

2022 NPT Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

Main Committee III (Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy)

New York

<As Delivered>

Thank you, Madam Chair,

We would like to congratulate you on your election as Chair of Main Committee III. Let me assure you of full cooperation of my delegation.

The Republic of Korea reaffirms its support for the inalienable right of all NPT State Parties to the peaceful use of nuclear energy, exercised in conformity with Treaty obligations under Articles I and II and verified by safeguards required by Article III for non-nuclear-weapon States Party. We also emphasize the importance of international cooperation in promoting peaceful use of nuclear energy as stipulated in Article IV.

Mindful of the significant benefits of nuclear energy, the Republic of Korea is committed to sharing its substantial and wide-ranging experience. In addition to its contributions to the Technical Cooperation Fund, the ROK has contributed over 97.91 million USD to the Peaceful Uses Initiative since 2011 to support the various Agency's activities. As Chair country of the IAEA Board of Governors from 2021 to 2022, we will continue to support the Agency's important role in promoting 'Atoms for peace and development'.

The Republic of Korea believes that State Parties can continue to work together to improve access to peaceful uses through a Sustained Dialogue aiming at promoting global awareness of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy in the efforts to achieve the UN SDGs. The ROK is committed to sharing its experience with other States Parties through the dialogue.

Madam Chair,

Building on the NPT's remarkable achievements in its first five decades, more work is needed to promote the long-term sustainable development of nuclear energy in three areas.

First and foremost, ensuring nuclear safety and security is a fundamental requirement for the promotion of peaceful use of nuclear energy. Nowadays, we are witnessing irresponsible threats to nuclear safety and security in Ukraine. My delegation expresses grave concern about those threats and irreversible impacts on nuclear safety and security. We highly appreciate the IAEA and Director General Grossi's efforts on the situation, and will continue to support its activities. In this regard, the Republic of Korea has contributed 1.2 million USD to ensure the safety and security of nuclear facilities in Ukraine.

On nuclear safety, we take note that since the 2011 Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant accident, serious efforts have been made to strengthen the global nuclear safety regime. We support the IAEA's efforts to ensure safety throughout the entire decommissioning process of the Plant, including the treatment of the contaminated water stored at the Plant.

Second, assurance of supply can promote peaceful uses of nuclear energy by ensuring reliable access to nuclear fuel while reducing the risk of nuclear proliferation. As a member of the International Framework for Nuclear Energy Cooperation, we will remain engaged in discussions on development of Multinational Repository concepts and their financing.

Finally, global interest is growing in the development and application of innovative nuclear power technologies, including Small Modular Reactors (SMRs) and advanced reactors. As one of the leading countries in developing SMRs, the Republic of Korea stands ready to share its experience and knowledge and to facilitate international efforts in promoting peaceful nuclear programme.

Madam Chair,

My delegation believes that it is necessary to examine and develop principles to govern the operation of Article X in order to appropriately respond to a State's withdrawal after violating the Treaty or to address the consequences of the violations prior to withdrawal. Our suggestion includes following elements.

First, there should be a mechanism that enables State Parties to intervene immediately to review the appropriateness of the withdrawal notice both substantially and procedurally and assess the withdrawing party's compliance with the Treaty and the IAEA safeguard agreement.

Second, withdrawal from the Treaty cannot affect the consequences resulting from violations prior to withdrawal, and the materials, equipment and facilities acquired prior to withdrawal must remain subject to IAEA safeguards.

Lastly, the withdrawing State Party must return all nuclear materials, equipment and technology acquired prior to withdrawal. My delegation is committed to working with interested State parties inter-sessionally so we can take concrete action at the next Review conference.

Thank you, Madam Chair. /END/