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Statement
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**2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the
Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons**

New York
3 May 2010

Mr. President,
Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Lady Ashton has delivered a statement on behalf of the EU. Permit me to add a few points from the perspective of Austria.

Forty years ago, the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons entered into force. The world was in the depths of the Cold War. At times, the threat of nuclear war seemed imminent. The goals of the NPT were clear: prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons, benefit from peaceful uses of nuclear energy and pursue nuclear disarmament.

Forty years later, it is deeply disturbing:

- that the number of nuclear weapons is still so high;
- that North Korea developed nuclear arms; and
- that Iran – requests by the IAEA and UN notwithstanding – is still not able or willing to dispel concerns about its nuclear ambitions.

Forty years of NPT produced resolutions and decisions, high hopes and aspirations – and yet, we are still waiting:

- for progress on the establishment of a nuclear-weapons free zone in the Middle East;
- for the entry-into-force of the Test-Ban-Treaty; and
- for negotiations on a fissile-material ban.

Forty years of NPT witnessed dangerous incidents, a terrible accident in Chernobyl, and growing concerns as regards the misuse of sensitive nuclear technologies, and yet we see:

- no real solutions for addressing environmental and health concerns on many questions, such as nuclear waste;
- no universal commitment to recognize the IAEA Additional Protocol as the verification standard; and
- no real interest in safe and fair multilateral control of the nuclear fuel cycle through the IAEA.

So there we are: Forty years of NPT. Is there something to celebrate?

In my view, the inadequacies of the system, grave as they may be, must not be used to distort the overall positive record:

- Since 1970, few new states have acquired nuclear weapons;
- We witnessed states giving up nuclear arsenals, dismantling weapons programmes or reducing their atomic arsenals;
- We saw the IAEA establish a highly efficient system of monitoring and verification and become the accepted authority on nuclear issues.

For me, the most important sign of life of the NPT is this conference – where almost the whole world has gathered to support the NPT as the cornerstone of the international nuclear non-proliferation regime.

Mr. President,

A Review Conference is an occasion to reflect on the past, but it should focus on the future. There is today a new sense of optimism – thanks primarily to US President Obama's inspirational new approach, which has enabled developments such as the Russia-US agreement signed last month. I hope the improved atmosphere will enable progress at this

Conference: real, concrete steps forward - especially as regards reductions in nuclear arsenals, the nuclear test ban, a fissile material ban, the additional protocol, a process towards a nuclear-weapons-free zone in the Middle East and confidence building.

Austria will actively contribute to these efforts, just as we have done in the past, for example with our proposal on a fair and transparent system to multilaterally control the nuclear fuel cycle. Most important for Austria is that the goal of a nuclear-weapons-free-world becomes the central objective of our endeavours. Forty years ago, such ideas were considered idealist dreams. But last year, the UN Security Council resolved, at the level of Heads of State and Government, to work towards a world without nuclear weapons. In the words attributed to the Brazilian Bishop Hélder Câmara. "When you dream alone, it's just a dream; but when many have the same dream, it's the beginning of reality".

Moving from the dream of a world free of nuclear weapons to actual global zero will take time and much effort. There are several promising ideas, like UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon's Five-Point-Plan. Austria supports this plan and believes that the most effective way to move towards "global zero" is through a universal legal instrument, a "Nuclear Weapons Convention", equipped with a strict multilateral verification mechanism.

You are aware how sincerely Austria engages in disarmament issues. We were at the forefront of initiatives resulting in conventions banning mines and cluster bombs. The Austrian government and the legislature - which recently adopted a formal resolution on a world without nuclear weapons -

will examine closely how disarmament is dealt with at this Conference. If there is no clear progress towards “global zero”, we will discuss with partners the feasibility of a global instrument to ban these weapons. The NPT remains the cornerstone of the international nuclear non-proliferation regime. But a static regime that has lost its vision may benefit from fresh ideas.

Mr. President,

To achieve a meaningful outcome at this Conference, you will require contributions from many sources. We have considered at length how Austria might assist. With no nuclear weapons to disarm, no international treaties left to ratify and no nuclear industry to monitor, we identified the following areas:

1. Strengthen the multilateral system

The UN Office of Disarmament Affairs (UNODA) shoulders a large mandate, with limited means. Last year, Under-Secretary-General Duarte stressed the desire to devote more attention to the *meetings on nuclear issues in Vienna*. Austria has, therefore, put together a proposal that enables UNODA to establish and maintain a permanent liaison office in Vienna: we will provide office space, equipment, a yearly stipend to offset personnel costs for 10 years and financial support for conferences. We hope that a presence close to institutions such as the IAEA and CTBTO will also help UNODA to provide support to the NPT, especially if a support unit for the NPT-review process along the lines of the Canadian proposal is established.

2. Support civil society

The contribution of civil society in disarmament matters is vital. Many projects – such as the Mine Ban Treaty or the Convention on Cluster Munitions – would not have turned out as successful had it not been for the work of dedicated NGOs. It is my firm belief that strengthening of the monitoring role of civil society can further our goal of a world free of nuclear weapons. For this reason, and in view of the increasing importance of [nuclear issues in Vienna, Austria will assist in establishing an international hub of expertise, a “Competence Centre for Nuclear Disarmament and Non-Proliferation” in Vienna. Over the next months, we will consult with partners in government and civil society on how such a hub could contribute effectively to the global efforts for a world without nuclear weapons.

Mr. President,

Before concluding, let me thank you and your team for the great effort you have put into the preparation of this Conference. I wish you much success and the best of luck.

Thank you.