

SWEDEN



STATEMENT

on behalf of the New Agenda Coalition

by

H.E. Mr. Christer Ahlström
Head of Delegation, Sweden

Preparatory Committee for the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the
Treaty on the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

General Debate

United Nations
New York

May 4, 2009

- CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY -

Mr Chairperson,

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

At the outset let me congratulate you on your election as Chairman of the Third Session of the Preparatory Committee of the 2010 NPT Review Conference. We assure you of our full support as you guide us in our work over the next two weeks.

The New Agenda Coalition remains fully committed to the objectives of the NPT and its three fundamental pillars: nuclear disarmament, nuclear non-proliferation and the peaceful use of nuclear energy. The NPT is an essential bedrock of our global security regime. All aspects of the Treaty need to be fully implemented and strengthened. The current challenges to the Treaty must be met with a common purpose and concrete action, demonstrating progress on all three pillars of the Treaty. The long-term success of the Treaty is dependent on the delivery of all its objectives.

Our common task at this Third Prepcom is twofold: to finalize the procedural arrangements for the Eighth Review Conference, and to make every effort to agree substantive input and recommendations to the Review Conference. We must at this meeting at least agree a shared framework for approaching the Review Conference. We cannot repeat the mistakes that led to the failure of the 2005 Review Conference. The stakes are too high.

Mr Chairperson,

As the President of the United States made clear in his speech in Prague on 5 April “the existence of thousands of nuclear weapons is the most dangerous legacy of the Cold War”. At the 2000 NPT 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”. This simple truth remains as relevant as ever.

The New Agenda Coalition has never shied away from acknowledging and welcoming progress made on nuclear disarmament. Significant reductions in overall nuclear arsenals have been made, three of the nuclear-weapon States have ratified the CTBT and the other two have recently reaffirmed their commitment to doing so, one nuclear-weapon State has taken all its nuclear weapons off high-alert, another has declared a no-first use policy and yet another has verifiably closed down all of its production facilities for weapons-grade fissile material. A new nuclear-weapon-free zone has been created in Central Asia.

But we also have to note with concern that a majority of weapons reductions made so far are not irreversible, transparent or verifiable. The role of nuclear weapons in security policies has not yet been diminished and the doctrine of nuclear deterrence is still being advocated. The option of creating new types of and new uses for nuclear weapons has not

yet been taken off the table in strategic planning. The CTBT has not yet entered into force. The negotiations for a Treaty ending the production of fissile material for weapons purposes remain to take off.

In addition, we see no real progress in fulfilling the commitment to create a Middle East free from nuclear weapons as well as other weapons of mass destruction. We therefore urge the Review Conference to address this matter effectively through the adoption of concrete and practical measures leading towards the implementation of the 1995 Resolution on the Middle East.

Within this mixed picture, we see some rays of hope. The New Agenda Coalition was heartened by the increased support given to its resolution in the current General Assembly entitled "Towards a nuclear-weapon-free world: accelerating the implementation of nuclear disarmament commitments". We also welcome the recent joint statement by the Presidents of the two major nuclear-weapon States, reaffirming their commitment to achieve a nuclear weapon free world and initiating negotiations for new and verifiable reductions in their nuclear arsenals, beginning with a new legally binding post-START Treaty this year. The prospects for further key ratifications of the CTBT were greatly improved by the commitment of the new US administration to "immediately and aggressively" pursue ratification of the Treaty. The consensus for launching negotiations in the CD for a verifiable FMCT is gradually being rebuilt.

The New Agenda Coalition looks forward to concrete and transparent progress on these and other issues before the 2010 Review Conference.

At the 2010 Review Conference we will review the operation of all aspects of the Treaty. This obviously includes assessing the implementation of commitments made by consensus at previous Review Conferences, in particular the Decisions and Resolution of the 1995 Review and Extension Conference and the Final Document of the 2000 Review Conference. But, even more importantly, we must look forward. We must build on previous commitments, take into consideration current challenges and opportunities and forge a renewed commitment to realizing all objectives of the Treaty, and ultimately translate this into concrete and realistic actions to be taken during the following 5 years.

Mr Chairperson,

The New Agenda Coalition has submitted working papers on nuclear disarmament to the two previous sessions of this Preparatory Committee. In the first of those working papers we identified seven areas that required urgent attention during the current review cycle: universality, nuclear doctrines, reductions in nuclear forces, security assurances, nuclear-weapon-free zones, negotiation of a treaty on fissile material and a prohibition of the testing of nuclear weapons. In our second working paper we focussed on transparency, confidence-building and operational readiness. In this Prepcom session, the New Agenda Coalition will table a further working paper offering some additional reflections and recommendations on ways forward on nuclear disarmament in the current review cycle. We will introduce this third working paper in the session dealing with cluster 1 issues.

Let me underline, Mr Chairperson, that all three working papers remain current and could be drawn upon by you when building consensus on substantive recommendations for next year's Review Conference.

Mr Chairperson,

The New Agenda Coalition will continue to be a constructive and principled partner in the important work that lies ahead, in the coming two weeks as well as during the remaining year of this Review Cycle.

Thank you

