

Information Note¹

Event	Moscow Nonproliferation Conference 2010
Organizers	Center for Energy and Security Studies (CENESS), Moscow, in cooperation with 10 other partners ²
Date & Venue:	4-6 March 2010, Moscow, Russian Federation,
Participants:	185 experts on security issues and non-proliferation from think tanks, as well as from 39 Governments representing different regions and specialists from international organizations, including the United Nations. ³ Also participating were 1540 Committee Chairman, Ambassador Claude Heller, and a 1540 Committee expert.

1. Objectives

The objectives of the Conference were: (a) to mark the 40th anniversary of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) by reviewing the progress and the challenges regarding the nuclear non-proliferation regime today; and (b) to suggest ideas for strengthening the regime for consideration during the 8th NPT Review Conference (New York, 3-25 May 2010). The Chairman of the 1540 Committee and an expert attended to raise awareness of the relevance of UNSC resolution 1540, explain the challenges of implementation and expand the network of contacts and interactions with conference participants about the contribution of resolution 1540 to the nuclear non-proliferation regime.

2. Background

The Moscow Non-Proliferation Conference was organized shortly before the NPT Review Conference to bring together a cross section of specialists from government departments concerned with issues of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, including those active in negotiating bodies. Experts from international organizations and scholars affiliated with academic and research institutions added a scholarly dimension. The conference provided an important platform for in-depth discussion on three pillars of the NPT: nuclear nonproliferation, peaceful uses of nuclear energy and nuclear disarmament. Notably, the conference included experts from all the States not-party to the NPT.

3. Highlights

The main issues of the conference were spelled out in the extensive introductory plenary session which gave the benchmarks of progress and the setbacks in building a nuclear non-proliferation regime. The key points were: the importance of nuclear disarmament as the third pillar of the NPT's "great bargain;" the significance of the new US policy on nuclear disarmament and the progress in US-Russia START

¹ For information – not an official report. The views expressed here do not necessarily represent those of the 1540 Committee or of the organizers or participants in the event.

² The Netherlands (General sponsor); Canada, Finland, Norway, Sweden, the U.K., the U.S. and the International Science and Technology Center (ISTC), the UN Office for Disarmament Affairs and the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (co-sponsors/partners).

³ For list of participants, agenda and conference materials, see website at <www.cenessrussia.org>

negotiations; the relevance of encouraging the dismantlement of tactical nuclear weapons in Europe; and the concern about the new threat from proliferation involving non-State actors.

A second segment of the session addressed institutional aspects and specific issues of the non-proliferation regime, including the significance of UNSC resolution 1540 to address the threat from non-State actors. There was a call for consensus to face the challenge of non-compliance, to develop criteria to cope with the NPT withdrawal clause, and to implement the 1995 resolution on nuclear-weapon-free Middle East. Hope was expressed to revitalize the NPT regime, building on the impetus from the UNSC resolution 1887 (2010) on non-proliferation, and the forthcoming summit-level Washington event on nuclear security. The session was followed by a dozen specialized panels, which identified the following issues.

How can the integrity of the nuclear non-proliferation regime be preserved and strengthened? There was wide agreement that loopholes in the NPT regime, such as those related to the withdrawal clause should not be allowed to undermine the regime, even though they were left open in 1968 as a safety valve. Among the solutions suggested were: (i) to agree on a common “understanding” on how to apply the withdrawal clause in legitimate cases; (ii) to elaborate criteria justifying withdrawal, perhaps requiring a longer period of notification; (iii) to provide positive inducements to States to remain within the treaty, including by offering them security incentives and assurances of supply or access to materials and technology; and (iv) to avoid a fruitless effort to resort to a treaty amendment. A negative alternative in dealing with the threat of withdrawal was also presented, namely to tighten the punitive measures through the Security Council in order to deter or remedy non-compliance that could lead to withdrawal from the treaty.

Secondly, given that the regime benefited from four or so cases of nuclear disarmament or dismantlement, but has also sustained four clear breakouts, how can it be strengthened? In this context many participants stressed the need for universalization of the NPT, progress towards an FMTC and full implementation of UNSC resolution 1540 to stem the threat of proliferation involving non-State actors.

4. **Additional Information**

For further information, please contact the 1540 Committee experts by e-mail at 1540experts@un.org.