

The Tenth NPT Review Conference: Challenges and Opportunities
Virtual event organized by UNODA, CNS, CENESS
Closing remarks by Ambassador Gustavo Zlauvinen
President-designate of the Tenth NPT Review Conference

First of all, I would like to extend my sincere thanks to CNS, CENESS, and UNODA for arranging this event and inviting me to speak. In these trying times, events like this one are vital in keeping the community engaged on the review process and on the key issues that will be at the center of the Tenth Review Conference.

Secondly, I would like to thank those of you have tuned into “attend” this panel. It is a demonstration of the importance all stakeholders continue to place on a successful Review Conference.

We have heard today some expert views and some excellent questions about the challenges and opportunities presented by the Review Conference. In the lead up to the Conference, there has been a lot of focus on the former. If we are to succeed in producing an outcome from the Conference that strengthens the Treaty and its implementation, we need to start talking more about the latter.

To this end, the Review Conference’s postponement is a disappointment to all, but I agree with the High Representative that it is also an opportunity. It is one that we cannot afford to squander.

At this stage we only have the tentative dates of 4-29 January that I have asked the UN Secretariat to reserve. I stress again that these dates are only tentative and cannot be confirmed until life returns to some semblance of normality at the United Nations Headquarters.

But we should act as if the Review Conference is next month – that is, with a sense of urgency. Before we know it, the conference will be upon us and we will need to hit the ground running.

Today, amidst the weeds of potential problems, I believe I heard some green shoots of convergence – areas of commonality that can help States Parties find compromise, with the aim to strengthen the Treaty.

In my view, a successful Conference should entail, among others, the following aspects:

- A balance across all three of the Treaty’s pillars.
- Practical ideas to strengthen implementation of each of the pillars.
- To take into account the outcomes from the 1995, 2000 and 2010 Review Conferences.
- Take on board the voices of a diverse range of stakeholders, as a plurality of views helps produce lasting results.

As we recently celebrated the twenty-fifth anniversary of the NPT's indefinite extension, it is worth remembering that this historical achievement came about due to an understanding that the strength of the Treaty is the grand bargain at its core, upheld by mutually reinforcing pillars in service of the ultimate goal of a world free of nuclear weapons.

Due to the extraordinary circumstances we find ourselves in, the Tenth Review Conference may not be identical in form to its predecessors, but I can assure you that the Bureau and I are exerting all efforts to ensure that the Conference will match the high standards that all States Parties expect.

To States Parties, I say this much you can expect from me. In turn, I hope that States Parties will approach the conference ready to negotiate in good faith, willing to listen to the views and legitimate concerns of others, and able to recognize the collective value that we all derive from the Treaty.

Thank you.