



United Kingdom
Mission to the
United Nations

**TENTH REVIEW CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE TREATY ON THE
NON-PROLIFERATION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS**

MAIN COMMITTEE II

STATEMENT BY THE UNITED KINGDOM

H.E. Mr Aidan Liddle, Ambassador to the Conference on Disarmament

Let me congratulate you in your election as Chair of Main Committee 2 and assure you of my delegation's full and active support.

Madam Chair,

The NPT is primarily a treaty designed to stem the threat posed by the proliferation of nuclear weapons. This is set out clearly in Article III, and informs the undertakings in Articles IV-VII. Since 1970, the NPT has been very successful in curtailing the nuclear arms race and so contributing to a safer and more stable world. We regret that Russia's unprovoked and unjustified invasion of Ukraine threatens this stability.

The threat of nuclear proliferation persists. We, as States parties to the NPT, must work to reduce this threat by strengthening the non-proliferation architecture, combating programmes of concern and building trust between regional neighbours.

Madam Chair,

The IAEA plays a crucial role in the context of the NPT, and the robust safeguards regime it operates has been responsible for much of the NPT's success. The demand for safeguards continues to increase and the IAEA needs continued financial support to undertake its crucial mission. The UK will continue to support the Agency and champion an effective and efficient safeguards system.

We believe that a Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement plus an Additional Protocol should be the universal verification standard and that which best fulfils Article III of the Treaty. The UK welcomes the six States that have brought a CSA into force, and the fourteen States that have adopted Additional Protocols since 2015. We call on all States, which have not yet done so, to sign and bring into force a Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement and Additional Protocol as soon as

possible. The UK is ready to provide assistance to States in bringing Additional Protocols into force. We also call upon States with original Small Quantities Protocols to either amend or rescind them. Our firm support for the continued evolution of the safeguards system persists with the aim to make it more robust, efficient and responsive to contemporary challenges, as exemplified by the development of the State Level Concept. We hope that the Review Conference will support the IAEA's progressive implementation of state level safeguards approaches.

The Agency must be allowed to conduct its safeguards verification activities fully and safely. We again urge Russia to comply with the IAEA Board of Governors resolution of 3 March and immediately withdraw its troops from Ukraine's internationally-recognised borders, including all nuclear facilities; and restore full control of these facilities to the relevant Ukrainian authorities.

We remain deeply concerned by the unprecedented steps Iran has taken to accelerate the pace of its nuclear programme over the past three years, in violation of the JCPOA. Iran's nuclear programme is now more advanced than at any point in the past. Iran's continued nuclear escalation is a threat to international peace and security and risks undermining the global non-proliferation regime. Intensive diplomatic efforts to restore the JCPOA have resulted in a viable deal being on the table since early March. We regret that up until now Iran has refused to seize this diplomatic opportunity and has continued its nuclear escalation. We call on Iran to stop and reverse its nuclear escalation, return to full cooperation with the IAEA and accept without further delay the offer on the table, which would benefit the Iranian people and nation. Furthermore, Iran remains under investigation by the IAEA regarding outstanding safeguards issues relating to Iran's obligations under its NPT-required safeguards agreement. This issue has been long outstanding and the overwhelming majority vote at the June 2022 IAEA Board of Governors meeting sends an unambiguous message to Iran that it must urgently meet its safeguards obligations and provide technically credible clarifications to the IAEA. We welcome the independent, professional and impartial efforts of the IAEA to uphold the international safeguards system in this case, which is essential to everyone's security, and urge Iran to meet its legal obligations and cooperate with the IAEA without further delay.

The UK remains committed to securing peace on the Korean Peninsula and we are clear that the DPRK's nuclear and weapons programmes must be dismantled. The DPRK continues to threaten international security through its illegal nuclear and ballistic missile programmes. We also note that the DPRK continues to restore its nuclear test site, and are concerned by activity suggesting a possible nuclear test. We support the diplomatic efforts of the US and our regional partners to secure peace on the Korean Peninsula and preserve regional stability. The UK calls on all UN Member States to fully implement and enforce all UN Security Council sanctions. We urge North Korea to return to dialogue, return to the NPT and IAEA safeguards, and to abandon its nuclear and ballistic missile programmes in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner.

The UK remains concerned with Syria's ongoing non-compliance, now over a decade old, with its nuclear safeguards obligations. We urge Syria to cooperate fully with the IAEA by providing access to the information, documentation, sites, material and personnel in Syria that the IAEA has requested.

The UK will focus on efforts to enhance international nuclear security - essential to an effective non-proliferation system. Effective nuclear security means preventing terrorists and non-state actors accessing nuclear material by ensuring all States adhere to their obligations, commitments and established good practice. While nuclear security is a national responsibility it cannot be achieved unilaterally. The UK is working to ensure that international nuclear security agreements and guidelines are robust, continue to evolve to meet new threats and technologies, and are implemented by as many States as possible. The Ministerial Declaration of the IAEA's 2020 International Conference on Nuclear Security shows the global support for nuclear security, the IAEA's central role, and the need for all States to meet their obligations. This Review Conference should endorse this Declaration.

We welcome that the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material and its Amendment Review Conference successfully took place in March and achieved consensus on an outcome document. The Convention and its Amendment remains the only legally binding international agreement for the protection of nuclear facilities and materials. The UK will work to ensure that international agreements and guidelines are as robust as possible, and ratified and implemented by as many countries as possible.

Export controls enable access to nuclear technology while minimising the risks of proliferation. The United Kingdom actively supports the efforts of the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) and the Zangger Committee in working towards minimising nuclear proliferation while ensuring that states are able to access nuclear technology for peaceful uses. We provide both secretarial and technical support to the Zangger Committee and are active in all meetings of the NSG. In 2019, we reviewed our interpretation of NSG guidelines and strengthened our controls on re-export of UK items through the ongoing exchange of government-to-government assurances. We call on all states to adhere to the NSG's Guidelines and to ensure that these are taken into consideration when making decisions on nuclear and nuclear-related exports.

I would like to address the new enhanced trilateral security partnership between the UK, Australia and the US. The UK, Australia and the US take our obligations under the NPT extremely seriously. This partnership is fully consistent with our international obligations, and we are engaging with the IAEA as the Director-General remarked on at the June Board of Governors, to ensure that the precedent set by Australia's acquisition of conventionally-armed nuclear-powered submarines strengthens the global non-proliferation regime. We will continue our open engagement and

transparency in this endeavour and in that spirit, we have offered a working paper to this conference.

Robust safeguards, security and nuclear safety remain key to the success of the nuclear industry and an enabler to support the peaceful uses of nuclear around the world. The UK has signed several Nuclear Cooperation Agreements in the last few years, and we ensure that these Agreements include important provisions relating to non-proliferation, including safeguards.

Madam Chair,

We continue to urge all non-NPT states to sign and ratify the NPT as non-nuclear weapon states as soon as possible in order to reach universality. In the meantime, we will work to bring those states closer to the international non-proliferation mainstream, and we urge all states parties to consider constructively how we can achieve this.

While the vast majority of NPT Parties fully comply with their safeguards obligations, there are current unresolved issues.

Madam Chair, in line with Article VII, the United Kingdom supports the creation of nuclear weapon free zones, wherever states of that region are able to agree arrangements. In this regard, we recall and wholeheartedly support the 1995 Resolution on the Middle East and the goal of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems. We observed the UN Conferences on a Middle East Weapons of Mass Destruction Free Zone in 2019 and 2021 to demonstrate that commitment; we remain convinced that progress can only be achieved with the consensus of all the States of the region. The UK remains ready to sign the Protocol of the Treaty of Bangkok, with a declaration aligned to our national negative security assurances.

Madam Chair,

It is the UK's hope that the Review Conference can both consolidate and strengthen the measures taken to ensure the non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and demonstrate the continued value and utility of the NPT at a time where the strategic context makes this more important than ever.