

**Wilton Park: Sustainable Approaches to Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy
and Technology**

Remarks by Ambassador Gustavo Zlauvinen

President-designate of the Tenth NPT Review Conference

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Excellencies

Distinguished delegates

Fellow participants

It is my pleasure to join you for this timely and educational event. My sincere thanks to Wilton Park, Argonne National Laboratory and the Governments of Canada and Nigeria for enabling it to take place and to build on the previous workshops in Nigeria and South Africa.

This is an issue that is close to my heart. I have spent a good deal of my career endeavouring to raise awareness about why investment in and facilitation of the peaceful use of nuclear science and technology can greatly assist all nations.

I am also pleased to see so many actual practitioners of the uses of nuclear science and technology on-line. From my perspective as President-designate of the Tenth NPT Review Conference, having practitioners engaged in this process is, I believe, integral to its success. It provides a fresh and different perspective from those at the front lines. Having practitioners from the developing world, where the peaceful uses of science and technology can have such enormous impact, is even more important.

I am sorry we cannot all meet in person, not least to enjoy the unique hospitality of Wilton Park, but as the COVID-19 pandemic continues to take lives around the world, we must continue to work how we can. The pandemic reminds us daily of why we need cooperation and compassion across borders and for solidarity amongst all peoples, but also of how science and technology are essential to meeting the challenges of our

globalized and networked planet. This is evident in the fine work being done by the International Atomic Energy Agency to help defeat the pandemic.

This conference and the two predecessors in Nigeria and South Africa have explored many of the ground-breaking ways in which advances in nuclear science is driving fulfilment of the Sustainable Development Goals in health, agriculture and water management, climate change and environmental protection. These achievements should be advertised to the widest possible audience to ensure the widest possible adoption.

I can think of no better venue for that conversation than the Tenth NPT Review Conference.

I know that the NPT has been discussed at the two prior conferences, so some of you are familiar with its substance and esoterica, but I thought I should provide a quick overview of the Treaty and why peaceful uses is so important to its continued vitality.

The NPT is often described as the “cornerstone” of the global non-proliferation and disarmament regime and a pillar of international peace and security. This is due to three factors: The first is the legally binding disarmament commitments it contains, including on five nuclear weapon-States; the second is its non-proliferation obligations and the safeguards system it employs to verify compliance by non-nuclear-weapon States; and the third is its near-universal nature, which imposes those commitments and obligations on the vast majority of the international community.

At its core, the NPT is a bargain between three pillars. The first is disarmament. The second pillar is non-proliferation and the third is the peaceful uses of nuclear science and technology. Under these pillars, Nuclear-weapon States agree not to provide others with nuclear weapons, and non-nuclear weapon States forswear nuclear weapons. In exchange they are guaranteed access to the benefits of the peaceful uses of nuclear science and technology, while accepting safeguards on those activities to ensure they are not diverted to non-peaceful outcomes. All States commit to pursuing nuclear disarmament.

In this way, non-proliferation commitments enable peaceful uses, but it is the promise of the benefits under the third pillar that prop up the other two.

Every five years, the NPT holds a Review Conference, the purposes of which are to review its implementation and chart its future course over all three pillars.

Every successful NPT Review Conference outcome has included action items to advance access to peaceful uses, including support to the International Atomic Energy Agency's Technical Cooperation Programme. Sadly, the third pillar still often feels overlooked and underdone.

The Tenth NPT Review Conference is an opportunity to remedy this situation.

As President-designate it is not my role to dictate what should comprise any potential outcome from the Review Conference, but it is my responsibility to facilitate an outcome that looks both backwards and to the future and that is balanced across all three of the NPT's pillars: disarmament, non-proliferation and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

To this end, I believe there are several ways in which States Parties could ensure that the peaceful use of science and technology receives due attention.

First, I think there is an opportunity to do a better job of creating understanding about just how important nuclear science and technology is for the entire international community, but especially those in the developing world.

Too few people are aware of the game-changing impact it is having for the most vulnerable populations on our planet. Strengthening the nexus between sustainable development and security can only benefit the Treaty.

So too can highlighting the NPT's role in addressing the two existential challenges facing the world: nuclear weapons and climate change.

In order to do so, we need to include you – the practitioners – in the process. This event and its forebears have gone some way to that end, but inclusion of the frontline users and industry at the Review Conference in ways that highlight their work will put these issues right in front of policymakers.

Second, this meeting, in particular, has done some excellent thinking about the sustainability of peaceful uses – especially the sustainability of human

resources. This could be an area on which the Review Conference chooses to focus.

Third, the question of how the NPT and its States Parties can strengthen cooperation between regions and between subregional organizations could be considered by the Review Conference. Enhanced cooperation will help fuel self-reliance and sustainability.

Fourth, the Conference could consider how to strengthen the IAEA's facilitation of peaceful uses, broaden its impact and ensure its long-term security, so that all who need to derive its benefits are able to do so.

In the coming months I will continue to work to engage the broadest constituency possible in dialogue and support for the NPT going forward. I hope to continue the informal interactions like this and to continue to raise awareness in all governments of the opportunities that are underpinned by the Treaty.

Many countries have not fully taken advantage of the opportunities for technological development and scientific training that they are entitled to as parties to the NPT who fulfill their international obligations fully.

It is important that governments understand where nuclear science and technology can make concrete contributions to meet the national sustainable development goals and support inter-regional and extra-regional cooperation.

I look forward to working with you all to strengthen the NPT, that is not only essential to international peace and security, but also an increasingly important contributor to international development.

Thank you.