

SWEDEN



STATEMENT

by

H.E. Mr. Carl Bildt
Minister for Foreign Affairs of Sweden

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

United Nations
New York

3 May 2010

- CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY -

Mr President,

The importance of the conference we are opening here today is obvious to us all.

It should reinforce our commitment to the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, and show us the path to a world without them.

This vision will not be realized tomorrow. But we must all be ready today to take concrete steps that give it credibility and strength.

As a member of the European Union, Sweden associates itself fully with the statement of High Representative Ashton. We are also working for the success of this conference within the New Agenda Coalition.

The last year has seen important contributions towards the goal that unites us.

I'm thinking of the Security Council Summit, the New START agreement between the United States and Russia on further substantial reductions of their strategic nuclear arsenals, and the successful Nuclear Security Summit in Washington last month.

The New START agreement is of great importance, both substantive and symbolic.

Substantive in the reductions agreed upon. Symbolic in demonstrating that nuclear weapons are increasingly weapons of the past.

But there is still scope for further substantial reductions.

In particular we urge the United States and Russia to engage in talks on reductions of their sub-strategic nuclear arsenals, leading to their eventual elimination.

Mr. President,

We must also strengthen our efforts to prevent new nations from acquiring these horrible weapons. The Treaty must be respected – fully, and by all.

We are deeply concerned that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has continued its policy of withdrawal from the Treaty, and even tested two nuclear devices in violation of the resolutions of the Security Council. We must all urge the DPRK to end its confrontation with the international community.

No one denies Iran the same rights as every other member of the Treaty, including to nuclear power and the nuclear fuel cycle.

But it is beyond dispute that Iran has been conducting activities in violation of its NPT commitments. A dark cloud of suspicion will hang over Iran until it has clarified all open issues associated with its nuclear activities.

This can only be done through full cooperation with the IAEA in every respect. Adherence to the Additional Protocol would go a long way towards establishing trust in the activities of Iran.

I cannot stress enough how important it is that Iran heeds the call of the international community in all these respects.

Confrontation is in the interest of no one. Cooperation is the way forward.

Iran's nuclear activities are a question for the entire region. We support a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons as well as other weapons of mass destruction.

This might not be achievable today, but we must be united in our determination to avoid any step that could endanger this objective, and be ready to discuss steps leading towards it.

I would also like to stress the importance of making the peaceful use of nuclear energy available to every nation that desires it.

Sweden relies heavily on nuclear power. In spite of this dependence we have never seen the need to invest in the complete nuclear fuel cycle, even though it would be well within our technological reach.

Although the world market for nuclear fuel generally functions well, we strongly support the work done in the IAEA on multilateral approaches to the fuel cycle.

This conference should give further support to these important efforts.

Mr President,

The vision of a world without nuclear weapons is stronger today than at any time since these weapons of horror were invented. We must unite on further steps taking us in this direction.

The vision of a world where every nation that so wishes has access to peaceful nuclear energy is well within our reach. On this issue, too, we have a duty to move forward.