Check against delivery!

Statement by H.E. Mr. Péter Szijjártó
Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade of Hungary
at the General Debate of
at the Tenth Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the
Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

United Nations
New York, 1 August 2022
Mr. Chairman,

Congratulations on your election to preside over the Review Conference of the NPT – I can assure you of Hungary’s full support.

Mr. Chairman,

Our current security environment is extremely complex and challenging. Due to the military conflict in Ukraine, the purpose of Non-proliferation, as well as the Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT) itself is even more important. As a neighbouring country, Hungary is of the view that all possible avenues need to be urgently explored towards peace and a negotiated settlement that also allows for the elimination of nuclear escalation and miscalculation, which only increase every day this military conflict continues. Peace is the only way to make sure that people stop dying, thus, it is our moral obligation to do everything in order to attain it. We maintain our call for peace in order to find a lasting and negotiated solution to the war in our neighbourhood.

Mr. Chairman,

Under these difficult circumstances, it is incumbent upon us to do our utmost to make this Review Conference a success. We must preserve and strengthen the relevance and integrity of the NPT, which during the more than five decades of its existence, has proved to be not only the cornerstone of nuclear non-proliferation but the only realistic framework for multilateral nuclear disarmament, and has facilitated cooperation on nuclear energy for peaceful uses. In order to do
so we need to concentrate on issues that unite us and not on the divisive ones in all the three equally important and mutually reinforcing pillars of the Treaty.

Given the tense international security situation, we urge the P5 to engage in dialogue because this is now more important than ever. Any alternatives will only lead to further tensions and escalation.

As far as the first pillar, nuclear disarmament is concerned, Hungary shares the ultimate goal of a world free of nuclear weapons. In the face of the increasing risk of the use of nuclear weapons, our Review Conference provides a critical opportunity to reinforce the norms against nuclear weapons and reject policies that threaten to use them. However, there is no “fast track” in nuclear disarmament, only an incremental approach, consisting of gradual and concrete building blocks can produce tangible results. We need to focus on those “Stepping Stones” where common ground exists and consensus can be reached that includes Nuclear Weapon States. In our view, such potential areas for progress are strategic nuclear risk reduction, transparency, confidence building and nuclear disarmament verification.

Regarding the treaty’s second pillar, non-proliferation, Hungary is of the view that the credibility of the NPT can only be preserved if existing and emerging nuclear proliferation risks are addressed in a timely and effective fashion. The full implementation of IAEA Comprehensive Safeguards Agreements, together with the Additional Protocol constitute the current IAEA verification standard under
the NPT, and, therefore, their universalization is indispensable. In addition, effective export controls, in accordance with the NPT, are also crucial.

With regard to the third pillar, the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, Hungary is convinced that it is a cost-effective, climate-friendly, safe and stable source of electricity that helps us to meet our environmental and sustainable development goals. As a country with an active peaceful nuclear programme, Hungary stresses that all States Parties have an inalienable right for the peaceful uses of nuclear energy in conformity with the relevant provisions of the NPT. Nuclear energy remains a key component of Hungary’s energy mix that meets our growing demand for affordable electricity for a long time. The new blocks of the Paks Nuclear Power Plant, built in cooperation with several companies from several countries, and based on a Russian design, will be even more important under the current circumstances of an extremely volatile energy market. We need affordable energy resources for our society and our economy and nuclear power is crucial for ensuring that. Thus, Hungary fully supports the work that the IAEA is doing in promoting the peaceful uses of nuclear energy in a safe, secure and safeguarded manner.

Mr. Chairman,

In conclusion, allow me to take this opportunity to emphasize the importance of recommitting ourselves to the objectives of the NPT and to the comprehensive and balanced implementation of all Treaty obligations and commitments made by
States Parties during previous Review Conferences. To produce a positive outcome, we need the have the political will. A cooperative approach is the only possible way to reach our goal. Hungary is ready and willing to take its share from these joint efforts and looks forward to working along these principles during the Review Conference.