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

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Main Committee II

Statement by H.E. Peter Woolcott Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Australia to the Conference on Disarmament

(Check against delivery)

Thank you Mr Chairman

I congratulate you on your appointment as Chair and commend you for your careful preparatory work and consultative approach. I assure you of my delegation's full cooperation.

I wish to set out briefly Australia's position on the issues covered by this Committee. I will then propose some elements we would like to see contained in the Committee's report and in the Review Conference outcomes document.

Mr Chairman

Australia attaches great importance to the non-proliferation undertakings States parties have made under the Treaty, and to the safeguards arrangements under the Treaty to verify the fulfillment of those undertakings.

We believe States parties have a strong common interest in an effective IAEA safeguards system. That system provides a means by which non-nuclear-weapon States can

demonstrate their commitment to use nuclear energy only for peaceful purposes and, just as importantly, receive assurances about others' nuclear activities. That assurance underpins international security, is an essential foundation for nuclear trade and cooperation, and is a critical factor in continuing progress on nuclear disarmament.

Australia considers it important to work towards expanding the coverage of IAEA safeguards. Under Art III of the treaty, each non-nuclear-weapon State undertakes to accept IAEA safeguards. We urge those states parties which have not yet done so to sign and bring into force Comprehensive Safeguards Agreements. Australia would like to see the coverage of safeguards expanded through universalisation of the treaty. We urge those states not party to the treaty to accede as soon as possible, without preconditions, and in the meantime to respect global norms and apply best-practice safeguards, safety and security provisions.

Australia supports constructive efforts by States parties to progress implementation of the 1995 Review Conference resolution calling for the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. Australia's report on steps taken to promote the achievement of such a zone has been circulated.

It is very important that States parties support efforts to strengthen IAEA safeguards to meet contemporary challenges. Under Article III, each non-nuclear-weapon State party to the Treaty undertakes to accept safeguards in accordance with the safeguards system. That system is evolutionary in character. Strengthened safeguards have been developed to address the problem of undeclared nuclear activities. The Additional Protocol is now an integral part of the safeguards system. Both a Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement and an Additional Protocol are necessary to verify the fulfillment of States parties' obligations under the Treaty. A Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement together with an Additional Protocol now represents the verification standard pursuant to Article III.1 of the Treaty. The Conference should declare this standard unequivocally. Australia encourages all states yet to sign and ratify an Additional Protocol, especially those with significant nuclear activities, to do so as soon as possible. Signing the Additional Protocol should be viewed as a positive step, a means of contributing to global security, not as a burdensome obligation or concession.

This Conference should underline the importance of states' strict compliance with their safeguards obligations. The Article III undertaking to accept safeguards means more than just bringing agreements into force. It means fully respecting the obligations that have been assumed under the Treaty.

From Australia's perspective, it is important that this Conference acknowledges frankly the challenges to the NPT resulting from cases of non-compliance. Dealing with non-compliance issues squarely is necessary to guard against proliferation, and also to create an environment conducive to the realization of other treaty objectives. The UN Security Council has a clearly defined mandate to act in cases of safeguards non-compliance, given the implications for international peace and security of such violations.

In this context, Australia is concerned that Iran continues to act in violation of binding UNSC resolutions and IAEA Board requirements, and in a manner inconsistent with its safeguards obligations. We remain concerned that Iran has not cooperated with the Agency in addressing information from a number of sources which points to possible military dimensions to Iran's nuclear program. It is our hope that Iran will take the strategic decision to cooperate fully with the IAEA and engage purposefully in dialogue on a long-term comprehensive solution to the nuclear issue.

North Korea's nuclear weapons program presents a serious challenge to the international nuclear non-proliferation regime. Australia profoundly regrets North Korea's announcement of its withdrawal from the NPT in January 2003, its non-compliance with its safeguards obligations which was reported to the UNSC in February 2003, and the nuclear tests it has conducted since then. We welcomed the progress that was made in recent years in the Six Party Talks. We call upon the DPRK to meet its Six Party Talks commitments, comply with relevant Security Council resolutions, and come into compliance with the NPT and IAEA safeguards.

Australia considers nuclear export controls, and international coordination in the application of national export controls, as legitimate, necessary and desirable means for States to implement their obligations under Article III of the Treaty, and relevant UN Security Council resolutions. We encourage all states to ensure their export controls are consistent with the major nuclear export control regimes, and are strictly enforced.

As a major supplier of uranium, Australia has a responsibility to ensure that material is not misused. Australia's policy is to sell uranium only to countries that have signed the NPT. We believe that the Additional Protocol, as part of the contemporary verification standard pursuant to Article III.1 of the treaty, should be established as a condition of supply for all nuclear material and equipment. Australia has made the Additional Protocol a condition of supply for uranium exports and encourages other nuclear suppliers to adopt a similar approach.

Mr Chairman

The recent Nuclear Security Summit underlined the threat nuclear terrorism poses to international security, and the need to strengthen measures to reduce that threat. Australia commends the US for hosting this event. We also welcome the commitments given by participants – notably the commitments by Ukraine and Russia - on concrete steps to reduce the threat of nuclear terrorism. For its part, Australia is using its network of bilateral agreements to ensure high standards of security on Australian uranium worldwide; we are engaging strongly with the IAEA on nuclear security; we have successfully converted to LEU-based technology; and we are involved in collaborative capacity-building efforts in the South East Asia and Pacific region. We believe this Conference should reinforce efforts to protect against nuclear terrorism by urging all

states to take further measures to strengthen the security of nuclear materials and facilities. The Conference should also support efforts to secure radiological material.

Mr Chairman

To assist the Committee, I now wish to refer to some specific elements Australia would like to see reflected in the Committee's report and the Review Conference outcomes document.

As delegations will be aware, Australia and Japan have submitted a working paper proposing a New Package of Practical Nuclear Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Measures. In relation to Main Committee II issues, the New Package working paper proposes that States parties endorse the following practical measures:

- Reaffirm the threat posed to international peace and security by nuclear weapons proliferation and the need for strict compliance by all states with their non-proliferation obligations, including compliance with their IAEA safeguards agreements and relevant UN Security Council resolutions;
- Emphasise that Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement (CSA) accompanied by an Additional Protocol based on the model additional protocol (AP) should be the internationally recognised safeguards standard; urge all states that have yet to do so to conclude and bring into force a CSA and an AP as soon as possible and call on all states to apply this safeguards standard to the supply of nuclear material and equipment.
- Urge all states to take further measures to strengthen the security of nuclear materials and facilities, such as conclusion of the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material including its 2005 Amendment and the International Convention for the Suppression of Nuclear Terrorism as soon as practicable.

My delegation would like to see these elements reflected in the report of this Committee.

Delegations will also be aware that Australia, together with a number of other non-nuclear-weapon States comprising the Vienna Group of Ten, has prepared several working papers on issues of relevance to Main Committee III. These papers - covering Compliance and Verification, Export Controls, and Physical Protection - have been circulated as conference working papers 17, 20 and 21. Each of these papers proposes specific draft review language, which has been crafted to facilitate convergence on key issues. We hope the draft language proposed in these papers will assist the work of the Committee.

Mr Chairman

While the primary focus of our work at this Review Conference is making progress across the three pillars of the treaty, we believe attention should also be paid to reviewing the Treaty's institutional arrangements with a view to facilitating and strengthening the review process. We have been pleased to co-sponsor Working Paper 4 at this Conference which contains a number of proposals to encourage and promote the implementation of the NPT. These proposals deserve our serious attention.

Australia looks forward to working with other delegations in a constructive and positive spirit.

Thank you Mr Chairman