



NORWAY

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NPT Review Process 2010

PrepCom II

Cluster I

STATEMENT BY NORWAY

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Disarmament Affairs**

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Mr. Chair,

Nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation serve the same goal - removing the availability of nuclear weapons.

Credible, robust and effective non-proliferation measures must be in place if we are to reach our common objective of a world free of nuclear weapons. My delegation will present its views in Cluster II on what elements should be part of a robust international non-proliferation agenda.

The elimination of nuclear weapons cannot be achieved unless we are able to speed up the disarmament process. While there has been a considerable reduction in the nuclear arsenals since the end of the Cold War, there is still a wide-spread sentiment that we are not moving quickly enough.

Mr. Chair,

It does not make sense that there are still more than 27 000 nuclear warheads in the world, nearly 20 years after the end of the Cold War. The mere fact that some of them could fall into the hands of terrorists testifies to the urgency in getting the number down. This should be done sooner rather than later.

Given the fact that the US and the Russian Federation are possessing 95 per cent of the world's nuclear weapons, it is important that these two countries lead the way in reducing the size of their arsenals significantly so that nuclear weapons eventually will be measured by the hundreds, and not by the thousands.

START will expire next year, while the SORT will be up for renewal in 2012. It is encouraging that the US and the Russian Federation have initiated consultations on the extension of START. We encourage continued reductions on the basis of key disarmament principles such as irreversibility, transparency and verification.

In addition, we encourage the US and the Russian Federation to take incremental steps in dealing with non-strategic nuclear weapons with a view to fully implementing the Presidential Initiatives of 1991/92 and reaching a legally binding arrangement.

We also encourage other nuclear weapon states to continue their effort to prepare for reductions in their arsenals.

Mr. Chair,

Our deliberations cannot be focused on the mere quantitative aspects of nuclear disarmament. We need to further explore fundamental qualitative aspects as well.

It is highly discouraging that we have not moved forward on a much needed Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty. For more than 10 years we have agreed that a FMCT is the next step on the multilateral disarmament agenda. Norway reiterates its call for early commencement of FMCT negotiations without pre-conditions.

A FMCT will cap future production of weapons materials and hence prevent any potential nuclear arms race. A FMCT will therefore send a strong message of a further diminished role for nuclear weapons in the future.

From a Norwegian perspective an ideal FMCT would have to include verification provisions. We understand that there are different views on this matter. It should, however, be re-called that over the years considerable experience has been gained in the field of verification. Indeed non-nuclear weapons states are already bound by a de facto FMCT with verification. Some nuclear weapons states have already placed their civilian installations under IAEA supervision. In the long run, we hope it should be possible to monitor de-commissioned military facilities in all nuclear weapons states.

A FMCT also dealing with existing stocks of fissile materials will undoubtedly strengthen the disarmament dimension of such a treaty. We acknowledge that there are different views also on this issue. Until we reach a common understanding on the scope of a FMCT, it is vital that nuclear weapons states declare or reconfirm their moratoria on production of fissile materials for nuclear weapons purposes. We urge them to place material designated as no longer required for military purposes under an IAEA verification regime.

Norway welcomes steps already taken by some nuclear weapons states in moving excess military stocks to civilian purposes. This demonstrates that nuclear disarmament can facilitate peaceful use.

At the same time we urge nuclear weapons states to explore possible new arrangements inspired by the Trilateral Initiative between nuclear weapons states and the IAEA, in order to enhance transparency and irreversibility.

Norway supports the Fissile Material Control Initiative to enhance the security and transparency of all nuclear material. This initiative was put forward at the Oslo Conference in February on Achieving the Vision of a World Free of Nuclear Weapons.

Mr. Chair,

Verification within the NPT has often been confined to compliance of non-proliferation obligations. Norway's views on further strengthening the non-proliferation are well-known. At the same time we fully recognise the need for verification to enhance confidence that disarmament commitments are being implemented.

In order to move forward in this area, the UK, Norway and Vertic established a joint research project in 2007, which aims to develop new technologies, methods and procedures for the verification of future multilateral and bilateral disarmament treaties. It is a joint project between a Nuclear Weapon State and a Non-Nuclear Weapon State, and is of a scientific and technical nature.

In 2008 there will be conducted exercises which hopefully will yield considerable experience in defining and negotiating the terms for mutually acceptable managed access inspections of nuclear warheads and facilities – both from a Non-Nuclear Weapon State and a Nuclear Weapon State's point of view.

The Norwegian-British scientific cooperation will produce concrete scientific results, to be presented in different international scientific journals and conferences, notably the NPT community.

Mr. Chair,

The CTBT is an integral part of the outcome from both the 1995 and 2000 conferences. A test ban is essential to prevent a new nuclear arms race.

Pending an entry into force of the CTBT, we must do our utmost to sustain the non-test norm. Nuclear weapons states must maintain their test moratoria. We must support the CTBTO, both politically and financially, in completing the International Monitoring System. While such steps are important, we reiterate that they cannot replace the importance in having a legally binding test ban in force. We therefore urge all Annex II countries to ratify the CTBT in a timely manner.

Mr. Chair,

Norway considers nuclear weapon free zones on the basis of established UN guidelines as a major contribution to reach a world free of nuclear weapons. Such zones will lead to enhanced regional confidence and stability, which are essential conditions for further arms reduction.

The concept of regional nuclear weapon free-zones is also an important feature in the overall global non-proliferation architecture.

Zones will facilitate the process of achieving legally binding negative security assurances. In this way, regional nuclear weapon free zones contribute to our agreed objective in reducing the role of nuclear weapons in security policies.

My delegation hopes it will be possible to move forward on the question of promoting nuclear weapon free zones. A de-nuclearised Korean Peninsula would be an important achievement. So would be a zone free of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery for the Middle East.

Mr. Chair,

In addressing the implementation of the disarmament obligation, we need enhanced transparency. We welcome presentations made by nuclear weapons states in the UN General Assembly last autumn and in the CD this year. Yet we are convinced that more could be done in this field.

Although reporting is an obligation for all States Parties, the nuclear weapons states have a particular responsibility in this respect. Reporting is an obligation and not a matter of choice. Like last year, Norway will during PrepCom II submit its national report on our national efforts to promote nuclear disarmament. An important part of that report will be about the Oslo Conference on Achieving the Vision of a World Free of Nuclear Weapons.

Let me also share with you that Norway has significantly increased financial support to research projects in the field of nuclear disarmament. We are engaged in co-operation with institutions from all regions.

Indeed, we must include all relevant stake-holders in our quest for nuclear disarmament. We have much to learn from academia and we are convinced that the NGO community will further enrich our debates. We do not believe that increased involvement by civil society undermines the intergovernmental character of the NPT.

Finally Mr. Chair,

Nuclear disarmament is one of the core pillars of the NPT. It also covers a number of issues which are closely interlinked with the two other pillars. This Review Process provides us with an opportunity to move the disarmament agenda forward. Let us use it.