



Statement by

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Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons**

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Madam President,

Let me start by expressing, on behalf of the Slovak Government and myself, our sincere condolences to the people of Nepal and to all those affected by the disastrous earthquake that hit the country.

I would like to congratulate you on your assumption of the Presidency of this Review Conference. I wish you all the success in your endeavor in steering the negotiations in the coming weeks. I also assure you of Slovakia's full support in fulfilling your responsible and challenging tasks.

We have heard about the decision of the *UN High Representative for Disarmament Affairs* to conclude her mission on this post soon after the current NPT Review Conference. Nevertheless, we continue to rely on you to help steer us also through this crucial event which will significantly affect further developments in global security.

Madam President,

Slovakia fully associates itself with the statement which will be delivered on behalf of the European Union in the course of our discussion. Nevertheless, I would like to stress few comments in my national capacity.

We have gathered here to put the Treaty, which represents a key element of global security, into scrutiny. The Non-Proliferation Treaty remains a unique and irreplaceable framework for maintaining and strengthening international peace, security, and stability. We must therefore arm ourselves with high ambitions and expectations. Yet, at the same time, we must remain realistic and pragmatic.

We face serious deterioration of security situation around the world which is a matter of a serious concern. We need to generate a momentum to protect the Treaty and to maintain our forward course that we have put in place by the 2010 Action Plan.

We see growing differences among NPT Member States on some areas and issues. It will be a challenge, but at the same time absolute necessary, to establish a common ground across the NPT. We need to keep a balanced approach to the Treaty in its all three pillars.

We need to work together and focus on finding a consensus in order to take our multilateral efforts forward. However, the efforts to reach a consensus should not lead to ignoring or omitting issues relevant in the NPT context. Such an approach would jeopardize the basic aim of the Conference.

Madam President,

Nuclear disarmament is a key pillar of the Treaty. Advancing on the full implementation of all commitments and undertakings in this area is a vital element and the main tool towards strengthening the Treaty and the non-proliferation regime as a whole.

A vision of a world without nuclear weapons remains a driving force in this regard. Elimination of nuclear arsenals is an integral part of a nuclear-weapon-free world and one of the building blocks that are essential for its creation.

There is no doubt that the elimination goes hand in hand with the reduction. The reduction-associated efforts must indeed be driven by a genuine intention of eliminating nuclear weapons with an aim to materialize the vision.

We believe that the right way forward is to diminish the role of nuclear weapons in security strategies and defense doctrines. This would pave the way towards reductions of nuclear arsenals.

Slovakia believes that in advancing nuclear disarmament we should work towards a set of mutually reinforcing and legally binding instruments underpinning a commitment for the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

The humanitarian dimension related to the nuclear weapons has recently regained an increased attention among the states. It ranks among issues with a wide scale of perceptions and understandings of possibilities and opportunities to address it.

The Vienna Conference in December last year was an important event in this regard and has added to a series of events aimed at awareness raising on the horrific consequences of nuclear weapons explosions. We have taken a careful note of a broad range of views and ideas expressed and introduced there.

Slovakia participated in all three international conferences on humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons and always clearly expressed its views.

As we all need to strive for the prevention in use of nuclear weapons, whether deliberate or accidental, Slovakia continues to support the process that would lead to the total elimination of nuclear arsenals, including the reasons for their existence. It would facilitate an effective elimination of the threat of nuclear weapon detonation and contribute significantly to the ultimate goal of creating and maintaining a world free of nuclear weapons.

Humanitarian dimension certainly underpins the NPT and adds to reasons why we need to move the NPT process onward.

Madam President,

The non-proliferation regime faces serious non-proliferation challenges. Non-compliance with the non-proliferation obligations ranks high among them. The proliferation of weapons of mass destruction continues to be one of the major threats to international peace and security.

Elimination of this threat requires a concerted effort which would sustain a global interest in the nuclear energy and allow for enjoying fully its peaceful use. We need to focus further on a preventive element, including the best utilization of instruments available to us.

Slovakia provides full and continuous support to the International Atomic Energy Agency in order to ensure that the Agency is able to meet its safeguards responsibilities. Slovakia, which currently chairs the Board of Governors, stresses the obligation of States to cooperate with the IAEA in order to facilitate the implementation of safeguards agreements.

We share the view that the IAEA full-scope safeguards and the Additional Protocol constitute the current verification standard. We call on all State Parties that have not yet done so to sign and ratify both the Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement and the Additional Protocol.

Slovakia also supports the IAEA in continuing the implementation of integrated safeguards for those States where both a comprehensive safeguards agreement and additional protocol are in force and where the IAEA Secretariat has drawn the broader conclusion that all nuclear material remains in peaceful activities.

Slovakia also welcomes and fully supports the diplomatic efforts of E3+3 as well as Iran to find a comprehensive solution to the Iranian nuclear issue.

We welcome the agreement on the Parameters for a Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action Regarding the Islamic Republic of Iran's Nuclear Program. We hope this agreement will be turned into a final comprehensive solution at the end of June. It is important to seize the opportunity and to bring this issue to the desired positive conclusion.

In this regard, Slovakia recognizes the crucial role of the International Atomic Energy Agency in the verification of Iran's nuclear program and it commends the Agency for its work done so far. IAEA reports provide a key benchmark for the evaluation of the obligations' compliance.

Slovakia supports the outcomes of the 2010 NPT Review Conference, including the one on the Middle East. We regret the postponement of convening a conference on WMD free zone in the Middle East.

However, we should not let the 2015 NPT Review Conference sink owing to the fact that the Conference must yet to take place. We should continue working and advance on the implementation of the 2010 Action Plan. The current Review Conference should underpin outcomes, including those on the Middle East, achieved so far.

My country continues to fully support the facilitator – Ambassador Jaakko Laajava of Finland and his team – in their efforts to lay the groundwork for a successful conference with the participation of all States in the region. We hope that it will be possible to convene the Conference as soon as possible. Slovakia wishes to see a reinforcing perspective for it at this Review Conference.

Madam President,

Extending a toolbox of non-proliferation and disarmament instruments available to the international community is an important part of strengthening international security architecture.

Stagnation in the strengthening and the moving forward of norms on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation endangers the global security environment and especially the disarmament landscape. We risk changes in the landscape.

Facing enormous difficulty to trigger the negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament, we must think together about ways forward. Nonetheless, we should make sure that it strengthens rather than weakens the global non-proliferation and disarmament regime.

We understand that the Conference on Disarmament does not operate in a vacuum. It is affected by the external environment, developments therein and interactions of its players. One of the major aspects of the current deadlock with the Conference lies outside the ‘sick body’.

That brings me to a dilemma whether we should try to put such a ‘body’ on a course of ‘outside treatment’ in order for it to be able to deal with issues inside the ‘body’ or we should focus on outside treatment of inside issues?

Many are also exploring whether a ‘shock therapy’ would help.

I believe that we need to resuscitate the ‘body’ and to revive its potential to deliver on pressing issues of the disarmament and non-proliferation agenda. However, we need to do it swiftly in order to reaffirm the relevance of the Conference to address current security needs. The revitalization of the Conference on Disarmament and its negotiation role is in vital interest of the non-proliferation regime and the Non-Proliferation Treaty as its cornerstone.

Madam President,

Slovakia fully supports peaceful use of nuclear energy. The Article IV of the NPT, which is a crucial part of the comprehensive bargain accomplished under the Treaty, has its leading role in this regard.

However, trust and confidence are the key elements for the development of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, if we want to take full advantage of it. It must be realized hand in hand with the highest safety and security standards as well as non-proliferation conditions.

Slovakia recognizes the role of the International Atomic Energy Agency in promoting safe and secure use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. It can make a valuable contribution to meet the social-economic needs and sustainable development all over the world.

Madam President, let me conclude by wishing the Conference constructive deliberations and a positive outcome – in the interest of all of us.