



# BELGIUM

## **GENERAL DEBATE 2010 NPT REVIEW CONFERENCE**

### **STATEMENT BY H.E. MR. WERNER BAUWENS HEAD OF THE BELGIAN DELEGATION**

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Mr. Chairman,

Today, the international non-proliferation regime is at a crossroads. It is up to us to choose the direction to take. Do we allow the Non-Proliferation Treaty to unravel or do we strengthen it as a cornerstone of our global security? The choice is ours. It will impact on today's environment as well as on future generations, since the question of how to deal with the full range of nuclear capacities in a peaceful manner will stay with us for as long as nuclear energy and knowledge exist. And thus we always will have to address the core issues spelled out in the NPT: non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, nuclear disarmament and peaceful use of the atom.

Belgium has made its choice. We believe that the NPT offers a well balanced and comprehensive platform, with clear commitments in all relevant fields. It is an anchor of stability in a constantly evolving process of checks and balances. The review cycle initiated by the Treaty allows for an almost continuous reality check. Indeed, the NPT has not been construed as a static document, shielded from the living world and the effects of globalization, daunting technological developments and new security perceptions. Besides, no other framework but the NPT offers a comparable level of legal commitment and perspective.

We call on India, Pakistan and Israel to join the NPT and to bring their nuclear posture fully in line with this treaty which has a truly universal vocation. We also call on all State Parties to remain indefinitely committed to the treaty. Honoring our NPT commitments is the best way to promote universality of the treaty.

Mr. Chairman,

Belgium is resolved to preserve the vitality of the NPT, to fully respect its commitments, to make concrete proposals in all areas and to contribute to a result-oriented action plan to be adopted by this conference. We will see to it that our vision of a revitalized NPT is duly pursued in the different European and multilateral settings to which we belong. The NPT is our yardstick, wherever we deal with nuclear non-proliferation, disarmament and peaceful uses. By the same token, we

advocate a multi-faceted approach to the issues before us, one that also addresses the complex root causes of proliferation concerns, including the regional context, as well as the challenges posed by the appearance of non-state actors. Our strategy is based on the conviction that an effective multilateral approach to security, including disarmament and non-proliferation, provides the best way to maintain international peace and stability. The final solution to the proliferation of WMD is that countries would no longer feel the need to have them. We therefore foster regional security arrangements that include an active disarmament agenda.

Belgium has consistently underlined that nuclear proliferation, while often rooted in unstable regional situations, is a global challenge that requires global and multilateral responses. We thus welcome the fact that the UN Security Council has brought this issue back in focus by adopting Resolution 1887 in September 2009. We particularly welcome the strong support expressed in this resolution to the day to day work of the relevant international bodies, such as the IAEA, as well as to the entry into force of the CTBT and the commencement of substantive work at the Conference on Disarmament, including the negotiation as soon as possible of a Treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices.

The Security Council is also united in emphasizing that a situation of non-compliance with non-proliferation obligations shall be brought to its attention. We call on Iran and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to comply with the provisions of the NPT. Their failure to do so is threatening to undermine the international non-proliferation regime and needs to be dealt with firmly. The IAEA has to be capable of properly conducting its assigned task of verification and this requires more effective cooperation on the part of the countries involved. Belgium calls on all States to sign, ratify and implement an additional protocol, which together with comprehensive safeguards agreements constitute the current verification standard.

Mr. Chairman,

Recent positive developments, such as the new START treaty and the Washington Nuclear Security Summit, have boosted hopes that further steps in the direction of a world without nuclear weapons will be taken. The agreement between the United States and Russia to cut their strategic nuclear arsenals is a concrete step towards a more secure world. It should encourage all nuclear weapon states, without exception, to actively and urgently support the zero option. We

recognize that this objective will require a gradual and realistic approach, if it wants to fulfil, as it should, the requirements of transparency, accountability, verifiability and irreversibility. Belgium also hopes that the United States and Russia will hold more talks, as soon as possible, with a view to further reducing their nuclear arsenals, including non strategic nuclear weapons. Within NATO, Belgium has actively helped to launch the debate on the future role of nuclear weapons and the importance of disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation in the new strategic concept. It is with the same open-mindedness that we, together with our European partners and other likeminded countries, intend to table proposals at this conference that will cover in a balanced way all pillars of the treaty.

Let me express the clear and full support of Belgium to the statement made by the High Representative of the European Union. The entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty offers a unique opportunity for ever more decisive EU action in support of the NPT goals and objectives. The EU working documents and the concrete initiatives of the EU in various core fields of the NPT, including safeguards, nuclear security and the implementation of the NPT 1995 Middle East Resolution, illustrate our level of commitment to achieving tangible results at the end of our conference.

Mr. Chairman,

Let me conclude by thanking you for your inspiring leadership and assure you of the full commitment of my delegation to a successful outcome of this conference.

Thank you for your attention.