

**U.S. Statement at the Closing Meeting of the
Tenth Review Conference of the Parties to the
Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
Ambassador Adam Scheinman
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United Nations, New York**

(As delivered)

Mr. President and colleagues, I wish to thank all of you for your tireless work, your professionalism, and your endurance throughout this long, four-week conference.

And after seven years and a long delay due to COVID, this was, for so many of us, a moment of profound relief.

Unfortunately, that relief was short lived. Because when we did finally convene, it was in the midst of Russia's illegal war against Ukraine. Never before has a review conference taken place in such circumstances.

That is why, for the past month, the United States has clearly and repeatedly called on States parties to acknowledge and confront this reality.

We are not alone. As you have already heard from the floor, dozens of others have spoken out against Russia's dangerous and illegal actions, and their impact on the treaty we all came here to defend.

But the NPT will remain a fundamental and irreplaceable cornerstone of the rules-based order. Our work over the past month reaffirms the commitment of the international community to this treaty and to the nuclear nonproliferation regime. It is a treaty system that continues to make all of us safer, more secure, and more prosperous.

At this Review Conference, the United States sought to work constructively and in good faith to engage all parties and to address all issues at each stage of negotiations, including by finding consensus language on naval nuclear propulsion. Let me just reiterate that the AUKUS partners have fully engaged the IAEA Board of Governors since day one, and we continue to communicate with the international community on these trilateral consultations. We remain confident that the process the IAEA already has in place is sufficient to determine the best approach for Australia, and that the IAEA will be able to report openly and

transparently to its membership on such developments, while fully respecting the confidentiality of safeguards arrangements.

I also want to state that we are concerned that “common security” was substituted for the language of the UN Charter -- “international peace and security” -- in paragraph 11 of the Final Document. The Charter language is stated in the preamble of the NPT itself, and the failure to use it here should not be considered a precedent for future NPT documents.

Mr. President, I think we know that negotiations among members of this treaty are not easy. I know that there is real frustration in the room. Many non-nuclear-weapon States strove for more tangible progress on disarmament, and we respect that. We hear you. Today, as we leave New York, I assure all NPT States Parties that the United States remains committed to the full and effective implementation of our Article VI obligations, and that we will work with you and all partners to help create the peace and security of a world without nuclear weapons.

We recognize the draft final document was not perfect or fairly reflected conditions on the ground. The text understated the situation at the Zaporizhzhya Nuclear Power Plant and failed to acknowledge what we all know to be true – that the risk of radiological disaster only exists because of Russia’s war of choice. Maybe this should be a consideration for countries looking to Russia as a supplier of nuclear energy.

Colleagues, Russia is the reason we do not have consensus today.

The last-minute changes that Russia sought were not of a minor character. They were intended to shield Russia’s obvious intent to wipe Ukraine off the map.

So let’s be clear.

Russia is the one undermining all three pillars of the NPT through its actions in Ukraine. Russia is the one that’s invaded a sovereign country in violation of the UN Charter and contrary to the security assurances given to Ukraine under the Budapest Memorandum. Russia is the one whose war puts Europe, Ukraine, and its own people at risk of a radiological disaster.

And if these actions are not central and germane to the NPT, then I don’t know what is.

Russia is the one that threw away a substantive outcome document. And it was an outcome document that didn't even call out Russia by name. It was a document that advanced this treaty in concrete ways, and at a time when it is needed most. We regret this outcome, and we even more deeply regret Russia's actions that led us here today. Let none of us forget that while we lost consensus on a document, people are losing their lives, and lives of their loved ones, in Ukraine.

This month has shown that, while we still have much work to do, we do agree on more than we disagree. And we are prepared to define ourselves by what we hold in common, rather than what by divides us.

I can assure you that the United States will continue to work with State Parties throughout the next review cycle, and we can begin by building on the good work we were able to accomplish here this month.

This includes working to reduce risks at a time when communication between nuclear-weapon States is more critical than ever. And I can tell you, we will continue to pursue actionable and achievable arms control and disarmament steps.

It also means acting on other areas of consensus, including condemning the DPRK's nuclear tests and affirming our commitments to the highest standards of nonproliferation and safeguards. We must also build on all we did to promote expanded access to the benefits of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, including through initiatives like the Sustained Dialogue and by supporting the IAEA's important promotional work. The United States looks forward to doing that when we host the IAEA Nuclear Power Ministerial later this year.

We told this conference at the outset that we remain committed to our prior commitments, and we will work to implement them to the fullest extent possible. That remains the case.

As U.S. President Lyndon Johnson once said, it is "stubborn, patient persistence" that brings us back to the negotiating table, time and time again. There is no other option.

And we need that kind of persistence now more than ever. We all need this treaty, and everything it represents. That is why the United States will remain stubbornly, persistently at the table. In the next review cycle, we can – and must – do more.

Thank you.