

Statement of the Republic of Cyprus
9th Review Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
(delivered by Ambassador Andreas Mavroyiannis, 28 April 2015)

Madame President, my statement complements that of the European Union to which Cyprus fully subscribes.

At the outset, allow me to add my delegation's congratulations on your appointment as Chair of the 9th NPT Review Conference and assure you of our full support and cooperation. We commend your efforts and hard work during the preparatory stage of the Conference and we are confident that you will lead it to a successful outcome.

Cyprus, a party to the NPT since 1970, is fully committed to the Treaty's letter and spirit. Like other small states, our security relies heavily on the international system of collective security, including the disarmament and arms control regime. This is why we support further strengthening of the NPT, while respecting the delicate balance among its three pillars.

We want to see the universalization of the Treaty, to achieve further reductions in nuclear arsenals and ultimately nuclear disarmament, to downgrade the role of nuclear weapons in defence and security doctrines, to explore further the long-term consequences of any use of nuclear weapons, and to see a focus on nuclear energy safety. We also stress the need to have updated early warning systems at any time concerning nuclear attacks, including mechanisms that prevent false alarm incidents from escalating.

The inalienable right of all states to engage in peaceful programs of nuclear energy comes with the responsibility to use nuclear energy with utmost caution, complete transparency, and the highest possible environmental and human safety standards. It is our common responsibility to ensure that the breakthrough achieved through nuclear technology is and remains a blessing for humanity and not part of a tragedy in the offing. In particular, States should avoid building nuclear power plants in areas of high seismicity or otherwise prone to natural disasters, especially if these areas border other States whose population is also at risk. We stress the need to have updated early warning systems concerning nuclear accidents with transboundary implications, particularly seismic early warning systems for nuclear power plants. We welcome the Vienna Declaration on Nuclear Safety adopted by the recent Diplomatic Conference but we are convinced that there are still safety and security gaps that should be addressed in the coming years.

Security in the Middle East is directly linked to the security of Cyprus. In this respect, Cyprus attaches great importance to the establishment of a Zone Free of Weapons of Mass Destruction in the Middle East. We reaffirm our continued support to the establishment of this Zone and regret that the conference on this issue has not yet been convened. We would like to commend the efforts undertaken by the co-convenors and the facilitator and encourage all states involved to engage substantially and constructively to this process.

We welcome the progress achieved thus far between Iran and the E3+3 and hope that continued constructive engagement will keep the process on track and produce a definitive agreement, addressing all concerns. Such an agreement would contribute significantly to our shared objectives.

Turning to the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, Cyprus considers its entry into force to be a top priority. Similarly, we attach great importance to the commencement of negotiations on an effectively verifiable Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty, banning the production of fissile material or other nuclear explosives, in the Conference of Disarmament in Geneva. Therefore, we encourage all parties involved to exhibit flexibility and to engage in a substantial process for an early conclusion of such a Treaty.

Currently, the non-proliferation regime faces severe challenges which necessitate international vigilance and determination. Cyprus is deeply concerned with nuclear activities taking place in a non-verifiable and transparent manner. To address these challenges we advocate for the use of peaceful and diplomatic tools, coupled with the strengthening of the IAEA's safeguards system and the universal recognition of the Agency's Additional Protocol as the verification standard.

All of us have individual and collective responsibilities towards our societies and mankind. Before us, there is an opportunity that should be seized. There is an urgent need for a positive outcome of this Review Conference, which will further contribute to the promotion of international peace and security and to the ultimate goal of *"a world free of nuclear weapons"*.

Thank you Madame President.