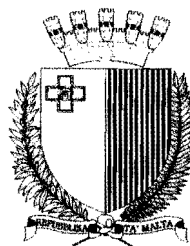


MALTA



Statement by

H.E. Mr. Saviour F. Borg

Ambassador

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to the United Nations

General Debate of the

**2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty
on the Non-Proliferation Nuclear Weapons (NPT)**

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Mr. President,

I would like to join other delegations that preceded me to extend to you my Delegation's congratulations on your assumption to chair this important Review Conference and to assure you of our full support and cooperation in your endeavours to bring this Review Conference to a successful conclusion.

Malta aligns itself with the statement delivered by the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, on behalf of the European Union last Monday 3 May 2010.

Mr. President,

Since becoming a Member of the United Nations in 1964, Malta has committed itself to the multilateral treaty system which also provides the legal and normative basis for all non-proliferation efforts. As a State Party to the NPT, the centrepiece of the nuclear non-proliferation regime, Malta therefore strongly encourages and supports all practical steps to achieve nuclear disarmament. Malta is convinced that the strengthening of the NPT regime is achievable through a balanced and gradual approach to its three mutually reinforcing pillars: non-proliferation, disarmament and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

The Review Conference provides us with an opportunity to build upon the historic agreements reached and the commitments made in 1995 and in 2000 respectively on the indefinite extension of the NPT and on a Programme of Action based on the "13 Practical Steps" towards global nuclear disarmament, in accordance with Article VI of the NPT, both adopted by consensus at the Review Conferences. Implementing the "13 Practical Steps" remain the benchmark for nuclear disarmament.

At the same time, the lack of substantive agreement at the 2005 Review Conference should not make us shy away from tough and unresolved challenges to the integrity and effectiveness of the NPT. The issue of non-compliance by States Parties to the NPT and the problems faced by compliance and enforcement provisions of the NPT must be addressed seriously and comprehensively during the next four weeks.

Mr. President,

The proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery are a growing threat to international peace and security. The danger inherent in the possibility that these weapons fall into the hands of non-state actors, armed groups and terrorists, adds a new critical dimension to this threat. WMD and missile proliferation put at risk the security of our countries, our peoples. Meeting this challenge must therefore be the central element in our collective external action. Malta is fully adhering to the provisions of UN Security Council Resolution 1540 (2004) as well as the Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Terrorism and to the thirteen Conventions on Counter-Terrorism. We urge other countries that are not yet Parties to these Conventions to do so as soon as possible.

Malta will continue to sustain all efforts and measures aimed at consolidating and strengthening the NPT. In this context, Malta strongly supports the call for the universalisation of the NPT and calls on the non-State Parties to reconsider their position and accede to the Treaty as non-nuclear-weapon States Parties without any conditions.

We fully support the right of peaceful uses of nuclear energy as long as the interested States effectively adhere to the applicable provisions and obligations provided for by the NPT in Articles I, II, III and IV as well as the provisions of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). On similar lines, Malta encourages the universalisation of the IAEA Additional Protocol as the standard safeguards and verification regime.

All delegations should aim to achieve the overall objective of a world free from nuclear weapons. No efforts for this objective should be spared. Greater and deeper cutbacks are needed. In this regard, Malta encourages the inclusion of tactical and non-strategic nuclear weapons in verifiable and irreversible disarmament initiatives, a drastic reduction of warheads that are still operationally deployed, and the marginalisation by nuclear States of the role of nuclear weapons from their strategic postures.

Mr. President,

A building block of nuclear disarmament and a prime objective of the NPT is the CTBT. Along with the other EU Member States, as well as with other countries, Malta has supported the affirmation of the critical importance of the early entry into force of the CTBT. Malta also urges all States, pending its entry into force, to maintain a moratorium on nuclear tests explosions and to refrain from any actions which are contrary to the obligations and provisions of the CTBT. The cessation of nuclear weapons test explosions is a meaningful step in the realisation of a systematic process to achieve nuclear disarmament.

Negotiations on a FMCT are long overdue. Malta attaches a clear priority to the commencement in the Conference on Disarmament of negotiations without preconditions on a FMCT including verification provisions as a means to strengthen disarmament and non-proliferation. The banning of the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices will constitute a significant achievement to nuclear disarmament efforts in accordance with article VI of the NPT. We therefore urge the Members of the CD to redouble their efforts to advance the process for the much-awaited early conclusion of a FMCT which is essential for regional and global peace, security, arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation and stability.

The CTBT and the FMCT are indispensable steps towards the fulfilment of the obligations and final objectives enshrined in Article VI of the NPT.

Mr. President,

UN General Assembly resolutions have repeatedly reaffirmed the primary role of the Mediterranean countries in strengthening peace, security and cooperation in the Mediterranean region, and that security in the Mediterranean is closely linked to European security as well as to international peace and security. Given Malta's traditional vocation and its geo-strategic position, it is only logical that Malta attaches great importance to disarmament and non-proliferation in the Mediterranean region. It is an acknowledged fact that the causes of tension and persistent problems in parts of the Mediterranean hinder efforts to strengthen security and cooperation in the region. Today, on the eve of this important Review Conference, Malta would like to strongly urge all the Mediterranean countries to make that extra effort needed to create the necessary conditions for strengthening confidence-building measures in the region, including in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation.

In this context, Malta would like to call for concrete and practical measures for the implementation of the resolution on the Middle East adopted at the 1995 NPT Review Conference, which includes a call for a Middle East Nuclear Weapon Free Zone (NWFZ). Pending the establishment of such a zone, it is of vital importance that all nuclear activities and facilities are placed under IAEA safeguards. Malta also extends its support to the already established Nuclear Weapon Free Zones and encourages other countries to establish similar zones in other regions of the world on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at among States of the region concerned.

Mr. President,

Malta welcomes the adoption of UN Security Council resolution 1887 (2009) on Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Nuclear Disarmament and the Communiqué adopted by the Washington Nuclear Security Summit held in Washington last month. Malta believes that these are important

outcomes as they renew a critical momentum in the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons as well as global arms control and disarmament.

Mr. President,

Being a small country does not mean that our interest in the process of disarmament and non-proliferation is non-existent or negligible. On the contrary, the realities facing humankind today make it the more imperative that small states like Malta, shorn of armaments and related military technologies, find protection under the disarmament treaty regimes. Like the majority of countries, Malta's security lies in the United Nations and its Treaty Bodies, including those that provide arms control mechanisms on weapons of mass destruction and conventional weapons. Malta's approach to disarmament is guided by its belief that multilateral cooperation serves the interest of all States, large and small, nuclear weapons States and non-nuclear weapons States. This is particularly more so in the case of smaller States. Malta, being a small state lacking military power and with a historical experience of suffering the devastation and horror of two World Wars, remains convinced that the multilateral regime of disarmament and non-proliferation treaties and agreements is the path towards international peace and security.

Mr. President,

It is our responsibility to keep and step up this momentum in our efforts to translate the frequently coined phrase "*a world free of nuclear weapons*" into concrete reality. We all recognise that the path ahead of us is not free from challenges. Notwithstanding, Malta expresses its hope that the 2010 NPT Review Conference will result in the strengthening of the centrepiece of the non-proliferation regime and as a key instrument for the security of all States without exception.

Thank you.