



PERMANENT MISSION OF SINGAPORE TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY 59TH SESSION

STATEMENT BY

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TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

**GENERAL DEBATE ON THE
2005 REVIEW CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES
TO THE TREATY ON THE
NON-PROLIFERATION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS**

5 MAY 2005

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Allow me at the outset to join others in extending my delegation's congratulations to you on your election as Chairman of this important conference. Our congratulations also extend to other appointment holders. We are confident that your skill and experience will help us bring this Review Conference to a successful conclusion.

2 The Non-Proliferation Treaty, with its system of integrated safeguards, remains the lynchpin of the global non-proliferation regime and one of the best guarantees for the security of small States like Singapore. It is the only global treaty dedicated to the containment of nuclear weapons and their eventual elimination.

3 Since the last Review Conference, the international political and security environment has changed dramatically. As the UN Secretary-General had said, the NPT "has not kept pace with the march of technology and globalisation, and developments of many kinds in recent years have placed it under great stress". It is therefore vital that this Review Conference build on the progress secured 5 years ago and ensure that the NPT remains the best defence against the spread of nuclear weapons.

4 The task before us is by no means easy. The 13 Practical Steps to Disarmament and Non-Proliferation agreed at the 2000 Review Conference have not yet been fully implemented. The CTBT has not yet entered into force. The Conference on Disarmament (CD) is still deadlocked and negotiations have yet to begin on the fissile material cut-off treaty. Neither is there agreement in the CD to establish a mechanism to deal with nuclear disarmament. We need to reignite our political will to make genuine progress in all these areas.

5 Compliance with various non-proliferation, arms control and disarmament treaties, above all the NPT, remains a key priority for Singapore. Compliance provides the international community with the credible assurance that the NPT's integrity and inviolability is maintained. A key step to strengthening compliance is to strengthen the IAEA's safeguards system through universal adherence to and full respect of obligations. States Parties who have yet to conclude Comprehensive Safeguards Agreements with the IAEA should do so without delay. Heightened international security concerns have raised calls for the adoption of the Additional Protocol as the new non-proliferation standard. This is a valid concern that Singapore fully shares. In that regard, Singapore is actively looking into the matter and we hope to conclude the Additional Protocol at the earliest opportunity.

6 We urge the DPRK to rejoin the NPT and abide by its non-proliferation obligations, including full cooperation with the IAEA. While we work towards an early and peaceful resolution to the issue, we also need to explore urgently how to strengthen the NPT regime's ability to deal with similar cases in the future.

7 Nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament remain at the heart of the NPT and are mutually reinforcing. On nuclear disarmament, Singapore welcomes the commitment by the United States and Russia, under the 2002 Moscow Treaty, to reduce their strategic nuclear warheads to between 1700 to 2200 by end 2012. We note that this accounts for almost a two-thirds reduction from 2002 levels and represents the largest reduction in nuclear forces ever required under a strategic arms control treaty. We encourage the United States and Russia to accelerate the pace of nuclear disarmament in the coming years and that this be undertaken within a framework that will ensure codified, irreversible, transparent and verifiable reductions.

8 Singapore recognises the importance of Art IV of the NPT for many States Parties. In recognition of this, Singapore has consistently contributed its full assessed share of the IAEA's Technical Cooperation Fund to help share and spread benefits of nuclear knowledge. Under the Singapore-IAEA MOU on Technical Co-operation, we have also conducted a host of third country training programmes, scientific attachments and other activities in areas such as radiation protection and nuclear medicine.

9 While Singapore supports efforts to help countries reap the benefits of harnessing the peaceful use of nuclear technology, we strongly urge countries to use nuclear technology responsibly. The Final Document of the 2000 Review Conference explicitly highlights the prominence of the NPT's non-proliferation and safeguards commitments in relation to peaceful nuclear technology transfer and technical co-operation activities. Ensuring that such peaceful nuclear activities are carried out in strict adherence to international standards on nuclear safety and security is equally important. Fostering a climate of confidence via strict compliance of one's nuclear programmes with non-proliferation, security and safety measures in turn fosters an enabling environment that will help generate greater momentum towards international cooperation on the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

10 The discovery of a sophisticated and clandestine nuclear procurement network supplying nuclear material, equipment and technology is deeply worrying. It is imperative for States to exercise individual and collective efforts to counter such threats, and continue to find ways to enhance international cooperation curbing the rise of proliferation networks. In this regard, Singapore

also supports the full and effective implementation of UNSC Resolution 1540 which inter alia, called on UN Member States to enhance domestic controls and step up cooperation against WMD proliferation. While legally binding multilateralism should form the cornerstone of the global non-proliferation regime and promote global security prospects, other initiatives such as the Proliferation Security Initiative are important elements that help bolster ongoing international counter-proliferation efforts.

11 We thank the Director-General of the IAEA for his thoughtful and useful recommendations to combat the threat of nuclear weapons without the need to amend the NPT. We look forward to further discussions on this issue.

12 The work of the Expert Group on the Multilateral Approaches to the Nuclear Fuel Cycle provides a fresh dimension in ongoing counter-proliferation work. Singapore looks forward to a comprehensive and informed discussion on this matter at this Review Conference.

13 In 1968, Member States of the United Nations approved the NPT because they understood the risks of nuclear conflict and firmly believed that the Treaty would promote international security. The NPT has exceeded expectations and even though it has yet to achieve full universality, it remains the most widely-adhered to multilateral arms control instrument.

14 We must preserve the progress and gains secured at previous Review Conferences and work towards enhancing and strengthening the global non-proliferation norms built around the NPT. It is essential that equal weight is given to all aspects of commitments undertaken by States Parties. Singapore therefore emphasises the importance of the full and non-selective implementation of all three pillars of the Treaty, namely nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. The NPT is a key instrument in international efforts to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons and an essential foundation for the pursuit of nuclear disarmament.

15 For the NPT to remain relevant, it cannot remain static in the face of mounting proliferation concerns. New proliferation challenges would require new measures to strengthen the NPT. In the words of the Director-General of the IAEA, "unless we regard it as part of a living, dynamic regime, capable of evolving to match changing realities, it will fade into irrelevance and leave us vulnerable and unprotected". The Singapore delegation thus looks forward to this Review Conference as an opportunity to strengthen this bedrock treaty.