



The Permanent Mission of Iceland to the United Nations

**Statement by
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At the 2010 Review Conference
of the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty

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The NPT has in many ways been a remarkably successful multilateral effort. Today, forty years after the treaty entered into force, the states parties are almost as many as the members of the United Nations, making the treaty the most widely adhered to multilateral disarmament agreement in history. Among other things, the NPT provides the basis for the very important work of the IAEA, exemplified by the thousands of extensive inspections carried out by the agency in a great number of countries every year. Thanks to the NPT, non-proliferation has become a global norm.

Yet, the NPT has been under critical stress for a number of years. The proliferation of nuclear weapons and the capabilities to deliver them over long distances is an issue that is increasingly being recognized as one of the key challenges confronting the international community and one of the most difficult to solve.

The purpose of the eighth NPT Review Conference is to chart the course for next five years or more. Recent developments, including the conclusion of the new START agreement of the Russian Federation and the United States, United Nations Security Council Resolution 1887, the Nuclear Security Summit held last month in Washington D.C., as well as the renewed commitment of the United States to seeking to ratify the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and initiate negotiations on a Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty, have set the stage for progress to be made.

We must now move beyond the stalemate that held up our last review conference five years ago. The outcome of this conference needs to demonstrate that the parties as a whole are willing to assume their full responsibility to uphold the treaty for the benefit of all. We need to make progress on a balanced review of each of the three pillars to the treaty, non-proliferation, peaceful uses of nuclear energy and safeguards and nuclear disarmament. On the whole, we need to aim at strengthening and reaffirming the NPT, bearing in mind that this treaty is the cornerstone of the broader NPT-regime.

To realize that goal it is essential to ensure strict compliance with existing non-proliferation obligations. We share the concerns that many have expressed in this regard about the Democratic Peoples Republic of Korea and the Islamic Republic of Iran and call upon both

states to meet their obligations consistent with United Nations Security Council resolutions and agreements of the IAEA.

Iran's nuclear activities are also a matter of regional security. Iceland supports efforts by states to make progress towards a zone free of weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East, in conformity with the NPT resolution of 1995.

The NPT gives clear expression to the inalienable right of all parties to the Treaty to develop research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. Reliable supplies of energy are vital for sustainable development and more and more countries are considering nuclear energy as a means of meeting their energy requirements.

We are all aware of the view that there is an inherent weakness in the NPT, namely, that it gives scope for countries to acquire technologies that bring them to the very brink of nuclear weapons capability without explicitly violating the agreement. We must all seek the common ground on how to respond to a State's withdrawal from the Treaty. Leaving the NPT must not be without consequences for the state concerned.

As we begin our important work at this conference, Iceland hopes that the momentum created by the new START agreement and other recent developments in the area of nuclear disarmament will help bring us closer to the eventual elimination of all nuclear weapons, as envisaged in Article VI of the NPT. This would be the greatest service our conference could render to the cause of international peace and security and the fittest way of honouring the basic purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations.