



AUSTRALIA



AUSTRALIAN MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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THE NINTH REVIEW OF THE PARTIES TO THE TREATY ON THE NON-PROLIFERATION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS

1 May 2015

Main Committee I

**Statement by H.E. John Quinn
Ambassador and Permanent Representative
of Australia to the United Nations**

(Check against delivery)

Mr Chairman,

It is widely acknowledged that this Committee's contribution will be critical in achieving a successful outcome for the 2015 NPT Review Conference. We thus urge all delegations to work collectively and constructively under your leadership toward this end. You have Australia's full support in this endeavour.

Australia is a member of the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative (NPDI). This diverse, cross-regional group of 12 countries shares a deep commitment to the NPT and to the goal of total elimination of nuclear weapons. We continue to urge all nuclear-weapon States (NWS) to actively pursue nuclear disarmament in good faith.

NPDI emphasises comprehensive implementation of the 2010 NPT Review Conference Action Plan. Progress across the three pillars has been variable; disarmament has clearly posed the most challenges, confirming that much of the sustained and difficult work to bring about a world free of nuclear weapons still lies ahead.

The building blocks of disarmament, elaborated in our NPDI papers, are well known. They include: increased transparency to build confidence and support further disarmament; entry into force of the CTBT; starting negotiations on, and concluding as soon as possible an FMCT; reducing the operational status of nuclear weapons systems; diminishing the role of nuclear weapons in security policies; and reducing the number of non-strategic nuclear weapons. Developing robust, widely accepted disarmament verification measures will also be an essential part of the process.

These measures will help create an environment where countries, including the NWS and those who rely on their nuclear umbrella, will see themselves being more secure without nuclear weapons than with them.

Mr Chairman,

Against this background, Australia welcomes the ongoing implementation of New START and hopes this process will not be impeded by the current tensions over the situation in the Ukraine. We also encourage the five nuclear weapon states to continue their regular dialogue and urge them to seriously discuss further measures to meet their Article VI obligations.

We see advancing the three principles of nuclear disarmament as a key component of a successful RevCon. Effective reporting on Action 20 of the NPT Action Plan is germane to the first transparency principle. While this obligation falls on all states, the biggest responsibility lies with the nuclear weapon states. We acknowledge the reporting efforts of the NWS at the Third PrepCom. However, this was always the baseline. Better and more regular reporting will also be fundamental to advancing the other two disarmament principles - verification and irreversibility.

We were an active member of the FMCT Group of Governmental Experts which adopted by consensus its ground-breaking report on 2 April. We should now leverage off the GGE's seminal work to begin early FMCT negotiations.

We renew our call upon all remaining Annex II States to ratify the CTBT without delay so that the treaty can finally enter into force. It is disappointing we still find ourselves some distance from achieving this longstanding priority goal.

Australia welcomes the renewed global focus on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons. It underpins all the work of the NPDI, and finds clear expression in the preamble of the NPT. Australia was pleased to join 26 other states in a statement delivered by our Ambassador to the UN, Gillian Bird, on 30 April. We firmly believe that this must be an inclusive discussion that engages the NWS, and serves to strengthen rather than undermine the NPT.

How we assess progress, and set our future disarmament course is the core task of this Committee. The 2010 NPT Action Plan has provided a robust roadmap over the past five years. We therefore call on all states, and in

particular the Nuclear Weapon States, to forge at this RevCon agreement on forward looking, practical and realistic measures which reinforce and refresh the 2010 RevCon outcome.

Thank you Mr Chairman.