
Preparatory Committee for the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

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Facilitating disarmament

Working paper submitted by the United States of America

1. The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) review process was designed from the outset to provide States parties with an opportunity to periodically discuss the operation of the Treaty and how best to preserve its integrity and fulfil its purposes.
2. When NPT parties have been able to reach consensus upon the way ahead, which has occurred at fewer than half of the Treaty's Review Conferences, they have issued resolutions, decisions or Final Documents. Such documents, which are statements of political rather than legal agreement upon certain policy positions, have provided an important window into the thinking of the parties at the time and have served as valuable guideposts to policy for as long as they have remained relevant to the challenges facing the Treaty regime.
3. It is up to all States parties to continuously evaluate the situation facing the NPT regime and to use the Treaty review process to encourage support for measures that promote fulfilment of the Treaty's provisions and the achievement of the purposes expressed in its preamble. As the world changes, many positions expressed in past Review Conference documents will remain of enduring importance and will need to remain a focus of attention. Over time, however, other positions may be overtaken by events, while new issues will no doubt also arise requiring that new positions be taken.
4. During the last NPT review cycle, much controversy arose over the present-day import of certain positions related to nuclear disarmament, i.e. the "Thirteen practical steps", which were articulated in the Final Document of the NPT Review Conference held in 2000. The security environment has changed substantially since 2000, and we cannot assume that all suggestions made then necessarily remain relevant today. The United States believes that the "Thirteen practical steps" now constitute an inadequate set of policy priorities for achieving the goals of article VI and the preamble to the Treaty. Rather than assuming that political statements from 2000 will forever reflect the needs of a changing world, the interests of nuclear disarmament would be better served by careful study of what measures would most contribute to the Treaty's goals today.



5. A companion paper to the present document (NPT/CONF.2010/PC.I/WP.21) discusses the sort of international security environment that would be necessary in order not merely to achieve nuclear disarmament but also to sustain it indefinitely. As part of its ongoing contributions to creating such an environment, the United States seeks in this paper to re-emphasize its commitment to the goals expressed in article VI and the preamble to the NPT. It also offers some suggestions about how the Treaty review process can help parties understand and create the conditions in which it would be possible to achieve the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

United States commitment to disarmament

6. The United States is steadfastly committed to the goals expressed in article VI and the preamble to the NPT. As an expression of this commitment, it believes that States parties should use the current NPT review cycle as an opportunity to reaffirm these objectives and consider ways to achieve them that are relevant to the current international situation. As United States diplomats have stressed in recent consultations, the United States is committed to engaging in dialogue with foreign partners on how to create an environment in which it will be realistically possible to achieve and sustain the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

7. As can be seen from the companion paper to this document, the United States has an outstanding record of: ending the superpower nuclear arms race; drastically reducing its nuclear weapons stockpile and inventory of delivery systems; removing large quantities of fissile material from its nuclear weapons programme and from military uses; cutting back its nuclear weapons infrastructure; and reducing its reliance upon nuclear weapons for national defence.

8. These accomplishments, moreover, are not just historical but ongoing. The United States conclusion that the “Thirteen practical steps” formulation from 2000 does not fit today’s conditions does not, therefore, represent a lack of commitment to the goals expressed in article VI and the preamble to the NPT. On the contrary, the United States position represents a commitment to ensuring that these goals are pursued realistically and productively.

Creating a disarmament environment

9. With the objective of creating an environment in which total nuclear disarmament will be practical and realistic, rather than simply a utopian fantasy, the United States urges NPT States parties to reaffirm their support for the goals expressed in article VI and the preamble to the NPT, while publicly recognizing the progress made by some nuclear-weapon States in continuing to reduce the number of nuclear weapons and delivery systems in their stockpiles. Building upon this, the United States believes that the following elements would help create the environment necessary for disarmament:

- Developing and implementing transparency and confidence-building measures in the strategic relationships among NPT nuclear-weapon States in order to facilitate the lessening of tension and strengthening of trust between them.
- Reduction by the nuclear-weapon States of nuclear weapon stockpiles to the lowest possible level consistent with maintenance of their national security and that of their allies and the need to help prevent the emergence of new nuclear

arms races that would undermine the principles of article VI and the preamble to the Treaty.

- Recognition of and support for steps being taken by the United States and some other nuclear-weapon States to reduce reliance upon nuclear weapons, including through the development of ways to meet deterrent needs by non-nuclear means.
- Increased transparency, on a voluntary basis, by all nuclear-weapon States vis-à-vis other States parties concerning their efforts to achieve the goals expressed in the Treaty and progress in creating an environment conducive to disarmament.
- Strict compliance with non-proliferation obligations as a means of preventing regional nuclear arms races and an essential step towards creating an environment conducive to disarmament.
- Achievement of a Middle East free of weapons of mass destruction of all types, as well as their delivery systems, goals articulated in the resolution on the Middle East adopted by the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference in the context of a stable regional peace and by means of easing tensions, strengthening trust between nations, and implementing robust measures to prevent the development of a nuclear arms race in the region.
- Observance of a voluntary moratorium on nuclear testing by all nuclear-weapon States and all other States possessing nuclear weapons, and effective steps by such States to maximize the safety and security of nuclear weapons in their stockpiles and work to help make it unnecessary to undertake nuclear testing until the elimination of nuclear weapons can be achieved.
- Achievement of a fissile material cut-off treaty that would prohibit the production of fissile material for use in nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, and to implement moratoriums on the production of fissile material for use in nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices pending entry into force of such a treaty, as well as a willingness by all parties with representation at the United Nations Conference on Disarmament to refrain from imposing linkages upon negotiations there that would prevent the rapid commencement of such talks.
- Recognition of and support for the significant and continuing efforts of some nuclear-weapon States in removing fissile material from nuclear weapons programmes, placing some of it under International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards, and transferring it, transparently, to non-weapons purposes, including civil power generation, and progress by all nuclear-weapon States in pursuing such steps.
- Recognition of and support for measures undertaken by States parties acting jointly or independently to reinforce non-proliferation norms and impede the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, including the Proliferation Security Initiative, the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism, United Nations Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) and resolutions addressing specific proliferation situations (such as Security Council resolutions 1718 (2006) and 1737 (2006)), and national steps taken pursuant to such measures, on account of the role such measures play in helping reduce the danger of new

regional nuclear arms races and helping prevent the worsening of international security relationships that could impede further progress on disarmament.

- Management of nuclear weapons stockpiles until such stockpiles are eliminated in a manner that maximizes safety and security, prevents unauthorized access or exploitation of nuclear weapons-related knowledge or material and subjects civil nuclear facilities and materials to IAEA safeguards and the Additional Protocol, consistent with national security and non-proliferation principles.
- Prevention by all States parties of unauthorized transfers of, or access by criminals or terrorists to, any nuclear weapons-related knowledge, technology or fissile material usable in such weapons, including by full implementation of United Nations Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) and implementation of obligations under the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material and its 2005 amendment.
- Deployment of ballistic missile and other defences that can reduce the perceived benefits of additional States engaging in nuclear weapons development and increase the confidence of the international community that any would-be violators of an eventual ban on nuclear weapons would have difficulty realizing strategic gains from such a violation.
- Prevention of regional arms races that could undermine the achievement of the United States and the Russian Federation in ending the superpower nuclear arms race as urged in article VI of the NPT.
- Continuing efforts by all States to create an environment that promotes universal adherence to the NPT, including through supporting regional peace processes and efforts to ease tension and strengthen trust.

Conclusion

10. To repeat, the United States is steadfastly committed to the goals expressed in article VI and the preamble to the NPT. As an expression of this commitment, it believes that States parties should use the current NPT review cycle as an opportunity to reaffirm these objectives and to ensure the relevance of the international community's disarmament-related agenda under present conditions. It is no less important now than during previous review cycles to pursue the total elimination of nuclear weapons, and no country would be more pleased to see fulfilment of the NPT's goals than the United States.

11. It is time for States parties to commit themselves to building upon the progress already made towards these ends in order to create not only an environment in which nuclear weapons can finally be eliminated, but also one in which this abolition could be sustained indefinitely through robust measures to ensure against the re-emergence of such weaponry.