



HOLY SEE

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**Statement by H.E. Archbishop Celestino Migliore
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**Preparatory Committee for the
2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the
Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons**

New York, 5 May 2009

Mr. Chairman,

At the outset allow me to congratulate you on your election to the Chairmanship of the Third Session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2010 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference.

After four decades of its existence and its good service to the international community, the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons remains a cornerstone of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regimes as well as a key instrument seeking to strengthen international peace and security. The Holy See reaffirms its strong and continuing support for the NPT and calls for universal and full adherence to and compliance with the Treaty.

Last year marked the Treaty's fortieth anniversary. Unfortunately, we note today that more than 26,000 nuclear warheads remain in the world and some nations are still racing to join the "nuclear club", despite the Treaty's legally binding obligations in the areas of disarmament and non-proliferation. In light of this the validity and relevance of the Treaty remain an urgent call for all States to join their efforts in achieving a nuclear-weapons-free world.

After many years of stalemate and even regress, we can observe with satisfaction some good signs in the field of putting again nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation at the centre of the international debate on peace and security. The many initiatives taken by Governments, international organizations and civil society are one step in the right direction. My Delegation commends national policies and bilateral agreements to reduce nuclear arsenals and looks forward to seeing progress in addressing issues related to nuclear arms and the delivery of these weapons. The different initiatives taken and the positions expressed in the last months are encouraging steps which inspire renewed hope that the goal of a nuclear-weapons-free world is achievable. However, as long as nuclear weapons exist they will always pose a danger to humanity of being used or falling into the hands of terrorists, threatening peace and security and even human existence itself.

The Holy See stresses the need for concrete, transparent and convincing steps in the fields of disarmament and non-proliferation under the guidance of the NPT principles. To build on the new momentum, the Holy See delegation is of the opinion that five objectives could be reached in a short period of time:

- The entry into force of the CTBT is essential and achievable if States are serious about their commitment to a nuclear-weapons-free world.
- The immediate commencement of negotiations of a Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty is overdue.
- Nuclear weapon States have to interpret their military doctrines as precluding any reliance on nuclear weapons.
- The peaceful use of nuclear energy should be under strict control of the International Atomic Energy Agency. All countries should join all relevant instruments in this area. The non-proliferation side of the NPT must be strengthened through increasing the capacity of the IAEA, and through further enhancement of the Agency's safeguards system.
- With the growing need for energy, it is imperative to find common solutions and international structures for the production of nuclear fuel. In this area, the IAEA should have a leading role to ensure safety, security and fair access for all.

All these measures are necessary to promote trust, transparency, confidence, and cooperation among nations and regions. The nuclear-weapons-free zones remain the best example of such trust and confidence, and affirm that peace and security is possible without possessing nuclear weapons. In an effort to put priorities and hierarchies of values in their proper place, greater common effort must be made to mobilise resources toward ethical, cultural and economic development so that humanity can turn its back on the arms race.

Nuclear disarmament, nuclear non-proliferation, and peaceful use are the three mutually reinforcing pillars. Urgent and irreversible progress is required on all fronts. Today's growing expansion of civil nuclear energy programmes poses new potential challenges to the non-proliferation regime. But without serious and concrete steps towards disarmament, the non-proliferation pillar will be further weakened.

Mr. Chairman, as we prepare for the 2010 NPT Review Conference, the Holy See makes an appeal that the difficult and complex issues of the Review Conference be addressed in an even-handed way. At the same time, my Delegation assures you of its full support in your endeavours towards a successful outcome of this session.

Thank you, Mr Chairman.