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Statement by

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for the 2010 Review Conference
of the Parties to the Treaty on the
Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons**

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Mr. Chairman,

As my delegation takes the floor for the first time during this session of the Preparatory Committee I would like to congratulate you on the election to this important office. You can bank on my delegation's full support in your endeavours to bring this session to a successful conclusion.

At the start of my statement I would also like to fully associate myself with the statements made by Slovenia on behalf of all EU member states.

Mr. Chairman,

The EU in its statement in the general debate unequivocally committed to ensuring a successful outcome of the 2010 Review Conference. This should be the leitmotiv of all our endeavours – our joint endeavours – during the preparatory process leading up to 2010. This is all the more important against the backdrop of the failure of the 2005 Review Conference to arrive at an agreed result, a fact which testifies to the serious challenges and risks of erosion that the nuclear non-proliferation regime faces.

What does it take to achieve success in 2010? Let me identify some fundamental requirements in this regard:

First, we must re-establish a sense of common purpose. The integrity and authority of the NPT cannot be taken for granted. It depends on a shared respect for the fundamental bargain underlying the Treaty, a respect for the relationship and interdependence between non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament. We must make best use of the preparatory process to make progress on all aspects of the Treaty. Sticking to one-sided agendas, futile ideological debates and disputes about the relative emphasis to be given to the three pillars of the Treaty are liable to undermine our efforts and increase the risks of failure in 2010. This might be considered a truism; however, it bears repeating in light of the fact that discussions during the first session of the Preparatory Committee last year and also during the general debate this year seemed to be entrenched along familiar lines. We all should pursue productive exchanges aimed at overcoming differences and reaching concrete results.

Second, in order to bring about a renewed sense of common purpose, it is important to set out a joint vision guiding us, the vision of a world free of all nuclear weapons. We should be thankful to George P. Shultz, William J. Perry, Henry A. Kissinger and Sam Nunn having made this vision the focus of their influential Wall Street Journal op-eds in January 2007 and 2008 and thereby stimulating a broad debate about the finality of our efforts which is long overdue. However, it should be understood that this vision can only be realized through an incremental process, which will require patience and time. In this regard I would like to draw attention to the working paper entitled „Attaining a nuclear weapon free world“ that Germany submitted in 2002 to the previous review process. In it we clearly identified the very stringent requirements that need to be met to achieve a nuclear weapon free world. We argued that these should not be taken as a pretext to shun progress but as an encouragement to redouble our efforts. Or as pointed out in the January 2007 Wall Street Journal op-ed: „Without the bold vision the actions will not be perceived as fair and urgent. Without the actions the vision will not be perceived as realistic or possible.“

Third, all States Parties need to honour and comply with all commitments under the NPT and be ready to be held accountable in this regard. Compliance does not only relate to the provisions in the NPT but also the results of the review conferences. The commitments undertaken at the 1995 and 2000 Conferences must continue to be considered as relevant and binding; failure to do so would call into question the very purpose of review conferences and undermine confidence in the good faith of States Parties and the viability and dependability of multilateral agreements. At the same time, however, it would be naive and unrealistic to ignore the developments that have occurred over the last few years. Merely dwelling on past disappointments and deploring shortcomings in the implementation of past agreements does not provide guidance for the way forward. Instead of looking backwards and continue to wallow in old and acrimonious debates we suggest to take a forward looking approach and to develop a „New NPT Implementation Baseline“ to be agreed in 2010.

The proposed „New NPT Implementation Baseline“ should consist of a comprehensive but at the same time realistic double track approach, reflecting the fundamental bargain underpinning the NPT. It should be geared towards, on the one hand strengthening the non-proliferation commitment of the NPT and, on the other hand, instilling a new momentum into the process of nuclear disarmament.

Mr. Chairman,

At this juncture I will refrain from discussing the elements of the suggested approach in more detail. These are enumerated in a working paper that we have submitted for circulation today. The non-proliferation track should contain clear commitments to compliance and a diplomatic solution to the pressing regional proliferation risks, in particular Iran and the DPRK. Both these states must be held accountable.

Other important elements within the non-proliferation track pertain to the improvement of verification and the effective prevention of any misuse of civilian nuclear programmes for military ends, topics that we will come back to at a later stage of this session of the Preparatory Committee.

Mr. Chairman,

Let me focus in some more detail on the second track, nuclear disarmament, the main subject for discussion in this cluster. On this subject we are faced with an apparent entrenchment of position. That is why it seems of particular urgency not merely to repeat the well-known positions that we are familiar with from past discussions but take a forward looking approach and set the stage for arriving at a substantive result in 2010.

In line with our basic approach to achieving a nuclear weapon free world we believe that incrementalism should be the guiding principle for nuclear disarmament. It is incumbent on the nuclear weapon states to demonstrate that the process of nuclear disarmament is inexorably moving forward. They should move from a defensive to a proactive support and promotion of Article VI and adopt a leadership role. Against this background the continuation of a strategic dialogue between Russia and the United States and the agreement on a follow-up to the START I and SORT treaties are of particular importance.

I would also like to draw attention to the issue of non strategic nuclear weapons and the need to develop an incremental arms control approach pertaining to this category of weapons as yet not covered by any formal agreement. Already in 2002 Germany submitted a working paper that sets out possible elements of such an approach. A first step to be realized early could consist of a reaffirmation of the 1991/92 Presidential Nuclear Initiatives by way of a formal joint statement of the United States and the Russian Federation. In addition to such a statement detailed information on the implementation of these initiatives could be provided and further steps be identified. Such a move would also serve as an important demonstration of nuclear disarmament being pursued with urgency and in a comprehensive manner.

Considering what should be "doable" at this stage, particular attention should also be paid to commitments which would give expression to the "cessation of the nuclear arms-race" - obligation contained in Article VI. The most obvious one would be the bringing into force of the CTBT and, pending the submission of all the required ratifications, a political commitment by all relevant countries that they will not be the first to conduct a nuclear explosion. Other commitments like the establishment of accountability and reporting obligations, denuclearizing and the capping of nuclear arsenals should also be considered in this context.

Last but not least it would be of paramount significance to immediately restart substantial work in the Conference on Disarmament here in Geneva. Building on the momentum gained over the last few years negotiations on a Fissile Material Cut Off Treaty (FMCT) should be started without delay. However, notwithstanding the priority nature which we attribute to this subject, there are still some questions that need to be resolved. Even if this is done quickly, it will take time to achieve an agreed outcome. Against this backdrop we have submitted a working paper with a proposal which is aimed at creating a new momentum for the endeavours regarding an FMCT.

Stressing the need to start negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament without delay we suggest that as an immediate step and accompanying all nuclear weapon states, de-facto nuclear weapon states and important non-nuclear weapon states, which have the capacity to produce weapons usable materials, enter into a political commitment which would take the form of a joint declaration. This declaration would contain an unambiguous fissile material cut off commitment, a commitment to adopt or maintain the necessary measures for security, control and accounting of weapons usable materials and a commitment to enter without preconditions into negotiations on a non-discriminatory legally binding FMCT. We will come back to our proposal at some later stage in our deliberations.

Finally I consider it of particular importance that consistent with the requirements already spelt out in 2000 the existing security assurances are recommitted to and formalised. A reaffirmation and formalization of existing commitments would make an important contribution to confidence building and would put to rest questions relating to the continuing validity of the assurances provided in 1995. In addition it is important to vigorously pursue efforts to bringing all existing nuclear weapon free zones into force.

Mr. Chairman,

The few remarks that I have made on the issue of nuclear disarmament illustrate that there is scope for progress, progress that can be achieved now, setting the right signals for 2010.

The NPT review process is not a self-serving exercise. It should be result oriented. Thus we should make best use of the time during this as well as next year's session of the Preparatory Committee. We should not just sit here to make and listen to presentations but be ready to engage in an active dialogue aimed at achieving a successful outcome in 2010. It is with this objective in mind that we submit our proposals. We are ready to discuss them here or informally on the margins of this session.

We have come here with an open mind addressing all issues and concerns in a constructive manner. Jointly we should undertake all efforts to pave the way for a new departure for and a strengthening of the NPT in 2010. It is high time that we overcome the entrenched ideological debates. We call again on all states to set aside petty disagreements and acknowledge the interdependence between non-proliferation and disarmament: proliferation threats reduce the prospect for progress on disarmament. And a lack of disarmament momentum is liable to boost proliferation risks. Now is the time to join forces to prepare for a successful 2010 Review Conference.