



# AUSTRALIA



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## THE NINTH REVIEW OF THE PARTIES TO THE TREATY ON THE NON-PROLIFERATION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS

4 May 2015

### Main Committee III

**Statement by Mr. Richard Mathews  
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Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade**

(Check against delivery)

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Mr Chairman,

We would like to congratulate you on your election as Chair of Main Committee III.

In the 45 years since it entered into force the NPT has underpinned global cooperation on the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and performed a critical role in the maintenance of international peace and security. The NPT has helped prevent proliferation while enabling the use and transfer of nuclear science and technology, thus contributing to global economic development.

We look forward to constructive deliberations in this committee. We should assess the implementation of the 18 pillar three action items from the 2010 Action Plan and look at which of these need to be reaffirmed and strengthened, and whether there are areas not covered in 2010 which warrant attention in the years ahead.

In the last five years, there has been solid progress on nuclear safety following the Fukushima-Daiichi accident, and an increased high-level focus on nuclear security. We have also seen a growing recognition of the essential role nuclear applications play in areas such as human health, water management, agriculture and environmental protection. The IAEA has assisted 140 Member States in these areas, demonstrating that the peaceful uses of nuclear technology benefit many people around the world.

Mr Chairman

Australia acknowledges the right of all States parties to develop, research, produce and use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination and in conformity with Articles I and II of the NPT. States may choose individually not to exercise all their rights, or to exercise those rights collectively. In accordance with Article IV.2, we support international cooperation to facilitate the fullest possible exchange of equipment, materials and scientific and technological information for the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. Science and technology, including nuclear technology, are an indispensable element of achieving development goals. We thus recognise the particular importance of peaceful nuclear energy to developing countries and encourage relevant IAEA programs to focus on those needs.

Almost sixty years ago, Australia was one of eight countries that envisaged the formation of the IAEA to allow for the peaceful uses of the atom while safeguarding against nuclear proliferation. Australia remains a staunch supporter of the invaluable work of the IAEA and its Technical Cooperation Programme. Australia will continue to contribute to this Programme by paying our target share in full and on time. We urge others in a position to do so to ensure the Agency has the resources it needs, consistent with Actions 52-55 of the Action Plan.

In this regard, we announced in our national statement in Plenary that Australia will contribute a further 350,000 Euro to the Peaceful Uses Initiative, including 250,000 Euros for the revitalisation of the Seibersdorf Laboratories under the ReNuAL project. The remaining 100,000 Euros will go towards PUI projects in the Asia-Pacific. These voluntary contributions supplement our long-standing financial and in-kind support to the Regional Cooperation Agreement, in which we have participated since the 1970s.

Mr Chairman

As endorsed in Action 57 of the 2010 Action Plan, nuclear safety and security are of the highest priority for all States, and at all stages of the fuel cycle. Australia urges all States to take advantage of the guidance offered by the IAEA through its Standards and Nuclear Security Series documents, and its many peer review services.

We also underscore the importance of the Convention on Nuclear Safety (CNS), and urge all countries with nuclear power programmes, to report regularly and fully. The peer review process remains an important part of the CNS.

We also applaud the IAEA's work on nuclear security, and look forward to the International Conference on Nuclear Security to be held in December 2016. We welcome the contribution of the Nuclear Security Summit process to promote action and cooperation at the highest levels.

Mr Chairman

Australia continues to play its part, as a major and responsible uranium supplier. Through our nuclear cooperation agreements we work to ensure the widest application of IAEA safeguards and the highest standards of safety and security.

Australia is a leader in the use of LEU fuel and targets for medical isotope production. We expect our production of molybdenum-99 will enable us to meet over 20 per cent of world demand by 2016. LEU technology is a viable pathway for the production of molybdenum-99, and a pathway that also reduces proliferation risk. We encourage States using highly enriched uranium to move to LEU, in line with Action 61.

Given the significance of withdrawal from the Treaty, we urge agreement on a set of principles governing the exercise of the right to withdraw under Article X (*ten*). Any state withdrawing from the Treaty would have serious implications for international security. While this issue impacts on the work

of all three Main Committees, it falls to us to consider it here. We look forward to discussing withdrawal in the subsidiary body, where we will speak again on the matter.

Australia of course strongly supports, and commends to other delegations, the working papers submitted by the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative and the Vienna Group of Ten in their treatment of Main Committee III issues. We trust these papers will serve to facilitate discussion and provide direction for our work. Thank you.

Thank you Mr Chairman.