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PERMANENT MISSION OF SWEDEN TO THE UNITED NATIONS AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS IN GENEVA, 82 RUE DE LAUSANNE, 1211 GENEVA 20. TEL 908 08 00

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STATEMENT

by

H.E. Laila Freivalds
Minister for Foreign Affairs

TO THE CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

Geneva, 15 March 2005

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Mr President, (Mr Secretary-General)

Multilateralism, disarmament and non-proliferation are key dimensions of Sweden's foreign policy. It is, therefore, with a sense of urgency that I again address the Conference on Disarmament, which, as we know, was established to be the single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum. It is particularly gratifying to do so under the Presidency of New Zealand, a country whose commitment to disarmament and multilateralism is second to none.

Some 15 years after the end of the Cold War, we are faced with both new and old challenges to our common security. Weapons of mass destruction figure prominently in both categories. We must find ways to effectively deal with the threats facing us. Containment and stop-gap arrangements may buy us some time. But we must never lose our focus. The complete elimination of all weapons of mass destruction is the only durable solution.

Mr President,

Agreed steps towards nuclear disarmament are not being taken. Some are even being challenged by nuclear weapons states. At the same time, the non-proliferation regime has come under great stress. Threats to our collective security include the risk that terrorists could acquire weapons of mass destruction. Illegal networks of proliferation have been discovered and shown to have been alarmingly wide-ranging. North Korea has declared that it possesses nuclear weapons. Iran's nuclear programme is high on the international agenda. These proliferation threats are being addressed in various ways, but we also

need to create conditions, which prevent such problems and concerns from arising in the first place.

In order to achieve this, and thereby reversing the current trend, there are a number of ways and possibilities – as well as several fora at our disposal. Most of the issues are identified and most of the instruments already exist. It is up to us to use them.

The **European Union** has stepped up its efforts by adopting a strategy against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. It is our conviction that the implementation of this strategy, in close cooperation with others, will have a positive effect on the global level.

The report of the UN Secretary-General's **High-level Panel** makes an excellent analysis and presentation of the task at hand in the disarmament and non-proliferation area. The threats from weapons of mass destruction are outlined, and the future scenarios are stern. But the distinguished Panel also gives us a number of clear policy recommendations. These are based on a thorough knowledge of the issues and they show the direction in which need to go. We should all do our utmost to make sure that the follow-up of the recommendations will be as serious and dedicated as the work that went into the report.

Mr President,

One of the High-level Panel's recommendations is directed specifically to **the Conference of Disarmament**. Without further delay, this body should negotiate a verifiable fissile material cut-off treaty. Similar calls have been voiced year after year by the UN General Assembly.

As we know, the CD has so far been unable to follow through on this key disarmament and non-proliferation task.

The impasse at which the CD still finds itself is of grave concern. You, Mr President, and your Dutch predecessor, have made great efforts to break the dead-lock and to get the CD back to work on its core tasks. All possible diplomatic and procedural tools have been tried to overcome the stalemate. But the consensus rule, which was meant to safeguard legitimate national security needs, is now routinely abused to block any attempt, which might lead to substantive progress. The time has come to recognise that the failure is not diplomatic. It is political.

Political difficulties require political attention. And global problems require global co-operation. The time has come to reflect on how best to achieve this.

Political leaders must realise that in the 21st century, legitimate security concerns of all states must be acknowledged, respected and addressed. Global security is not a zero-sum game. Effective multilateralism enhances security for all. Effective multilateralism means seizing opportunities when they arise, such as negotiating a fissile material cut-off treaty. It means re-considering positions that yield no results. And it means a readiness to give and take. Those blocking progress must be made to understand that the inertia in the CD is doing damage to both their own security and to our common security.

Mr President,

In just over a month's time, States Parties to the **Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty** will meet to review the implementation and compliance of the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime. The NPT is the nexus of nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament. The two are intimately linked.

Without the fundamental balance inherent in the Treaty between nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and peaceful uses of nuclear energy, there would have been no Treaty. Without the fundamental bargain in 1995 - when the nuclear weapons states again promised to pursue nuclear disarmament and a commitment was made to the entry into force of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty - the NPT would not have been extended indefinitely. This fundamental agreement and balance between the three pillars of the NPT was further developed in the year 2000, when a number of undertakings were made, including an unequivocal undertaking by the nuclear weapons states to the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals and a practical plan for the pursuit of nuclear disarmament. Without due progress in all three spheres of the NPT the regime risks erosion.

There are serious problems. Just as the three pillars were meant to reinforce one another, so do the respective problems tend to reinforce each other. Proliferation has occurred. Clandestine weapons programs have been pursued. Nuclear weapons are still abundant and are still being further developed and refined. New kinds of nuclear weapons and new uses of them are seriously contemplated. Furthermore, the challenges come from both state and non-state actors. As the High-level Panel concluded, lacklustre disarmament by the nuclear-weapon states weakens the ability of the regime to constrain proliferation.

We need to focus on compliance and implementation. The problem is not the Non-proliferation Treaty itself, but the way states choose to comply or not comply with various commitments as they deem politically opportune. Non-compliance breeds non-compliance. The result is diminished security for all of us.

All articles of the Treaty are equally legally binding and all must be fully complied with. Compliance and implementation is necessary not only vis-à-vis all the obligations laid down in the Treaty itself, but also vis-à-vis commitments made on how to implement the Treaty. This goes for agreements reached between the states Parties during the Review Conferences. It also goes for the safeguards agreements with the IAEA. And it means allowing the CD to do its job.

Mr President,

The processes towards nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation need to be strengthened. International co-operation is of the essence. The Conference on Disarmament clearly has a vital role to play and the stakes are high. This conference has great potential and Sweden will continue to push for this potential to be realised.

Thank you, Mr President.