

SWEDEN



STATEMENT

by

**H.E. Ms. Margot Wallström
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at the

**General Debate of the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty
on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT)**

**United Nations
New York**

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Madam President,

Let me first congratulate you on assuming the important task of chairing the Review Conference. I assure you of the full cooperation of the Swedish delegation.

Sweden fully subscribes to the statement by the European Union, and I will make some additional points from a national perspective.

Last week, we commemorated 100 years since the first use of chemical weapons in Ypres; later this year, we will commemorate 70 years since the nuclear bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

These attacks using weapons of mass destruction killed and maimed hundreds of thousands of people; they destroyed the works of human hands, and devastated the environment.

How do we act now – here today – knowing as we do, that chemical weapons are still used and that more than 16 000 nuclear weapons still exist? And that nuclear weapons are ready to be launched in just a few minutes?

I would like to emphasize two points, which I believe we should keep in mind in our work ahead.

My first point is:

It is not hopeless.

Progress is possible. With persistence, courage, patience and hard work, we can achieve results.

Even if we meet against a bleak backdrop.

And even if we certainly can criticize the lack of fulfillment of commitments, in particular with regards to nuclear disarmament.

We must not forget that when there has been political will, we have made progress.

We see this in the past - with agreements on nuclear weapons reductions and disarmament treaties.

And just recently – the diplomatic negotiations on Iran’s nuclear programme. In this context, I join others in welcoming the progress achieved so far, and express support for continued efforts.

I am convinced that nuclear disarmament diplomacy is more urgent than ever.

This brings me to my second point, which is:

The heightened tensions in the world and the worsened global security environment with conflicts and terrorism, has led to an increased awareness of the risks we face.

A large number of states and individuals have realized that status quo is unsustainable.

As long as nuclear weapons exist, there is a risk that they will be used. And the consequences of their use would be catastrophic.

This realization has led to increased engagement, not least through the humanitarian initiative. We must now use this broad engagement to garner support and to push for real results in the disarmament field.

What I wish to say is this:

We must not lose hope. We cannot afford to. The risks are too high and too much is at stake. We must work tirelessly to achieve a world free of nuclear weapons.

The initiative on the humanitarian perspective on nuclear weapons has gained increased momentum, and is now supported by more than 150 States, Sweden being one of them.

Putting human beings first, at the heart of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, is key. Sweden will strive to make this a guiding principle of this Conference. It would be essential for this Conference to agree on recommendations that take the work on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons forward. Sweden and partners have produced a working paper to this end.

Madam President,

The NPT created the framework through which it has been possible to prevent the wider proliferation of nuclear weapons. The number of nuclear weapons has been reduced, and the applications of nuclear energy have benefited many.

Today, 45 years after the NPT entered into force, the grand bargain remains unfulfilled, and the promise of a world free of nuclear weapons still seems far off. Nuclear arsenals are being enhanced in some parts of the world, States are developing new vehicles for the delivery of nuclear weapons, and billions of dollars are spent annually to upgrade nuclear armaments.

Obligations under the NPT and commitments undertaken during previous Review Conferences need to be implemented with increased urgency including the unequivocal undertaking by the Nuclear Weapon States to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals.

We call for the universalisation of the NPT and welcome all new State Party accessions to the Treaty.

Together with our Nordic neighbours, Sweden has presented recommendations to the Conference on the way forward on nuclear disarmament, and together with the de-alerting group we have presented recommendations on risk reduction measures.

We have also prepared language on the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, non-proliferation, and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, together with the European Union and the Vienna Group of Ten.

Other positive contributions have been made by the New Agenda Coalition and the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative, among others.

Madam President,

Sweden welcomes the continued implementation of New START between the Russian Federation and the United States, and we urge Russia to take up the offer from President Obama in 2013 to negotiate further and deeper cuts in the two countries' nuclear arsenals. We call for non-strategic nuclear weapons to be included in future negotiations and reductions.

Nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation are mutually reinforcing. The role of the International Atomic Energy Agency in verifying non-proliferation obligations under the NPT is crucial.

Regarding the DPRK, there has not been any progress. Sweden has strongly condemned the nuclear test explosions by the DPRK. We call upon the DPRK to return to the NPT and IAEA safeguards without delay, and to sign and ratify the CTBT.

Sweden, through the Swedish Defence Research Agency, provides a unique capability to detect noble gases emanating from an underground nuclear explosion. The Swedish SAUNA system is installed at monitoring stations worldwide and provided for on-site inspections, as an essential contribution to the CTBT Verification Regime.

The CTBT, like the IAEA safeguards system, is an integral part of the NPT regime. It is therefore natural that the States Parties are given the opportunity to hear from the CTBTO early in the General Debate.

Sweden believes that nuclear-weapon-free zones contribute to peace and security. We welcome that zones have been established in Latin America and the Caribbean, the South Pacific, South East Asia, Africa and Central Asia as well as Mongolia.

We are committed to the establishment of a zone free of weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East and commend the efforts by Ambassador Laajava of Finland to bring about the agreed Conference.

Sweden is also an active partner in the Nuclear Security Summit and the Global Partnership. We cooperate with several eastern European countries to help upgrade nuclear security and prevent nuclear terrorism.

Madam President,

Some 20 years ago, I and many others stood as one in protesting against nuclear weapon tests in Mururoa. A lot has happened since those days; in some ways we have moved forward, in others not.

Attending this Review Conference, I am heartened by the number of States, organisations and individuals, working tirelessly to rid the world of nuclear weapons, and by the many pragmatic and creative ways presented to achieve this goal.

Seeing this, my conviction is as firm today as it was all those years ago: a world free from nuclear weapons is possible.

Thank you.