



AUSTRALIA



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Third Preparatory Committee for the 2010 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference

4 May 2009

General debate

**Statement by Mr John Sullivan
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Branch
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade**

(Check against delivery)

Mr Chairman

I congratulate you on your appointment as Chairman. The Australian delegation looks forward to working with you.

Australia is firmly committed to the goal of a nuclear weapon free world.

In the first instance, we look to those states possessing nuclear weapons to exercise leadership: leadership in reaffirming their shared vision for a world without these terrible weapons; and leadership in taking concrete steps to disarm, consistent both with the obligations they have freely assumed under Article VI of this treaty and with agreed outcomes of past NPT Review Conferences.

In this context we warmly welcome the bold re-statement of US commitment to a world without nuclear weapons and to specific disarmament measures given by President Obama in his 5 April speech in Prague. We are also greatly encouraged by the ambitious joint statement delivered by President Obama and Russian President Medvedev in London a few days' earlier. Such commitments by countries which hold some ninety-five percent of the world's nuclear weapons are deeply significant and demonstrate a momentum towards nuclear disarmament not seen since the immediate post-Cold War

A world without nuclear weapons requires an equally strong commitment by non-nuclear-weapon states not to acquire nuclear weapons and to accept stringent international safeguards on their nuclear facilities. The vast majority of the world's nations, including Australia, have made such commitments and honour them scrupulously - because they judge it in their national security interests to do so.

These non-proliferation and disarmament commitments comprise the fundamental collective security bargain which underpinned the NPT when it was negotiated in 1968. Nuclear weapon states and non-nuclear weapon states must join together to reaffirm the vital importance of this Treaty to their security at the Review Conference.

The NPT includes another bargain: states parties accept these commitments on the understanding they can participate in exchanges in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. States' interest in the fullest possible access to nuclear energy and nuclear materials while preventing proliferation risks will be an important issue for the Review Conference.

This Preparatory Committee should pave the way for a successful Review Conference by adopting an agenda quickly and by moving on to identify key issues for consideration in 2010.

Mr Chairman

Australia has a long history of determined activism in support of non-proliferation and disarmament. In June 2008, the Australian Prime Minister, Mr Rudd, announced the establishment of an International Commission on Nuclear Non-proliferation and Disarmament. The Commission – an independent global panel co-chaired by former Australian Foreign Minister Gareth Evans and former Japanese Foreign Minister Yoriko Kawaguchi – aims to reinvigorate the global effort to curb the proliferation of nuclear weapons and to promote nuclear disarmament. The Commission commenced its work in October 2008 and will present its major report by early 2010 to help forge international consensus in the lead up to the Review Conference and beyond.

The Commission seeks to bring a fresh and imaginative vision to the set of issues that comprise the nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament agenda. The Commission takes a realistic approach to the challenges of nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament, and does not underestimate the magnitude of the tasks it faces. There will be a briefing on the work of the Commission by the co-chairs tomorrow, 5 May, at 1300, in Room I.

Mr Chairman

It is important to recognise the real cuts in nuclear weapons made since the end of the Cold War. The United States and Russia have significantly reduced deployed strategic nuclear warheads in accordance with the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START I) and the Moscow Treaty. Australia welcomes the decision, announced by President Obama and President Medvedev on 1 April 2009, to conclude a legally binding and verifiable successor agreement to the START before its expiration at the end of this year. We have also welcomed significant nuclear reductions by France and the United Kingdom.

We would encourage China to make reductions in a similarly transparent fashion.

But more can and must be done. We urge all nuclear weapon states to commit to faster, deeper and irreversible reductions in all categories of nuclear weapons. We urge them to reduce further the role of nuclear weapons in their security policies and to reduce the operational status of such weapons in ways that promote international security and stability. We welcome undertakings on these issues by some nuclear weapon states.

All states should make the entry into force of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) a priority, starting with those states possessing a nuclear weapons capability. We welcome the strong commitment by the US Administration to pursue ratification of this treaty. And we encourage all Annex II states which have not yet done so to ratify it.

Australia remains committed to negotiations on a verifiable Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty (FMCT) in the Conference on Disarmament on the basis of the Shannon mandate (CD/1299 of 1995). Negotiation of such a treaty was a recommendation of the 1995 and 2000 Review Conferences. It continues to have very broad support. It's time we made it happen. As one of the CD Presidents for 2009, Australia is working closely with the other five presidents and CD members to ensure the Conference agrees this year to start negotiations in the context of agreement on a balanced program of work. We would like to acknowledge the excellent efforts of the current Algerian CD President, Ambassador Jazairy in producing a document for discussion.

Demonstrated progress on and additional clear commitments by all five nuclear weapon states to take forward nuclear reductions and to support important steps like the entry into force of the CTBT and the commencement of FMCT negotiations will provide necessary momentum and an enabling environment for a successful Review Conference in 2010.

That said, while leadership by the nuclear weapon states is critical, non-nuclear weapon states also have an important role to play in building the climate of stability and trust which allows nuclear disarmament to proceed.

Mr Chairman

While most NPT parties fully accept the need to comply with the IAEA safeguards arrangements they have freely accepted, the unwillingness by some states fully to cooperate with the Agency raises concerns about the nature of their nuclear programs.

In the case of Iran, we do not question Iran's right, under Article IV, to nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. But that right is not unconditional and must be in conformity with Articles I, II and III – as NPT parties reaffirmed in the Final Document of the 2000 Review Conference.

The international community is gravely concerned about the direction of Iran's nuclear program because Iran has continued to refuse to provide the assurances required by the NPT that its program is purely for peaceful purposes. It has not fully cooperated with the IAEA in response to its repeated requests. Nor is it complying with UN Security Council resolutions. Australia therefore urges Iran to comply with its UN obligations, cooperate fully with the IAEA and engage constructively with the P5+1.

The DPRK's nuclear weapons and missile programs are a serious challenge to international security and to peace and stability on the Korean peninsula. The DPRK's

missile launch. We urge the DPRK to reconsider its positions, comply with relevant UN Security Council Resolutions and address international concerns about its missile and nuclear programs.

The case of the DPRK has highlighted the need to increase disincentives to withdraw from the Treaty and strengthen and formalise international responses to any cases of withdrawal, including through automatic referral to the UN Security Council.

That states have developed proliferation sensitive nuclear capabilities in secret while party to this treaty demonstrates a clear need to strengthen the international safeguards system. Australia's firm view is that a comprehensive safeguards agreement combined with an Additional Protocol should be the basic standard of verification for non-nuclear weapons states.

As a major uranium supplier, Australia recognises the important role suppliers play in nuclear non-proliferation. We have made adherence to the Additional Protocol a condition of supply for Australian uranium.

Prevention of nuclear terrorism is part of the broader agenda to prevent nuclear proliferation. Terrorists can access information on developing a nuclear weapon on the internet. And we are aware of terrorists' interest in acquiring weapons of mass destruction. So preventing them obtaining relevant material, particularly fissile material, is vital. In this context Australia welcomes President Obama's proposal for a Global Summit on Nuclear Security.

Mr Chairman

Central to the long-term strength of the NPT is its guarantee of access to peaceful nuclear energy. The recent upsurge of interest in nuclear power to combat climate change and facilitate energy security must be underpinned by strong non-proliferation commitments.

Australia takes seriously its Article IV undertakings to facilitate the exchange of equipment, materials and scientific and technological information for the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

The IAEA Technical Cooperation Program and Regional Cooperative Agreements are key mechanisms for ensuring that countries are able to benefit from the peaceful uses of nuclear technology. Australia supports a number of Regional Cooperative Agreement programs in the Asia-Pacific.

But the right to peaceful nuclear energy is not unqualified. To access that right NPT parties must fully comply with their NPT non-proliferation obligations.

Australia looks forward to further discussion at this Prepcom on arrangements to ensure that the international nuclear market reinforces non-proliferation without restricting peaceful access to nuclear technology. Australia is interested in hearing more about multilateral approaches to the fuel cycle which might help avoid the unnecessary spread of sensitive nuclear technologies. This discussion is an important one both in supporting the peaceful use of nuclear energy and in upholding the highest nuclear non-proliferation standards.

Australia like other NPT parties continues to call on India, Pakistan and Israel to join the

non-proliferation disciplines to these states to the maximum extent possible. How to do so will be one key focus of the International Commission's work which, we think, could usefully be discussed at the Review Conference.

Also in this context, we note the importance of outcomes at the Review Conference which assist progress towards the establishment of an effectively verifiable Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and their means of delivery. Any such progress will need to take account of the legitimate security needs of all regional states.

Mr Chairman

Finally, we offer some suggestions on outcomes for the Review Conference.

It seems to us the Review Conference could usefully issue some kind of forward looking blue print for action, possibly along the lines of the 2000 Review Conference's 13 steps.

For states parties to have confidence that such a blue print would be implemented, they would need to be reassured that, to the maximum extent possible, all states, particularly the nuclear weapon states, were implementing past Review Conference outcomes. They would also need some assurance that states parties could monitor future implementation more effectively than in the past. In this context, we see merit in exploring ideas, such as those put forward by Canada, for shorter annual meetings of states parties to replace the prepcom process.

NPT parties must seize the opportunity in 2010 to move forward on all the substantive issues covered by this treaty. We should take advantage of the increased interest in nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament generated by former politicians, think tanks and NGOS which play an important role in raising public awareness and building public support. But most significantly, we must take advantage of the new determination of world leaders to tackle these issues by encouraging and supporting them to take crucial decisions vital to the strength of this treaty and to the security of the world.