

**2015 REVIEW CONFERENCE OF THE TREATY ON
NON-PROLIFERATION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS**

Statement by

THE REPUBLIC OF LATVIA

at the

Main Committee I

New York, 4 May 2015

Mr Chairman,

At the outset I would like to congratulate you on your election as the Chairman of the Main Committee I. Let me assure you of the full support and cooperation of my delegation.

Latvia aligns itself with the intervention made on behalf of the European Union. I would like to add the following points in a national capacity.

Mr Chairman,

Nuclear disarmament is one of the three main pillars of the NPT, all three equally important. However, we expect that finding the way forward in nuclear disarmament will be the main challenge for us during this Conference.

Contemplating further steps in this regard, recognition of certain realities might bring us closer to understanding.

Both nuclear weapon and non-nuclear weapon states are an organic part of any disarmament discussions. Open discussion and engagement rather than criticism provide the best chance towards achieving a common goal of a world free of nuclear weapons.

There are no short-cuts to disarmament. Let me also point that nuclear disarmament differs from the processes of the development of other arms control treaties in the past.

Mr Chairman,

Latvia supports a step-by-step or building block approach to disarmament.

As outlined in my delegation's general statement we believe it is crucial to continue working on multiple steps that facilitate disarmament and strengthen the NPT, whilst preserving the strategic balance.

This includes but is not exhausted by promoting the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty, overcoming the prolonged stalemate in the Conference on Disarmament and commencing the negotiations on a Treaty Banning Production of Fissile Material. We sincerely hope that the recently adopted report by the FMCT GGE will provide the necessary impulse to achieve this end.

Along with such multilateral initiatives, as well as unilateral and bilateral disarmament initiatives, the key to success is the P5 process. It is reassuring that the last P5 conference highlighted that multilateral nuclear disarmament is high on the P5 agenda. I would also like to note the steps by the P5 towards a more intensified dialogue on disarmament issues with non-nuclear weapon states.

Latvia supports this development, as well as other initiatives aimed at increasing cooperation between nuclear weapon states and non-nuclear weapon states on nuclear disarmament verification. Positive examples are the UK-Norway initiative on nuclear warhead disarmament and the US-NTI International Partnership for Nuclear Disarmament Verification.

Mr Chairman,

Latvia believes that the 2010 NPT Action Plan contains a valuable set of extensive, balanced and substantive steps, which can strengthen the NPT and advance the work towards disarmament. The goals of the Action Plan are still relevant, therefore Latvia urges their continued full and substantive implementation.

We are aware that the work of the Main Committee I will be particularly challenging. However, we hope for a balanced discussion on disarmament during this conference. Non-strategic nuclear weapons, including reciprocal confidence building and transparency measures, should be addressed in this discussion.

Latvia encourages Parties to the Treaty to negotiate in the spirit of compromise to facilitate the adoption of a Final Document.

Mr Chairman,

As my last point I would like to point out that Latvia is deeply worried that one party has violated a number of the provisions of the Budapest memorandum on security assurances to Ukraine. The efforts of Ukraine in strengthening the NPT by abandoning its nuclear arsenal and acceding to the Treaty as a non-nuclear weapon State have been mistreated and exploited in the most unacceptable way. Such actions significantly erode the level of trust and undermine nuclear non-proliferation efforts.

Additionally, we believe this negative impact is furthered by the threat of use of force and possible breaches of bilateral arms control agreements. We must do our best to restore confidence.

Thank you!