



Closing Statement: NGO Abolition Caucus

May 28, 2010

The NGO Abolition Caucus came to the 2010 Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference determined to achieve a breakthrough on the road to a nuclear-weapons-free world. Specifically, we saw an opportunity for the NPT Member States to come together around a comprehensive, concrete, and urgent action plan for nuclear disarmament. That expectation was echoed by a large number of States who have called for the commencement of work on a Nuclear Weapons Convention, and who have struggled to insert language to that effect in the Conference outcome.

We have had to resign ourselves to the likelihood that this will not be a breakthrough Conference, and that the outcome, whether or not it is regarded as successful by the participants, has fallen short of that essential objective. The gap between reassuring rhetoric about nuclear disarmament and real programs to rid the world of nuclear weapons is unacceptably wide at the end of this Conference.

We have not resigned ourselves to another five years without an action plan for the abolition of nuclear weapons. Upon the conclusion of this Review Conference, NGOs will immediately reach out to those States who have voiced support for a Nuclear Weapons Convention, and will explore steps we can take together to build a global foundation for such a treaty.

International agreements and actions to prevent horizontal proliferation of nuclear weapons are important not only to provide a context in which progress can be made towards comprehensive nuclear disarmament agreement but also to promote international and regional security in the meantime. We recognize challenges to achieving NWFZs posed by the nature of conflicts and the symbolic value of nuclear weapons as providing an illusion of security and a symbol of power and prestige. In light of that, we welcome recent progress towards establishing nuclear weapons free zones across much of the world, and urge nuclear weapons states to follow up on their recent commitments to properly recognize these and to provide proper security guarantees. The emerging agreement to begin an international process to establish a NWFZ in the Middle East represents important progress.

While we applaud the efforts of the NPT Member States to strengthen the disarmament and non-proliferation provisions of the Treaty, we are deeply disturbed that the promotion of nuclear energy and the global expansion of the nuclear energy industry was given such unquestioned support at this Review Conference. Nuclear energy is fraught with health, environment, and proliferation dangers, and—dollar for dollar—nuclear power for electricity production is one of the most expensive ways to meet energy needs. We support universal participation in the International Renewable Energy Agency, providing a truly “inalienable right” to energy from the sun, wind, and tides, a right to which no nation can be denied, and to initiate a phase out of nuclear power for the health of the planet and future generations.