



**TENTH REVIEW CONFERENCE OF THE TREATY ON THE NON-
PROLIFERATION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS (NPT)**

**SOUTH AFRICAN NATIONAL STATEMENT FOR MAIN COMMITTEE I –
NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT**

Chairperson,

I congratulate you on your assumption of the Chairpersonship of Main Committee 1 and assure you of South Africa's support.

South Africa wishes to associate itself with the statements delivered on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and the New Agenda Coalition.

Chairperson,

The work of this Committee will not be easy given that the review of the sections of the NPT that we would be undertaking, includes the only article of this instrument which has not seen progress over the past 50 years, while there continues to be a widening implementation gap between the disarmament and non-proliferation obligations.

Chairperson,

During the last few years, we have continued to witness attempts by some States to negate and reinterpret the nuclear disarmament commitments. Together with modernisation programmes and deterrence arguments, this has not only continued to polarise the nuclear non-proliferation regime, but undermines the NPT.

Nuclear-weapon States need to demonstrate political will to implement the 2010 Action Plan, set a high example on nuclear disarmament, and not look for the lowest common denominator when implementing their obligations.

Given this situation, South Africa recommends that this Conference do the following:

- Urges all States Parties to commit to pursue policies and actions that are fully compatible with the Treaty's object and purpose.
- Reaffirms the continued validity of the 1995 decision on "Principles and objectives for nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament", the practical steps agreed to in the Final Document of the 2000 Review Conference and the "Conclusions and Recommendations for follow-on actions" of the 2010 Review Conference, and urges the nuclear-weapon States to accelerate concrete progress on the measures leading to nuclear disarmament through the adoption of specific timelines and benchmarks.
- Urges nuclear-weapon States to stop their modernisation programmes and consider diverting the resources used for these programmes to sustainable development assistance.

Chairperson,

South Africa firmly believes that, the object and purpose of the Treaty NPT can never be achieved if it is seen only as a means to address security concerns of some, but not security for all.

This is not only illogical but morally unethical and lacks credibility.

Beyond the arguments on the security benefits of nuclear weapons, there is also an assertion by some States that the international security environment is not conducive for nuclear disarmament.

South Africa therefore opposes any conditionality for nuclear disarmament or the reinterpretation of agreed undertakings, obligations and principles, especially the unequivocal undertaking and obligation of the nuclear-weapon States to disarm.

South Africa recommends that this Conference:

- reaffirms the unequivocal undertaking by nuclear-weapon States towards nuclear disarmament and the principles emanating from the past NPT Review Conferences. Importantly, the principles of transparency, irreversibility and verifiability should apply to all nuclear disarmament, nuclear arms reduction and

arms control measures, with clearly defined timelines and benchmarks for the implementation of these commitments.

Chairperson,

Beyond the Article VI obligations, there is not a more compelling reason for the pursuit of nuclear disarmament than the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of any use of nuclear weapons.

Concerns about the catastrophic humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons have been with us since the first use of these weapons. These concerns were the motivating factor for the establishment of the NPT and they remain a motivating factor in insisting its provisions are fully implemented.

Given the understanding of the catastrophic humanitarian consequences, South Africa recommends that this Conference:

- Reiterates State Parties' "deep concern at the continued risk for humanity represented by the possibility that these weapons could be used and the catastrophic humanitarian consequences that would result from the use of nuclear weapons".
- Welcomes the negotiation, adoption and entry into force of the TPNW,
- Acknowledges that the TPNW is an effective measure of nuclear disarmament contributing to the implementation of Article VI and is complementary to the NPT by fulfilling the Article VI obligations.
- Reiterate that the TPNW will not replace the obligations and commitments that States have already made under the NPT and other instruments.

Chairperson,

Concerns about nuclear risks have gained prominence during discussions leading up to this RevCon. These concerns have flowed from developments related to modernisation programmes, security concerns, heightened tension among nuclear-weapon States and better understanding of the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of any nuclear weapon explosion.

While nuclear-weapon States bear a special responsibility to reduce the risks, non-nuclear-weapon States also have a role given that these risks directly affect all States.

We further have to emphasise that non-nuclear-weapon States that maintain a role for nuclear weapons in their military doctrines also have an additional role to play.

South Africa recommends that this Conference:

- Considers risk reduction measures that go beyond nuclear-weapon States minimally providing political signals and having dialogue amongst themselves.
- We further recommend that Non nuclear weapon states not be encumbered with the workload of transparency and confidence-building measures to improve predictability in international relations or creating the environment for nuclear disarmament.

In conclusion Chairperson,

South Africa recommends that the Conference again urges all States Parties to commit to pursue policies and actions that are fully compatible with the Treaty and the objective of achieving a world free of nuclear weapons.

I thank you, Chairperson.