

TREATY ON THE NON-PROLIFERATION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS

2010 REVIEW CONFERENCE

GENERAL DEBATE

STATEMENT

BY

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TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

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CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Mr. President,

40 years have passed since a grand bargain in the field of international security was struck between nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear-weapon States. This bargain is upheld by the delicate balance of three equally important and mutually reinforcing pillars: disarmament, non-proliferation and the peaceful use of nuclear energy. The failure of the last NPT Review Conference in 2005 to achieve a concrete outcome underscored the perceived lack of balance in the implementation of the Treaty. The 2010 Review Conference provides a unique opportunity to once again restore this delicate balance. On our part, Liechtenstein remains fully committed to the implementation of the NPT and supports the complete disarmament of nuclear weapons in accordance with Article IV and the 'Thirteen Steps.'

Mr. President

After the rather modest progress on NPT implementation in the past decade, recent developments give us reason for optimism. The New START treaty concluded between the United States and the Russian Federation severely limits the number of nuclear warheads deployed by the two largest nuclear powers. This is the biggest success in the field of nuclear disarmament in recent times, and we encourage both parties to pursue further arms reduction and disarmament initiatives. Security Council resolution 1887 (2009), adopted at Summit level, also underscored the world's commitment to non-proliferation. Furthermore, the Nuclear Security Summit held in Washington last month has advanced efforts to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction to non-state actors.

But let there be no mistake: These are steps into the right direction, but much more is needed to convey the sense that real disarmament is under way. We would like to thank the delegation of Switzerland for reminding us that nuclear disarmament is not just a geopolitical necessity, but also a moral and legal imperative – in particular in view of international humanitarian law. Liechtenstein supports the long-term goal of a Nuclear Weapons Convention, in line with the Secretary-General's five-point

plan. This Conference should prepare the ground for such a project by adopting a Program of Action including concrete goals to be achieved within set time-frames.

The de-alerting of nuclear weapons presents a further avenue for immediate action. The lengthening of nuclear launch procedures not only reduces the risk of error, but can also serve to further reduce the role of nuclear weapons in military strategy, and as such contribute substantially to the process of nuclear disarmament. We applaud the entry into force of the Pelindaba Treaty, establishing a Nuclear Weapons Free Zone in Africa on 15 July 2009 and the Treaty of Semipalatinsk, establishing a Nuclear Weapons Free Zone in Central Asia on 21 March 2009.

Mr. President,

While we continue to strive for complete nuclear disarmament, a number of practical steps can be taken to improve safety and security immediately, as was outlined in the 'Thirteen Steps' contained in the final document of the 2000 Review Conference. We must prevent the misuse of civilian nuclear programmes for military or even terrorist ends. The next two decades will see a further surge in energy demand, particularly in developing countries, which will increase the use of nuclear power. It is therefore more important than ever that we address the risks posed by the nuclear fuel cycle. A big step in the right direction would be to make the IAEA Additional Protocol the verification standard, something that Liechtenstein has supported by signing the Additional Protocol in 2006. We also support the proposal of an international fuel bank under the auspices of the IAEA, which would guarantee supply and significantly reduce the risk of nuclear proliferation. On this issue in particular we can make progress if we resist the temptation to condition progress on movement on other issues. To further reduce the risk of nuclear proliferation, it is likewise imperative that States fully comply with and implement the mechanisms established by SC Resolution 1540, thereby reducing the risk of terrorists gaining access to nuclear materials. While respecting the right of NPT States Parties to develop, research and produce nuclear energy in conformity with

Articles I, II and III, we must ensure that this sensitive technology is used responsibly and does not contribute to the proliferation of nuclear weapons. The activities undertaken by North Korea and Iran in the recent past are cause for grave concern in this regards and seriously testing the resolve of the international community. We hope that this Conference will only strengthen that resolve, and bring both countries closer to cooperation.

Mr. President,

Liechtenstein is a State Party to the CTBT, which we ratified in 2004. We believe that an end to nuclear testing contributes to peace and security, and provides a stepping stone towards nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. We are heartened by the United States' announcement that it will pursue ratification of the Treaty, and urge other non-States Parties, especially those listed in Annex II, to do the same. At the same time, however, we note the utter lack of progress in the Conference on Disarmament. It speaks volumes that the body's greatest achievement in thirteen years was last year's adoption of a programme of work that was not followed up. We must overcome the deadlock and begin negotiations on a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosive devices (FMCT). Such a treaty would complement the existing non-proliferation and disarmament regime and would bring tangible benefits to nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear weapon States alike. Until such a treaty is achieved, we join others in calling on all States concerned to declare and uphold a moratorium on the production of such fissile material.

Mr. President,

Our immediate goal remains to bring all non-States Parties into the NPT regime as non-nuclear weapon States and to ensure the universal adherence to and application of the treaty. The NPT review process plays an important role in this regard and should be further strengthened. To this end, Liechtenstein supports proposals to strengthen the review process of the NPT by replacing the present

series of Preparatory Committees with shorter, more frequent annual meetings of both a procedural and substantive nature, and creating a small support unit. Furthermore, the review process should clarify the meaning and consequences of a withdrawal from the treaty. Legally, it is clear that States found to be in violation of their treaty obligations cannot abdicate their responsibility by simply withdrawing from the treaty.

I thank you.