinite extension, and four years after States Parties made an “unequivocal undertaking” to achieve total elimination through the progressive application of 13 Practical Steps, the integrity of the NPT is severely compromised.

In essence, the NPT promised a world in which nuclear weapons would be eliminated and nuclear technological cooperation for development would be widespread. The heart of this anticipated cooperation was the bargain struck between the non-nuclear-weapon States, which agreed not to acquire nuclear weapons in return for the nuclear-weapon States negotiating the elimination of their nuclear arsenals.

Mr. Chairman,

The current geo-political environment, especially considering the threat posed by global terrorist networks acquiring weapons of mass destruction, requires us to reinforce these commitments. At the same time, it is becoming obvious that nuclear business as usual cannot continue.

Nuclear-weapon States have not given evidence of fulfillment of their Article VI obligation, that is, the negotiation of effective measures related to the elimination of their nuclear arsenals. The modernization of nuclear weapons and development of new nuclear weapons technologies is taking place now and challenge directly the viability of the Treaty. It continues to be a discordant note in international relationships that some States, which profess ardent support for the NPT, are still

attached to military policies which hold that nuclear weapons are essential as the supreme guarantee of security. Nuclear-weapon States should be pressed to reveal under what security conditions and assurances they could eliminate their nuclear arsenals. More positively, the work of the Nuclear Suppliers' Group should help enforce their Article I obligations not to transfer nuclear weapons or assist, encourage or induce any non-nuclear-weapon State to acquire such devices.

On the other hand, non-nuclear-weapon States Parties have Article II obligations which include not receiving, transferring, manufacturing or otherwise acquiring nuclear weapons. While Article IV admits the "inalienable right of all Parties to develop research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes", it is becoming clear that such peaceful activities can be too easily diverted into weapons programs. We all know that the role of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in this regard is vital and should be strengthened, with more vigilance exercised on the part of all States Parties.

Yet another problem is posed by States which remain outside or withdraw from the NPT. Being outside the Treaty framework should not place such States outside larger non-proliferation concerns. At the very least, various forms of political, economic and security leverage can and should be used to assure compliance with the goals of non-proliferation and disarmament.

At the level of security doctrine, there is a great need to move beyond nuclear deterrence. The time has come for all States to comply with the unanimous conclusion of the International Court of Justice that negotiations toward nuclear disarmament be pursued and achieved in good faith under strict and effective international control.

The Holy See reiterates its stand that a "peace" based on nuclear weapons cannot be the peace we seek in the 21st century. Reaffirming fundamental opposition to nuclear weapons as a threat to the survival of humanity, the States Parties must now focus their attention on recommendations that can command common support.

Attention must be paid to the 13 Practical Steps for systematic and progressive efforts to implement Article VI of the Treaty; the importance of completing ratification required to achieve the early entry-into-force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty; the necessity of irreversible dismantling of tactical and strategic stocks in a transparent and verifiable manner; the process of accounting for and control of fissile materials on a worldwide basis in accordance with NPT principles; and the strengthening of the capacity of the IAEA and adherence to its protocols.

To advance this agenda, a global dialogue is necessary. This dialogue should be multilateral, informed by public opinion and the views of expert analysts. Consideration should be given to the holding of an international conference to identify ways to eliminate nuclear dangers, such as those explicitly mentioned in the U.N. Millennium Declaration. The Holy See, deeply concerned about the present crisis of the non-proliferation regime, supports this initiative for such a conference.

Solutions to the terrible dilemma posed by nuclear weapons are not beyond us. A program of action towards elimination could be advanced once all States Parties express their determination to protect the integrity of the NPT.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.