

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

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Statement by Mr. Bård Glød Pedersen
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Madam President, Excellences, ladies and gentlemen,

On behalf of my country, I wish to convey our condolences for the victims of the tragic earthquake in Nepal. Our thoughts and sympathy are with all victims and the people of Nepal. I also wish to congratulate you, ambassador Feroukhi, on being elected president for this conference.

We are here to seek agreement; on concrete steps and a path forward towards a safer world. A world without nuclear weapons. Our task is as important as it is challenging.

The civil war in Syria continues and we have witnessed the use of weapons of mass destruction. Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea and destabilisation of eastern Ukraine is a violation of international law and contrary to the Budapest memorandum. The risk of nuclear proliferation remains a challenge and a threat towards international security. Nuclear tests conducted by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is a clear violation of its international obligations.

Nevertheless, there have also been positive developments. The Nuclear Security Summits have contributed substantially to nuclear security and to keeping fissile material beyond the reach of terrorists. Negotiations with Iran have proceeded, and a verifiable long-term agreement can be within reach. The establishment of a Nuclear Weapons Free Zone in Central Asia is a welcome step forward.

Norway welcomes the continued implementation by the US and the Russian Federation of the new START. However, progress on Article 6 is disappointing. The nuclear weapons states need to increase their efforts. We urge Russia to respond positively to the US proposal to reduce the number of strategic nuclear warheads by an additional one-third.

Madam President,

We share the vision of a world without nuclear weapons. The Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) is the foundation for the global non-proliferation regime. Over the next four weeks, we must work constructively to produce a result that strengthens the NPT and its three pillars.

We should aim for agreement on the following:

- The new START accord should be considered a first step in a more intensified process of nuclear arms reduction, covering all categories of weapons, and involving all nuclear weapon states. New types of weapons should not be developed, and disarmament should be pursued on the principles of transparency, verification and irreversibility.
- The process of reducing the role of nuclear weapons in security policy must be accelerated. An important step would be to further strengthen negative security assurances.

- We must intensify efforts to sustain existing regional Nuclear Weapons Free Zones, and to create new ones. We need to move forward towards a zone free of weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East.
- We must make real progress towards entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT).
- We must start negotiating a treaty that bans the production of fissile material for weapons purposes, and start the process of reducing existing stocks.
- We must strengthen the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). We should reach common understanding of the fact that the Comprehensive Safeguards Agreements and Additional Protocols protect our collective security and facilitate peaceful uses. We welcome progress on state-level safeguards, and the improvements on their effectiveness and efficiency, particularly considering the expected growth in nuclear energy.
- We must secure all fissile materials. It is encouraging that a growing number of civilian research reactors that used to use highly enriched uranium are now being converted to low enriched uranium. In Norway, we have discontinued the use of highly radioactive sources in our hospitals.
- We should reaffirm the right to peaceful nuclear power applications. The work of the IAEA is crucial for achieving the Millennium Development Goals. Norway intends to strengthen its support for this work, and I am happy to announce that we have decided to support financially the Agency's Peaceful Uses Initiative.

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Madam President,

Norway is working on numerous projects to support the goal of a world without nuclear weapons.

Firstly, the Oslo Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons in March 2013, and the two following conferences in Nayarit and Vienna, were successful. The Joint Statement on the Humanitarian Consequences of Nuclear Weapons is a clear manifestation of the importance of this perspective. We particularly encourage the nuclear weapon states to sign up to this statement. Norway has submitted a working paper on the Oslo Conference and its main findings.

We hope to see a clear commitment to the humanitarian perspective on nuclear weapons in the outcome of this conference. This should also reflect the important contribution from civil society, whose efforts we value greatly. The three conferences on humanitarian consequences will be presented at a side event on 6 May, co-hosted by Norway, Mexico and Austria.

Secondly, the UK–Norway Initiative on Nuclear Warhead Dismantlement will continue to be crucial in our efforts to fulfil Article 6. We have submitted a working paper on the Initiative and will host two side events.

We also welcome the launch of the International Partnership on Nuclear Disarmament Verification (IPNDV), as a follow up to President Obama's Prague speech in 2009. There is now a broad coalition of nuclear and non-nuclear weapon states that are working together to achieve real progress on verification, a necessary step in implementing Article 6. Norway will chair the next plenary meeting of the partnership this autumn.

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Thirdly, at the Nuclear Security Summit in The Hague, Norway and Sweden offered to enter into a partnership with Ukraine to strengthen the safety and security of its nuclear power plants. Norway undertook to support the ongoing initiatives led by the US and Ukraine in the areas of radioactive source security and border control. We have now established a long-term cooperation with Ukraine.

In addition, I would like to draw your attention to the working paper submitted by the five Nordic countries on nuclear disarmament. And I would like to mention that Norway is a member of the Vienna Group of 10, which submitted a working paper containing valuable and practical guidance on non-proliferation and peaceful uses.

At this conference, we have an opportunity to renew and strengthen the Treaty that forms the basis of all these efforts. Let us make sure that we do just that. In the interest of peace and security for all of us, and generations to come.

Thank you, Madam President.