2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

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President: Mr. Bugajski (Vice-President). . . . . (Poland)

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In the absence of Ms. Feroukhi, Mr. Bugajski (Poland), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m.

General debate (*continued*)

1. **Ms. Bird** (Australia), speaking on behalf of a group of States concerned about the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons, said that it was precisely such concerns, combined with a desire to create a peaceful world for future generations, that underpinned the advocacy for effective progress on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, particularly through the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

2. Despite the significant reductions made in the number of nuclear weapons worldwide since the end of the cold war, it was regrettable that more than 16,000 nuclear warheads still existed, many of them on high-alert status, and that, moreover, some nuclear-weapon States continued to produce new nuclear weapons. All States should resolutely and urgently fulfil their disarmament commitments and work to ensure that nuclear weapons were not used and did not proliferate. The elimination of such weapons was possible only through substantive and constructive engagement with nuclear-weapon States.

3. Creating the conditions that would facilitate further major reductions in nuclear arsenals and their eventual elimination would require the global community's cooperation in addressing the important security and humanitarian aspects of nuclear weapons. It would also require efforts to reduce tension between States — which was running particularly high between nuclear-weapon States — and to pursue confidence-building measures, such as enhanced transparency on existing nuclear arsenals and a reduced role for nuclear weapons in military doctrines.

4. Non-proliferation and disarmament should be advanced as mutually reinforcing processes. Practical contributions to such processes would include breaking the stalemate in the Conference on Disarmament; beginning negotiations on a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices (fissile material cut-off treaty); and bringing into force the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. Nuclear-weapon States must make further cuts in their nuclear arsenals as soon as possible; de-alert nuclear warheads; and reduce the role and significance of nuclear weapons in their defence doctrines. They should also commit to cease production of any new nuclear weapons. The powers of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in matters of inspection, verification and reporting on global proliferation risks must also be strengthened. In that connection, she welcomed initiatives to develop a better understanding of the complexities of international nuclear disarmament verification.

5. As stipulated in article VI of the Treaty, a multilateral framework on general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control would have to be negotiated to underpin a world without nuclear weapons. Nonetheless, practical measures must still be taken in order to achieve a world free of nuclear weapons.

6. **Mr. Alotaibi** (Kuwait) said that during the five years since the 2010 Review Conference, the nuclear-weapon States had persisted in maintaining that nuclear weapons were necessary for deterrence and security. The rest of the States parties continued to aspire to a world free of nuclear weapons, which they hoped could be achieved through implementation of the commitments made at previous Review Conferences, regional efforts to establish nuclear-weapon-free zones, and new initiatives such as the conferences on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons. The nuclear-weapon States must work to reduce their arsenals in accordance with their international commitments and bilateral agreements, and to provide non-nuclear-weapon States with assurances against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons on the basis of a binding international agreement.

7. There continued to be obstacles to the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, despite the 1995 resolution calling for the establishment of such a zone, and despite the recommendation in the Final Document of the 2010 Review Conference for a conference on implementation of that resolution to be held by the end of 2012. The Arab States had shown great flexibility in their efforts to convene that conference, but it had been postponed unilaterally without them being consulted. He called on the Secretary-General of the United Nations to convene that conference within 180 days of approval of the final document of the present Review Conference.

8. Technology transfer for peaceful uses of nuclear energy helped developing countries achieve their development goals. His country had a number of technology-transfer projects planned in cooperation with IAEA. His delegation welcomed the framework agreement reached on the Iranian nuclear programme, and called on the Islamic Republic of Iran to cooperate fully and transparently with IAEA, with a view to reassuring the other peoples of the region and reaching a final agreement by the end of June 2015.

9. **Mr. Perera** (Sri Lanka) said that although the 2010 Review Conference had been hailed as a breakthrough at the time, its aftermath had proven to be no different from any of the others. Nuclear disarmament had stalled, peaceful uses of nuclear energy continued to face obstacles in many developing countries, and non-proliferation was honoured more in the breach than in the observance; in fact, it was moving in the wrong direction in one or two regions.

10. Like the other States parties, Sri Lanka believed in the inalienable right to peaceful uses of nuclear energy provided for in article VI of the Treaty. It was regrettable that the obligation to negotiate in good faith to achieve the goal of the total elimination of nuclear weapons remained unfulfilled despite the 1996 advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice on the legality of the threat or use of nuclear weapons. The 13 steps for nuclear disarmament agreed to at the 2000 Review Conference remained unachieved. A fundamental shift in the mindset of reliance on nuclear weapons was necessary if the goals of the Treaty were to be reached.

11. His country was taking steps to ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty as soon as possible, and was studying an additional protocol to its safeguards agreement with IAEA to determine the benefits it offered in the area of verification. In an era when nuclear material and technology reaching the hands of non-State actors was a distinct possibility, the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material and the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism were centrepieces of the legal architecture for nuclear security.

12. His delegation welcomed the new paradigm in the nuclear discourse that stressed the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons. It also welcomed progress in the negotiations over the Iranian nuclear programme, and reiterated its support for efforts by Iran to develop nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. He hoped that the planned conference on establishing a zone free of weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East would take place in the near future. He also wished to highlight the work of the Weeramantry International Centre for Peace, Education and Research, established by Judge Weeramantry, a national of Sri Lanka and a former Vice-President of the International Court of Justice. The Centre had undertaken a series of measures to promote peace and disarmament education, particularly among school children.

13. **Mr. Ibrahim** (Malaysia) said that in the 20 years since the bargain that had resulted in the indefinite extension of the Treaty in 1995, nuclear-weapon States had not exhibited the same urgency in pursuing the disarmament pillar as they had in pursuing the non-proliferation pillar, whether inside or outside the Treaty framework. He hoped that they would stop harping on the need to accelerate non-proliferation while at the same time ignoring their disarmament obligations under article VI, because nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation were two sides of the same coin. The perennial imbalance could soon lead to a situation where non-proliferation non-compliance existed as a result of disarmament non-compliance. His delegation reiterated its call for implementation of the three pillars of the Treaty in a balanced and non-discriminatory manner, and stressed the importance of negative security assurances.

14. His country was encouraged that the international discourse on nuclear disarmament was being broadened to include the humanitarian perspective, as evidenced by the Oslo, Nayarit, Mexico, and Vienna conferences on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons. It welcomed the framework agreement reached on the Iranian nuclear programme, and hoped that it would lead to a long-term comprehensive solution.

15. Malaysia was a strong advocate of nuclear-weapon-free zones and, as Chair of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), it hoped to seize the momentum generated by the twentieth anniversary of the Southeast Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty to encourage the five nuclear-weapon States to sign the Protocol to that Treaty, ideally, without reservations. If reservations proved necessary, as had been the case with other such treaties, it would be up to ASEAN to determine whether those reservations were logical and reasonable and did not run counter to the Treaty. He called for a nuclear-weapon-free zone to be established

in the Middle East without delay, and for the planned conference on implementation of the 1995 resolution on the Middle East to be convened as soon as possible.

16. His delegation reaffirmed its full confidence in IAEA, which must be afforded the time and space to conduct its activities within its mandate independently. It remained perplexed, however, that States outside the Treaty regime continued to benefit from the kind of technology transfer that was supposed to take place only within the framework of the IAEA safeguards system. Such discrimination and lack of transparency only served to undermine the Treaty.

17. **Mr. Otto** (Palau) said that as the first nation to have adopted a constitution banning nuclear weapons and as a Pacific island nation that had experienced the catastrophic and ongoing humanitarian consequences of more than 300 nuclear test explosions, Palau had a particular interest in achieving a world free of nuclear weapons. It stood in solidarity with the Marshall Islands in its legal proceedings before the International Court of Justice aimed at obliging the nuclear-armed States to fulfil their legal obligation to disarm. Palau was within striking distance of nuclear warheads from an unfriendly nation. It was unacceptable that 45 years after the Treaty's entry into force more than 15,000 nuclear weapons remained in existence, threatening human survival and the planet's fragile ecosystems.

18. While the Treaty had been largely successful in preventing the spread of nuclear weapons to new States, very little had been done in respect of disarmament. His delegation was deeply concerned that all five nuclear-weapon States parties to the Treaty continued to invest heavily in modernizing their nuclear arsenals. Given such challenges, he commended the Norwegian, Mexican and Austrian Governments for hosting three major conferences to examine the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons and to build global support for a treaty banning them completely.

19. Palau endorsed the pledge made by the Austrian Government in 2014 at the Vienna Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons to launch a diplomatic process in order to negotiate and adopt a treaty banning nuclear weapons. Such an achievement would fill the existing gap in international law and help to advance nuclear disarmament. Negotiations should begin in time for the seventieth anniversary of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombings; he urged all States that had not yet done so to endorse that same pledge. Furthermore, Palau supported the proposal by the New Agenda Coalition to devote substantial time at the current Review Conference, in the work of Main Committee I, to discussing effective measures to ban and eliminate nuclear weapons.

20. A nuclear-weapon-ban treaty would complement the Non-Proliferation Treaty and other related treaties, including the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and the various regional nuclear-weapon-free-zone treaties. The negotiations should proceed even if the nuclear-armed States and some of their nuclear-dependent allies refused to participate. It was important to establish a clear legal norm against the use and possession of such weapons. Palau supported a negotiating process that was open to all States and blockaded by none. A process similar to those that had led to the successful adoption of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction and the Convention on Cluster Munitions would be the most likely to achieve the desired result.

21. **Mr. Aisi** (Papua New Guinea) said that the total and irreversible elimination of nuclear weapons must continue to be a top priority for the United Nations, consistent with its Charter. Indeed, the continued existence of a large number of nuclear weapons posed a serious threat to international peace and security and to the very survival of humanity.

22. He echoed the concerns regarding the meagre progress made towards disarmament since the 2010 Review Conference. The investment by nuclear-weapon States in the modernization of their nuclear arsenals with the clear intention of retaining them for decades to come ran counter to their obligations under article VI of the Treaty.

23. Such regrettable developments notwithstanding, the international community's recent focus on the humanitarian impacts of nuclear weapons had brought much needed momentum to the discussions on nuclear disarmament. His delegation endorsed the pledge made by the Austrian Government at the Vienna Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons, held in December 2014, to cooperate with relevant stakeholders in efforts to fill the legal gap for the prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons. Finally, it reiterated the call made at the second such conference, held in Nayarit, Mexico, in February 2014 and again at the Vienna Conference, to start the

diplomatic process to negotiate a legally binding instrument prohibiting nuclear weapons. Having already established a number of regional nuclear-weapon-free zones, including in the South Pacific, it was now time for a global nuclear-weapon-ban treaty.

24. His delegation welcomed the recent dialogue between Iran and the five permanent members of the Security Council and Germany as a positive development. It was nonetheless important to recognize and respect the sovereign right of States Members of the United Nations to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

25. As part of its international obligation to foster global efforts for nuclear non-proliferation, Papua New Guinea was working closely with the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization. Specifically, it hosted a radionuclide international monitoring station, which had recently been upgraded as part of the global network established by the United Nations to monitor and detect atmospheric and underground nuclear weapons testing.

26. Nuclear weapons posed an unacceptable threat to people everywhere. The resources invested in such weapons should be redirected to the sustainable development of humanity instead.

27. **Mr. Ramírez Carreño** (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) said that since the 2010 Review Conference, little or no progress had been achieved in nuclear disarmament and the future looked no brighter. There were currently 16,400 nuclear weapons still in existence, including some 1,800 nuclear warheads on high-alert; the majority of existing nuclear weapons were much more powerful than those used against Japan in 1945, and the nuclear-weapon States, notably the United States, planned to invest billions in modernizing their nuclear arsenals in the coming years. The policy of maintaining nuclear weapons ran counter to the undertaking set out in article IV of the Treaty.

28. It was difficult to make progress in the areas of non-proliferation and peaceful uses of nuclear energy when the nuclear-weapon States did not comply with their obligations under the disarmament pillar. The Treaty attempted to strike a balance between the aspiration and need for security of all the States parties, not just those in possession of nuclear weapons. His delegation urged the nuclear powers to resume negotiations in order to make swift progress towards eliminating such weapons.

29. Despite having acceded to a number of agreements relating to peace and nuclear non-proliferation, the States of Latin America and the Caribbean felt threatened by imminent nuclear attack. His Government called on the nuclear-weapon States to commit, once and for all, without conditions, to never use their weapons against a country in Latin America or the Caribbean or against any country in a nuclear-weapon-free zone.

30. Latin America and the Caribbean had made significant progress in promoting non-proliferation and the elimination of nuclear weapons. It was now time for non-nuclear-weapon States that depended on the nuclear security policies of other States to take the necessary steps towards the definitive elimination of nuclear weapons; those States should refuse to be part of a security doctrine that protected them through the use and threat of use of nuclear weapons, and should ban the movement of such weapons on their land and in their airspace and maritime areas. Given the horrific damage wrought by the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and to the devastating consequences of a potential future detonation, whether deliberate or accidental, it was clear that the deterrence policy defended by a few States did not justify the risk of extinction to all humanity.

31. His delegation welcomed the agreement reached by Iran and the five permanent members of the Security Council and Germany as a step towards reaffirming the sovereign right of all States to develop nuclear energy for peaceful uses. In that connection, article VI of the Treaty was a fundamental objective and must be fully implemented. The same media attention and diplomatic impetus should be afforded to the entire Middle East, particularly in respect of the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in that region.

32. Moreover, if the Western powers were truly committed to non-proliferation in the Middle East, they should comply with the undertakings made at the 1995 Review and Extension Conference and the 2000 and 2010 Review Conferences, specifically, to convene a conference on the establishment of a Middle East nuclear-weapon-free zone, without further delay. Selectivity in nuclear non-proliferation policies only served to erode the foundation of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. Further, the extremely tense political-military situation in the Middle East made it all the more important to send a clear signal to the region by convening the conference as a preliminary step towards peace.

33. He called on the Government of Israel — the only State in the Middle East that was not a party to the Treaty and had not expressed an intention to become one — to renounce its nuclear weapons, accede immediately and without conditions to the Non-Proliferation Treaty, and to place all its facilities under the supervision of IAEA. The possession of nuclear arms by Israel was a serious and permanent threat to its neighbouring countries and to the region as a whole; it bred suspicion and distrust and hampered cooperation.

34. **Ms. Murmokaitė** (Lithuania) said that real progress on nuclear disarmament and compliance with obligations under the Non-Proliferation Treaty would encourage peaceful uses of nuclear energy and help to address human and economic development needs. Her delegation supported global efforts on multilateral building blocks for achieving effective, verifiable and irreversible nuclear disarmament, but did not share the view that creating new structures for negotiation could help to overcome existing differences. The two next logical steps towards the elimination of nuclear weapons would be the early entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and the start of negotiations for a fissile material cut-off treaty. Regional peace, security and trust would render nuclear deterrence obsolete. Her delegation deplored the recent revival of nuclear rhetoric by one nuclear-weapon State in support of its political goals.

35. While proliferation challenges continued to threaten international stability, it was regrettable that the goal of a Middle East free of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems had not yet been reached. She commended the efforts of the facilitator to convene the proposed Helsinki conference as early as possible. Her delegation welcomed the prospect of a comprehensive diplomatic solution to the Iranian nuclear issue, and called on Iran to cooperate with IAEA on all outstanding issues, including those with possible military dimensions. Lithuania condemned the outright violations by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea of its international obligations, notably those contained in Security Council resolutions 1718 (2006), 1874 (2009), 2087 (2013) and 2094 (2013), and urged that country to abandon its nuclear weapons and ballistic missile programmes, return to the Treaty, and comply with IAEA safeguards.

36. It had been 20 years since Ukraine had joined the Treaty as a non-nuclear State, relinquishing what had been at the time the world's third-largest nuclear arsenal, in exchange for the guarantees against the use or threat of force contained in the Budapest Memorandum on Security Assurances. By illegally occupying Crimea and destabilizing eastern Ukraine, the Russian Federation had breached its obligations under the Memorandum, the Charter of the United Nations, and the principles of international law. Her Government condemned those actions in the strongest possible terms and urged the Russian Federation to respect the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine, and the denuclearized status of Crimea.

37. The inalienable right to peaceful uses of nuclear energy must go hand in hand with the responsibility to abide by non-proliferation obligations. Universalization of IAEA additional protocols combined with adherence to full-scope safeguards had prevented the significant spread of nuclear weapons. Planned or existing nuclear projects must meet the highest standards of safety and transparency in order to build trust, in particular with neighbouring countries. The growth in civil applications of nuclear power, in addition to the risk of non-State actors gaining access to nuclear weapons, made IAEA verification and safeguards more important than ever. The Nuclear Security Summits held in Washington, Seoul and The Hague had laid a framework of far-reaching initiatives to reduce the threat of nuclear terrorism and secure vulnerable nuclear material.

38. **Mr. Hilale** (Morocco) said that with terrorism on the rise, notably in the Middle East and the Sahelo-Saharan region, it was essential to strengthen disarmament mechanisms, and in particular the Conference on Disarmament. States must exhibit the political will to fulfil all their commitments under the Treaty and the Review Conferences. Nuclear weapons must not be viewed as security guarantees or instruments for regional or international stability. Despite the irreversible impact their use would have on the environment and human life, nuclear weapons remained the only weapons of mass destruction not subject to a universal ban. His delegation welcomed the recent conferences on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons, and deplored the delay in the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty.

39. He reaffirmed the need to respect the inalienable right of States to peaceful uses of nuclear energy. The ability of IAEA to promote such uses for development purposes should therefore be strengthened and that Agency's Technical Cooperation Programme should receive adequate and predictable funding. His

Government welcomed the recent framework agreement on the Iranian nuclear programme, which had shown that dialogue and diplomacy could be an effective option for resolving disputes.

40. The Non-Proliferation Treaty must be universalized, and all States must conclude comprehensive safeguards agreements with IAEA. His Government called on all States of the Middle East to join the Treaty regime and to sign comprehensive safeguards agreements with IAEA. In that connection, it welcomed the accession to the Treaty by the State of Palestine, which it hoped would advance the cause of ridding the region of weapons of mass destruction. He regretted, however, that despite the efforts of the facilitator, the planned conference on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction had not been convened.

41. Lastly, the success of the current Review Conference rested on agreement on concrete actions for the balanced implementation of the three pillars of the Treaty. Simply reiterating commitments already made would not be sufficient, and bold new measures were needed to preserve the credibility of the Treaty.

42. **Mr. Meza-Cuadra** (Peru) said that there were two well-defined positions on disarmament and non-proliferation: one group of States sought to justify its possession of nuclear weapons by referring to its security needs and tended to stress strict compliance with the non-proliferation regime established by the Treaty; the other group called for the verifiable elimination of nuclear weapons. Those two groups had to find common ground at the 2015 Review Conference.

43. Peru was convinced that reductions in nuclear arsenals would strengthen the Treaty and, in that connection, welcomed the implementation of the New START Treaty by the United States and the Russian Federation and urged them to resume negotiations in order to make progress on the basis of the principles of irreversibility, verifiability and transparency. He likewise welcomed the framework agreement recently reached by Iran with the five permanent members of the Security Council and Germany as a major step towards global stability. Peru called for universal adherence to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and urged those States that had not yet done so, especially the Annex 2 States, to ratify it without delay.

44. His delegation shared the concern of many that the Non-Proliferation Treaty had no specific provisions relating to the possible acquisition of nuclear technology by non-State actors, with potentially dangerous consequences. It supported proposals aimed at increasing the security of nuclear materials and facilities through compliance with and strengthening of existing international obligations, including Security Council resolution 1540 (2004); at developing capacities for detection and investigation; at improving the sharing of information between States; and at establishing an effective verification mechanism. It was also crucial to strengthen the IAEA safeguards regime; he urged all States to sign an additional protocol to their respective safeguards agreements with the Agency.

45. Peru benefited from IAEA cooperation in the peaceful use of nuclear energy, for instance, in the medical sector. It supported the decision to open an IAEA office in Monaco to address the important topic of ocean acidification. It was of the utmost importance to increase funding for the Technical Cooperation Programme, and to ensure that such resources were secure and predictable so that developing countries could harness nuclear energy for peaceful purposes.

46. Although the right of States parties to withdraw from treaties was guaranteed under international law, it was problematic when a State party to the Non-Proliferation Treaty developed suspicious nuclear technology, supposedly in exercise of its right to develop peaceful uses of nuclear technology, and then sought to withdraw from the Treaty in order to avoid verification of its compliance with its non-proliferation obligations. Peru was open to all constructive proposals aimed at dealing with such situations strictly within the framework of international law.

47. A signatory to the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (Treaty of Tlatelolco), Peru also supported the conclusion of a legally binding instrument to prohibit and eliminate nuclear weapons on the basis of a multilaterally agreed time frame.

48. **Mr. Shava** (Zimbabwe) said that the urgent need for the total elimination of nuclear weapons must remain the highest priority of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, although it was also important to simultaneously pursue the three mutually reinforcing pillars of the Treaty. Indeed, without those weapons, there would be no proliferation, or need to use them. Nuclear-weapon States should honestly fulfil their legal obligations under article VI of the Treaty and be seen to

be providing leadership towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons, in accordance with the principles of transparency, irreversibility and international verifiability.

49. Zimbabwe recognized the nuclear reductions that had taken place thus far and applauded the nuclear-weapon States that continued to pursue such reductions. However, such reductions could not replace the total elimination of nuclear weapons. That existing nuclear weapons were reportedly being modernized was a cause for concern, because that modernization would not make them safe or secure, but rather sharpen their destructive capabilities.

50. The greatest responsibility for nuclear disarmament lay with nuclear-weapon States. Such States that were not party to the Treaty had an equally important role to play in the pursuit of a world without nuclear weapons. It was therefore imperative to engage in candid, honest dialogue with them. While it was important for countries outside the Treaty to join as non-nuclear weapon States, nuclear weapons remained a danger to humankind regardless of who possessed them. The indefinite extension of the Treaty in 1995 was not as a sign of success, but a warning that the world was increasingly sliding into the danger zone.

51. Nuclear-weapon States must continue to provide concrete legally binding security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States. Efforts must be strengthened in pursuit of a nuclear-weapons convention that will outlaw the possession of those deadly weapons, which would undoubtedly increase pressure for the dismantling of existing nuclear arsenals. The immediate entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty would enhance confidence among States, and its ratification by the remaining Annex 2 States must be a priority.

52. All States had an inalienable right to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) should ensure transparency and fairness as it considered various cases across the globe. As the chief nuclear watchdog, IAEA must never be seen to be biased towards some while seemingly being lenient or demonstrating reluctance to rein in others. The recently concluded framework for a comprehensive agreement on the Iranian nuclear programme under negotiation was welcome. The creation of zones free of nuclear weapons must remain a top priority of the Non-Proliferation Treaty as a confidence-building measure toward the total elimination of nuclear weapons. Africa had taken the bold step to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone, under the African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty (Treaty of Pelindaba). Focused and serious discussions should be held to allow a conference on a zone free of nuclear weapons in the Middle East to be convened.

53. The current international system was riddled with growing tensions, particularly major power rivalries. The world's most powerful countries should engage in honest political dialogue aimed at eliminating those tensions and laying the groundwork for the peaceful resolution of disputes. Only when there was mutual trust and confidence in one another could there be meaningful and realistic efforts towards nuclear disarmament.

54. **Mr. Mendonça e Moura** (Portugal) said that the action plan contained in the Final Document of the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT/CONF.2010/50 (Vol. I)) remained a valid benchmark upon which to build in discussions and prospects for the near future. In that connection, Portugal had submitted to the Conference its report on the national implementation of the action plan.

55. Strengthening all three pillars of the Treaty, including by promoting its universalization and credibility, was a crucial task that required further collective engagement. The difficulties encountered in that process must serve as a strong encouragement to redouble efforts and renew the determination and political will to achieve the goal of a world free of nuclear weapons, in which nuclear resources were available exclusively for civil purposes. All three pillars of the Treaty must be simultaneously pursued and advanced in a balanced way, so as to benefit from mutually reinforcing synergies.

56. Portugal fully shared the frustration expressed by other States on the slow pace of progress on nuclear disarmament. The ongoing international debate, including in the framework of the three relevant international conferences on the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of the intentional or accidental use of nuclear weapons, was relevant, and Portugal followed with great interest the evolving approaches to that issue. Effective, verifiable and irreversible nuclear disarmament was indeed a key to preventing all such catastrophic consequences. A step-by-step, building-block approach offered the most practical and realistic strategy for achieving that common objective. However, that

approach must include concrete steps and could not be an excuse for any type of stagnation or maintenance of the status quo.

57. The obligations contained in article VI of the Treaty should be fulfilled through all appropriate measures, including further reductions of nuclear arsenals, de-alerting measures, entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, and the start of negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty, involving all States that wished to participate in the negotiations. In addition, enlargement of the membership of the Conference on Disarmament would help to overcome its long-lasting stagnation, and no valid argument for opposing that enlargement had been advanced to date.

58. Portugal was concerned about the proliferation activities that had been reported over the last five years and therefore called on North Korea to definitively abandon its nuclear programme and fully comply with the Treaty framework as a non-nuclear State, and urged Syria to fully cooperate with IAEA. Nonetheless, it welcomed the agreement on the key parameters of a joint comprehensive plan of action on the Iranian nuclear programme, which confirmed that diplomacy offered the best option for resolving differences, no matter how far apart the starting point was. Further efforts should be made to ensure that a final agreement was reached by the end of June 2015.

59. The full implementation of the IAEA comprehensive safeguards regime by all States would greatly contribute to a world free of nuclear weapons. Comprehensive safeguards agreements and additional protocols were the current verification standard and any breach thereof meant a breach of article III and deprivation of the rights guaranteed by article IV. The proposal by the Director General of IAEA of a State-level approach to safeguards was a very positive development for the understanding of safeguards and for ensuring undiminished security for all. Export control mechanisms and negative security assurances were also important.

60. Portugal regretted the failure to convene a conference on a Middle East zone free of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems and called on all States of the region and the co-conveners to ensure that it would take place soon. All parties to the Treaty had an inalienable right to develop research, production and use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, without discrimination and in conformity with articles I, II and III of the Treaty, in order to achieve a world free of nuclear weapons. The discussion of nuclear-energy-related issues, in particular global safety and security concerns, should be kept strictly within an inclusive multilateral framework, without ignoring the prime role of the States.

61. There was a need for further work on a common understanding of the content of article X regarding a State party's right of withdrawal from the Treaty; the Security Council had an important role to play in addressing promptly any notice of such withdrawal.

62. **Mr. Al-Hammadi** (Qatar) said that his delegation wished to congratulate the State of Palestine on its accession to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, which constituted the cornerstone of the global non-proliferation regime. Although the outcomes of previous Review Conferences and the three conferences on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons, held in Oslo in 2013, and in Nayarit, Mexico, and Vienna in 2014, had underscored the global community's conviction of the grave danger posed by nuclear weapons. Nuclear-weapon States continued to upgrade the operational readiness of their nuclear arsenals, which were a source of great concern for humanity, but had become the bedrock of many nuclear-weapon States' strategic doctrines. They should therefore put into effect the 13 practical steps toward disarmament contained in the Final Document of the 2000 Review Conference (NPT/CONF.2000/28) and the concrete steps contained in the action plan on nuclear disarmament adopted by the 2010 Review Conference (NPT/CONF.2010/50 (Vol. I)), to make a significant contribution to global efforts to promote comprehensive nuclear disarmament, in accordance with article VI of the Treaty.

63. In an advisory opinion on the legality of the threat or use of nuclear weapons, issued in 1996, the International Court of Justice had ruled that the threat or use of nuclear weapons was contrary to the principles and rules of humanitarian law. Until the five nuclear-weapon States adopted concrete measures for the elimination of their nuclear weapons, and put in place mechanisms for the implementation of those measures within a defined time frame, credible security assurances prohibiting the threat or use of nuclear weapons would continue to be needed.

64. The establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones could play a crucial role in safeguarding international peace and security. Furthermore, effective international arrangements to provide assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States that they would not be subjected to the threat or use of nuclear weapons should be adopted. States parties should conclude safeguards agreements with IAEA, as required under article III of the Treaty.

65. The Treaty affirmed that States had an inalienable right to benefit from the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. It was therefore incumbent on the international community to uphold that right rather than seeking to circumscribe its applicability. To that end, the Qatari delegation called for the elaboration of mechanisms to promote the peaceful uses of nuclear energy in full compliance with States' comprehensive safeguards agreements with IAEA and for the Agency to be provided with the support it needed to conduct its inspection and verification activities effectively. Moreover, all States developing nuclear energy programmes must adopt confidence-building measures to reassure the international community that their programmes were peaceful in nature.

66. All Arab States had acceded to the Treaty and endorsed its indefinite extension. They also fully supported the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East. Failure to convene a conference in 2012 on the establishment of that zone was a matter of deep concern, as was the decision to postpone that conference indefinitely. Unless the current Review Conference formulated a credible mechanism for the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East within a clear time frame, the sincerity and willingness of the international community to fulfil its obligations in the area of non-proliferation, and the very credibility of the Treaty, would increasingly be called into question.

67. **Mr. Mathews** (Australia), speaking on behalf of the Vienna Group of Ten, said that the Group convened prior to each Treaty meeting with a view to encouraging discussion and substantive progress on what had traditionally been referred to as the "Vienna issues", namely, peaceful uses of nuclear energy; nuclear safety, security and safeguards; export controls; nuclear testing; and, since 2015, withdrawal from the Treaty, given the inherent risks it posed to non-proliferation. The Group believed that the Treaty fundamentally contributed to international peace and security and was committed to its universalization. The Treaty played a unique role in providing a framework that fostered international confidence and cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, and was built on three equally important and mutually reinforcing pillars.

68. Although the Treaty was being undermined by slow progress on the implementation of nuclear disarmament commitments, lack of universality and a number of pressing non-compliance challenges, it was still highly relevant. Full implementation of the Treaty was essential to facilitating the use of nuclear applications in a growing range of areas, including human health, water management, agriculture and environmental protection. Over 140 States members of the International Atomic Energy Agency had sought or received assistance from IAEA to that end.

69. Although there had been some solid progress on the items contained in the action plan from the 2010 Review Conference relating to the "Vienna issues", particularly regarding the high-level focus on and practical steps towards nuclear safety and security, more work remained to be done.

70. While the Vienna Group of Ten was made up of broadly likeminded countries, its membership was diverse, comprising nuclear-weapon States, uranium exporters and non-nuclear-weapon States, members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, the Group of 20, the European Union, the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative, and the New Agenda Coalition. The Group therefore represented a range of experiences and perspectives that had helped to shape the carefully negotiated consensus working paper it had submitted to the Review Conference.

71. **Ms. Mindaoudou** (Niger) said that the upcoming adoption of the post-2015 development agenda should serve as inspiration for the international community in its implementation of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. As had been demonstrated at the three major conferences on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons, recently held in Austria, Mexico and Norway, no one country or organization had the means necessary to deal with the catastrophic consequences of the use of such weapons. Her delegation supported the appeals made to nuclear-weapon States to stop modernizing their nuclear weapons, to promote the non-proliferation of such weapons and to dismantle their nuclear arsenals. The indefinite extension of the Treaty was not an argument for delaying the elimination of the threat posed by nuclear weapons. Indeed, the eradication of

such weapons was the best guarantee for world security, which was increasingly compromised by risks such as cybercriminal activity.

72. The Niger was strongly attached to the promotion of international peace and security and to all three pillars of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. It had signed a safeguards agreement and an additional protocol with IAEA and had ratified the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. Within the framework of that Treaty, it hosted a primary seismic station and a national data centre on its territory and was in the process of building a radionuclide monitoring station with noble gas detection capabilities. In addition, it worked closely with the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004) and participated in the European Union Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear Risk Mitigation Centres of Excellence Initiative.

73. With regard to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, the Niger had established the High Authority on Atomic Energy to oversee the promotion and use of nuclear technology for peaceful purposes, including nuclear power and ionizing radiation. The same institution had been tasked with monitoring the implementation of all regional and international legal instruments in the field of nuclear energy.

74. Her Government was finalizing the alignment of its national institutional and legislative frameworks with international standards, with the imminent establishment of the Authority on Nuclear Security and completion of the process of ratification of the African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty (Pelindaba Treaty) and other international agreements on electrical power generation.

75. **Ms. Pajević** (Montenegro) said although many States parties, particularly the nuclear-weapon States, had made considerable efforts to fulfil their obligations under all three mutually reinforcing pillars of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, much remained to be done. Her Government welcomed the understanding reached concerning the Iranian nuclear programme, which could positively influence the outcome of the current Review Conference, and ensure that Iran was in compliance with all its obligations under the Treaty, while respecting its right to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. It hoped that a final agreement would be reached within the defined time frame, which could go a long way towards renewing trust and confidence and strengthening stability and security not only in the turbulent areas of the Middle East, but in the region as a whole.

76. Her delegation advocated universalization of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, prompt entry into force and universalization of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, and immediate commencement and early conclusion of negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty. In that context, Montenegro welcomed the constructive discussions at the meetings of the group of governmental experts and hoped that the group's report would provide guidelines for future work on a fissile material cut-off treaty. Before concluding such a treaty, however, a moratorium must be imposed immediately on the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. Universal accession to and comprehensive implementation of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention, the Chemical Weapons Convention and conventions and instruments related to conventional weapons were also of vital importance.

77. Considering that some 17,000 nuclear weapons were still in existence, it was clear that only limited progress had been made towards achieving the goal of a world without nuclear weapons. Moreover, the ongoing efforts to modernize and upgrade nuclear weapons violated the spirit of the Treaty. With the continued existence of nuclear weapons, the risk of their proliferation and the potential impact on international peace and security was a constant concern that could never be fully eliminated. She called on all States concerned to work with the facilitator and co-conveners to ensure that the planned conference on the establishment of a zone free of weapons of mass destructions in the Middle East was convened.

78. Her Government welcomed the campaign to increase awareness of the possible catastrophic humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons, including the international conferences on the topic held in Norway, Mexico and Austria. It would also continue to support a stronger IAEA safeguards system, which represented a fundamental component of the nuclear non-proliferation regime and played an essential role in the implementation of the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

79. Montenegro did its utmost to ensure that its national strategies and policies complied fully with its Treaty obligations, but also with all its other international obligations under various multilateral agreements on arms control and non-proliferation. In

that connection, it had established an effective export control system, monitoring in particular intangible technology transfers.

80. At a time of growing international uncertainty, when it was important to ensure that weapons of mass destruction and nuclear or other radioactive material did not fall into the hands of terrorists, Montenegro had adopted a national action plan for the implementation of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) concerning weapons of mass destruction, and had further strengthened its national security system in order to contribute to the international mechanisms to combat the use of such weapons. The universality of international provisions on the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction was crucial, because even small States that did not possess nuclear capabilities or industries were an important part of the security architecture that aimed to confine the use of nuclear energy to peaceful uses.

81. **Mr. Bamrungphong** (Thailand) said that a world free of nuclear weapons was an achievable goal. The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons was the cornerstone of international nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation efforts, and all States parties had a legal responsibility to uphold its provisions, including the agreement to pursue general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control. Regrettably, however, States parties had largely failed to uphold their obligations under the Treaty since its entry into force some 45 years previously. Both nuclear-weapon and non-nuclear-weapon States were responsible for that lack of progress and must work to find creative and flexible solutions with a view to creating a safer world for future generations.

82. In accordance with its obligations under article VI of the Treaty, Thailand had explored ways to advance the debate on a legal instrument to promote nuclear disarmament and, with the International Law and Policy Institute, had co-hosted, in March 2015, the Regional Roundtable on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons and the Prospects for a Ban Treaty. It hoped that the outcome of that Roundtable would help boost diplomatic efforts in that regard. His Government was committed to raising public awareness of nuclear disarmament issues and advancing the goals of the Treaty, particularly among young people. To that end, it had held a reception in 2014 to commemorate the first-ever International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons, which had included a public speaking contest for young people on the theme "A World Free of Nuclear Weapons".

83. Thailand was the depository State of the Treaty on the Southeast Asian Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone. Nuclear-weapon-free zones were important confidence-building mechanisms which should be established in all regions. It was therefore regrettable that the conference on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East had not yet been convened; he called on all relevant stakeholders to continue to work constructively and in good faith to make tangible progress on modalities that would facilitate the holding of that conference.

84. His Government was strengthening its implementation of relevant international instruments to combat nuclear proliferation, in accordance with articles I and II of the Treaty, and was committed to fulfilling its obligations under Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) on weapons of mass destruction. It participated actively in a number of international mechanisms to combat terrorism and promote security, including the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism and the Proliferation Security Initiative, and called for efforts to be made to engage all relevant stakeholders with a view to strengthening nuclear security and non-proliferation. Awareness-raising initiatives were also crucial and IAEA could play a key role in promoting capacity-building to that effect. He called for more cooperation with non-States parties to the Treaty through the exchange of best practices, sharing of lessons learned, and provision of assistance to requesting States.

85. It was important to uphold States' inalienable right to develop and use nuclear energy in a safe, secure and peaceful manner, as provided in article IV of the Treaty. Thailand appreciated the assistance it received under the IAEA Technical Cooperation Programme, and would continue to work closely with the Agency to promote the peaceful uses of nuclear technology and ensure that all its activities complied with the highest safety standards. In that regard, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations Network of Regulatory Bodies on Atomic Energy had been established in 2013 for the exchange of views and best practices on nuclear safety and security. Thailand looked forward to expanding cooperation between the Network, IAEA and other relevant bodies.

86. **Mr. Johnson** (Ghana) said that his country would continue to support implementation of the three pillars of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and promote its universality. It had benefitted from peaceful nuclear technologies in many areas, including agriculture, health, industry, human resources and the environment, and deeply appreciated the support it received from IAEA and its development partners in that regard. Ghana still required further assistance, however, so that it could more effectively use nuclear technology to promote sustainable development, including in the area of safe energy generation.

87. His Government was committed to the exclusively peaceful use of nuclear technology and called on nuclear-weapon States to completely eliminate their nuclear arsenals, the very existence of which posed a significant threat to humanity. It urged States that had not yet signed and ratified the Treaty on Non-Proliferation, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and other multilateral instruments on disarmament and non-proliferation to do so. Pending the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals, nuclear-weapon States should pursue and conclude a universal, unconditional and legally binding instrument that provided negative security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States. The international community must also negotiate a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices and sustain efforts to lower the operational readiness of existing nuclear-weapon systems.

88. His delegation welcomed the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones in certain parts of the world, including in Africa. Such zones helped to enhance the international non-proliferation regime and promote global peace and security. The delegation therefore looked forward to the convening of a conference on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction at the earliest opportunity.

89. His delegation believed that the humanitarian and environmental impact of nuclear weapons was unacceptable and warmly welcomed the convening of three conferences on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons in recent years. While the outcome document of the 2010 Review Conference had fallen short of certain aspirations of the international community, it was a significant step towards the shared goal of nuclear disarmament. Little progress had been achieved since 2010, however, making it imperative for all stakeholders to redouble their efforts to advance nuclear disarmament.

90. **Ms. Adhikari** (Nepal) said that the Government and people of Nepal were profoundly grateful for the support, sympathy and solidarity that had been extended by friendly countries and donor agencies, including the United Nations, in the wake of the tragic earthquake that had struck their country on 25 April 2015. That 7.8 magnitude earthquake had affected some 8 million people, caused the deaths of over 5,000 people, injured at least 11,000, and caused significant damage to property, infrastructure and the country's historic monuments, including World Heritage Sites. It had also undermined the country's efforts to promote development, including its efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. Many people in Nepal risked falling back into poverty, and the country would face significant challenges as it sought to rebuild and move forward.

91. The 2015 Review Conference was an important milestone in global efforts to achieve the objectives of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and a significant opportunity for States to strengthen their commitments to implement its provisions. Despite the numerous conferences that had been held and commitments made on non-proliferation and disarmament, and the ambitious action plan on nuclear disarmament that had been adopted by the 2010 Review Conference, nuclear proliferation continued apace. Every effort must be made to implement all three pillars of the Treaty, which must be seen as an integral whole; it was unacceptable to adopt a selective approach to the interrelated principles that underpinned the very essence of the Treaty regime. In that context, States must put into effect the 13 practical steps contained in the Final Document of the 2000 Review Conference (NPT/CONF.2000/28).

92. The time-bound, comprehensive and complete elimination of all biological, chemical, nuclear, and radiological weapons of mass destruction was needed to sustain global peace, and any nuclear explosion would have catastrophic, long-term consequences for both people and the planet. Ongoing nuclear proliferation efforts and the continued existence of stockpiles of nuclear warheads and their delivery systems were a matter of great concern, particularly when the world was struggling to address numerous significant challenges, including poverty, unemployment and the impact of climate change and natural disasters. Poor and

vulnerable countries, including the least developed countries, had limited resources and technological knowledge to be able to address the challenges posed by nuclear weapons. Pending their complete elimination, the international community should endeavour to enhance its preparedness to respond appropriately to both natural and nuclear disasters.

93. Nuclear-weapon States must comply fully with their disarmament obligations without delay and provide unequivocal negative security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States through a legally binding instrument. Furthermore, the international community must reject the concept of nuclear deterrence and enact a permanent ban on nuclear-weapon testing. Similarly, a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, together with an international monitoring mechanism to ensure compliance with that treaty, would be another crucial step in the international community's efforts to promote nuclear disarmament.

94. Provided they were subject to IAEA safeguards and verification mechanisms, the peaceful uses of nuclear technology could help the world achieve the sustainable development goals. Furthermore, a technical cooperation programme to facilitate the use of nuclear technology in industry, agriculture and other areas was needed and should be given priority consideration by the 2015 Review Conference. His delegation also called for the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free-zones around the world with a view to promoting global nuclear disarmament. In that regard, the resolution on the Middle East adopted at the 1995 Review and Extension Conference must be fully implemented in order to promote peace and stability in that region. Nepal also strongly opposed the weaponization of outer space, which should be used exclusively for the betterment of the global community.

The meeting rose at 12.50 p.m.