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Disarmament Commission**2006 substantive session**

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Agenda item 4

Recommendations for achieving the objective of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons**Working paper submitted by France****Defining the current role of the United Nations Disarmament Commission in the area of nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation**

1. France reaffirms its commitment to the multilateral nuclear non-proliferation regime based on the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. It believes that there is no substitute for this Treaty in efforts to combat the proliferation of nuclear weapons and that no other tool can give the international community as high a level of security.
2. In recent years France has put forward many proposals to serve as inputs for international deliberations on ways to strengthen the non-proliferation regime. These proposals concern the effectiveness of the IAEA verification system; the role of the Security Council in dealing with proliferation cases as a forum of last resort; steps to hold States more accountable with regard to transfers of nuclear materials, especially the most sensitive materials; easier access to non-sensitive nuclear materials for States that honour their commitments; guarantees of access to nuclear-fuel-related services or to nuclear fuel itself; and the issue of withdrawal from the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.
3. France seeks to ensure that the debate on the strengthening of the non-proliferation regime takes place in conditions in which the right to “nuclear energy for peaceful purposes”, as recognized in article IV of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, is preserved and fully exercised by countries that strictly abide by their international obligations. France believes that nuclear energy can contribute significantly towards meeting energy needs and supporting sustainable development in the twenty-first century, particularly for countries with emerging economies.



4. In addition, France reaffirms its commitment to nuclear disarmament and to general and complete disarmament, in accordance with article VI of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.
5. Since the 1990s, a number of initiatives have been undertaken to strengthen the nuclear non-proliferation regime. Some have succeeded, while others have not. New challenges have arisen. The international community is continually pondering new solutions for ensuring security for all without obstructing the exchanges of technology that are necessary for human development.
6. France is proposing the following areas of action to enable the United Nations Disarmament Commission to play its role to the full in the current round of deliberations.
7. With respect to the method, the Disarmament Commission should, over the next three years, work in the same constructive spirit that led, in 1999, to the preparation of the landmark report on the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones.
8. The Disarmament Commission could make an immediate and useful contribution to international deliberations by taking stock of the non-proliferation regime at the dawn of the twenty-first century. The Commission has the dual advantage, for the objective conduct of this analytical exercise, of being a forum for the development of ideas rather than decision-making, on the one hand, and of being genuinely multilateral, on the other. Together, the Commission members could focus on identifying the most effective measures taken in recent years, determining which measures have failed and recommending the decisions needed for the future development of the non-proliferation regime.
9. In particular, France encourages the Disarmament Commission to reflect on the best ways of promoting universal adherence to the existing regulatory framework, especially the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty.
10. Now that the end of the cold war has made it possible to move ahead in implementing article VI of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, the Disarmament Commission could also discuss ways of putting an end to the nuclear arms race in those parts of the world where it is still taking place.
11. Lastly, as it has mentioned in the past, France believes that in-depth discussions on the issue of negative security assurances could, in the future, appropriately take place in a forum such as the Disarmament Commission, in which States not parties to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty are also represented.