

TREATY ON THE NON-PROLIFERATION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS

2005 REVIEW CONFERENCE

GENERAL DEBATE

STATEMENT

BY

**H.E. AMBASSADOR CHRISTIAN WENAWESER,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE
OF THE PRINCIPALITY OF LIECHTENSTEIN
TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

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CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Mr. President,

35 years after the entry into force of the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, the Review Conference meets this month facing stark challenges. A total of 188 parties have joined the treaty, more countries have ratified the NPT than any other disarmament treaty. As the Secretary-General pointed out in his address to us, the NPT serves as the cornerstone for global security but now has to adapt to the changing realities of the world. Due to a number of events in the past years, the goal of universality has become even more elusive, and the Treaty is now in urgent need of strengthening. The indefinite extension of the NPT was a complex and crucial diplomatic achievement. Ten years later, the Treaty is in the middle of a crisis of confidence.

Mr. President

In order to overcome this crisis, the Review Conference must result in an outcome that restores the balances between the three pillars of the NPT, i.e. non-proliferation, disarmament and the peaceful use of nuclear energy, through progress in all three areas. To this end, full commitment to and reaffirmation of the existing non-proliferation and disarmament regime are of paramount importance. In order to contribute to an enhanced implementation of the treaty, Liechtenstein has decided to ratify the Model Additional Protocol to its Safeguards Agreement with the IAEA and presented its notification of intent to the Agency earlier this year. We call on all 106 states that have not yet done so, to also conclude an additional protocol and strengthen the IAEA verification mechanisms.

If we all agree on the significance of this instrument as the only legally binding, global instrument to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons and to provide international stability and security, we should also ensure that the institutional framework of the treaty enables us to make continuous and full use of it. Liechtenstein supports the Canadian proposal presented at the 2004 PrepCom Meeting to hold annual Conferences of States Parties and to create a standing Bureau which would be able to react in close cooperation with the IAEA in a efficient and effective manner to emergencies, such as notification of withdrawal as well as violations of the Treaty.

Unfortunately, almost 10 years after its adoption, the CTBT is still not in force, and the negotiations of a Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty (FMCT) have not even started yet. One of the disarmament goals is the ending of nuclear testing and the CTBT is the only adequate instrument to reach it. It was also an essential part of the process that led to the indefinite extension of the NPT in 1995. Although the CTBT has achieved an impressive number of ratifications, there are still three out of the 44 required/Annex B States missing for its entry into force. Since the last NPT Review Conference in 2000 progress towards the entry into force of the CTBT has slowed down, and the risk of new nuclear testing has increased. Liechtenstein ratified the CTBT last year, firmly believing that an end to nuclear testing provides a great step in ensuring security and stability. The possibility of future tests of nuclear arsenals by any Nuclear Weapon State remains a great risk to international security. The opposition from some Nuclear Weapon States to the CTBT is damaging and blocking progress on entry into force of the Treaty. We would like to see a strengthening of the Nuclear Weapons States' commitment to the moratorium.

Another important element of strengthening the non-proliferation and disarmament regime is the Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty. However, hardly any progress has been achieved in this respect, despite the decision of the NPT Review Conference ten years ago to place a FMCT into its "Programme of Action for Nuclear Disarmament" and the urgent appeal of the 2000 Review Conference to begin negotiations immediately. We are deeply distressed to note that the deadlock has continued and no side seems willing to make a first step and initiate progress.

It is our strong belief that the pursuing of a FMCT has advantages for nuclear as well as for non-nuclear weapon states. NWS would reinforce their commitment to nuclear disarmament and by increasing the security through preventing further proliferation, the interests of both, NWS as well as NNWS would be met.

Liechtenstein remains fully committed to the implementation of the NPT and supports the complete disarmament of nuclear weapons worldwide in accordance with Art. VI of the NPT and the "Thirteen Steps" contained in the final document of the last Review Conference which remain important commitments even though implementation has been very disappointing. Only through the full commitment of all State Parties of the relevant treaties will it be possible to achieve a more secure environment.

During the last years, the treaty was challenged in many different ways, it is our task now to rebuild faith in its effectiveness. We fully subscribe to the statement in the Secretary-General's report "on Larger Freedom" that "progress both in disarmament and non-proliferation is essential and neither should be held hostage to the other". In fact, this reflects the spirit in which the NPT was drafted. The stakes at this Review Conference are thus very high indeed: Not only are we called upon to restore the central place that the NPT has been occupying in the international disarmament agenda for 35 years. The outcome of this Conference will also have a strong impact on the already very difficult discussions on UN reform the results of which we wish to see adopted by our Heads of States and Governments in September. Failure is thus something we can simply not afford.

I thank you, Mr. President.