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General Debate
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2015 Review Conference of the States Parties to the Treaty on the
Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
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(As Prepared) Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On behalf of the United States Delegation, let me add my voice to those delegations that have congratulated you on your selection to chair the first meeting of the Preparatory Committee to lay the groundwork for the 2015 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference. You, like many of us here today, are a veteran of the 2010 NPT Review Conference, and we share a desire to build on the encouraging results of that conference and move the agenda forward. I want to assure you of our Delegation's commitment to work with you and our NPT partners to ensure the success of this body and, through our work, to sustain and reinforce the NPT.

Mr. Chairman, the United States looks forward during this PrepCom meeting to sharing detailed information on our efforts over the past two years to follow-up on the commitments we made in 2010. So I will not take time this morning to catalogue these activities. Let me say, however, that the United States continues to take those commitments seriously, and we have been working – and will continue to work - to translate them into actions and accomplishments. We look forward, as well, to hearing from other Parties on their own efforts to implement the Action Plan adopted by the 2010 RevCon. We all have a role to play in bringing the 2010 Action Plan to fruition.

Today, I would like to share some thoughts on how the United States is approaching this Preparatory Committee meeting and the 2015 review cycle.

Lessons Learned from the 2010 NPT Review Conference

We are concentrating on using the lessons learned from 2010 as we prepare for 2015. This new NPT review cycle follows our successful collaboration during the 2010 NPT Review Conference. That Conference was an exercise in

constructive and creative multilateralism. The NPT Parties defied the skeptics who saw a treaty regime under siege and little chance of agreement among so many states with such a wide range of views on such a broad and often contentious agenda.

By reaching across traditional regional and political lines, NPT Parties worked together successfully to find common ground. That effort produced a unique and unprecedented NPT Action Plan that was adopted by consensus, a real achievement given both the sheer number and complexity of the issues and the variety of perspectives and priorities countries brought to the table. This Plan reflects agreement on a forward-looking agenda that encompasses both essential principles and specific actions that each Party can take to reinforce the NPT and contribute to the achievement of the Treaty's fundamental objectives.

The Action Plan, however, also reflects the limits of multilateralism when the goal is consensus. It does not contain every state's list of priorities, particularly because it does not address some very serious challenges to the Treaty, to the credibility of the global nonproliferation regime, and to international security in general in a level of detail justified by the gravity of these challenges. In particular, the Action Plan does not address as clearly and strongly as it should have the unresolved cases of noncompliance with the Treaty's nonproliferation obligations. Nonetheless, the Plan covers most NPT issues, reflects a balanced approach to the three pillars of the NPT, and does acknowledge that full compliance with the Treaty's nonproliferation obligations, like progress on nuclear disarmament and access to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, is essential. The Plan remains an excellent point of departure for our efforts that begin during this Preparatory Committee meeting.

The Three Pillars

The NPT is the cornerstone of the international nuclear nonproliferation regime and a key element of the international security architecture. It is both an essential legal barrier to the further spread of nuclear weapons and the only international agreement with nuclear disarmament as one of its objectives. While the Treaty is very much a product of its time, it has also stood the test of time. It may, in fact, be even more important today than in the past.

The NPT's basic bargain, as President Obama has noted, remains sound: countries with nuclear weapons will move toward disarmament, countries without nuclear weapons will not acquire them, and all countries can have access to nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. These three pillars--nonproliferation, disarmament, and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy--remain mutually reinforcing. Adherence to and full compliance with the NPT by all states would make a significant contribution to reducing nuclear dangers. A global nonproliferation regime that is strong and reliable serves as an essential foundation for efforts to reduce existing nuclear arsenals to lower numbers leading to their eventual elimination. Without this foundation, progress toward nuclear disarmament cannot be assured. And without this foundation, the fullest possible access to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy will not be realized.

It is imperative, therefore, that all NPT Parties recommit themselves to ensuring the health and vitality of this essential international agreement by advancing each of the Treaty's three pillars together. The Treaty and the regime cannot thrive unless each pillar thrives. All Parties must accept responsibility for taking appropriate steps to contribute to the achievement of each of the Treaty's fundamental objectives, whether collectively or individually. The Action Plan

provides an achievable blueprint for advancing together each of the Treaty's pillars, but it requires the involvement of all Parties.

A World without Nuclear Weapons: The U.S. Record

Three years ago in Prague, President Obama reaffirmed the U.S. commitment to achieving a world free of nuclear weapons. He set out a comprehensive disarmament and nonproliferation agenda to advance toward that goal. President Obama reiterated that commitment and noted the progress on that agenda when he said recently in Seoul,

“American leadership has been essential to progress in . . . taking concrete steps towards a world without nuclear weapons. As a party to the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, this is our obligation, and it’s one that I take very seriously.”

A world free of nuclear weapons requires both disarmament and nonproliferation. The United States has made clear on many occasions that it understands its special responsibility to take concrete steps towards a world without nuclear weapons by pursuing nuclear disarmament. The United States is making progress on disarmament, and we will detail those efforts this week. We remain equally committed to doing our part to strengthen the nonproliferation pillar of the NPT, and we will detail those efforts, as well as our commitment to the promotion of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy in the days ahead.

The Nonproliferation Challenge

All NPT Parties can and must contribute to the norm of nonproliferation established by the NPT. The health of the entire regime depends on it. The security of every state depends on it.

The Action Plan's blueprint for bolstering nonproliferation is clear. There is no greater threat to the integrity and vitality of the Treaty than the unresolved cases of noncompliance. Because of the corrosive effect of noncompliance on international confidence in the NPT, we must redouble our efforts to encourage full compliance with Treaty obligations. It is the responsibility of all of us to make clear that violating the NPT, and I would add, abusing the Treaty's withdrawal provision, will have consequences. This cannot be a concern of merely one state or a group of states.

Fundamental to bolstering nonproliferation is supporting the International Atomic Energy Agency, the IAEA, and contributing to international efforts to strengthen its ability to verify the exclusively peaceful use of nuclear materials and technology. The importance of the Agency's role in NPT implementation cannot be overstated. By providing credible assurances of states' compliance with their nuclear nonproliferation obligations, IAEA safeguards build confidence among neighbors and the international community at large. As agreed in the 2010 Action Plan, NPT Parties should work together to ensure that the IAEA has the authority and resources needed to fulfill its vital safeguards mission, including through the broader implementation of the IAEA's Additional Protocol. The number of states adhering to the Protocol is steadily increasing, with 14 states having brought it into force since we met in 2010. We welcome this important step by governments that recognize the tremendous reinforcement it gives to the IAEA in fulfilling its mission and the signal it sends to their neighbors about the peaceful nature of their nuclear activities.

A strong and reliable nonproliferation regime makes it possible for NPT Parties to continue to realize the promise of the Treaty's Article IV - international

cooperation in the peaceful use of nuclear energy - not only to generate power, but to contribute to the welfare of our people in such diverse areas as human health, water resources, agriculture, and food security. The United States takes great pride in being the largest single contributor to these important programs. And we have built on our traditional support by pledging an additional \$50 million to the IAEA Peaceful Uses Initiative, which seeks to expand support for peaceful uses programs by \$100 million before the next Review Conference.

Some of the many side events scheduled for the PrepCom will allow us to take advantage of our presence here in Vienna to share valuable information on the Agency's diverse programs, including safeguards and cooperation on peaceful nuclear applications. Such increased awareness among Parties can help reenergize our governments, their Vienna missions, and the IAEA itself in our collective efforts to implement many of the actions contained in the 2010 Final Document.

Conclusion

Mr. Chairman, let me close by reading a quote from President Obama's message to the third Preparatory Committee meeting in 2009 that set the tone for our work at the 2010 Review Conference. He said,

"I recognize that differences are inevitable and that NPT Parties will not always view each element of the treaty in the same way. But we must define ourselves not by our differences, but by our readiness to pursue dialogue and hard work to ensure the NPT continues to make an enduring contribution to international peace and security."

The United States recognizes there is no easy way forward. The agenda we have endorsed will require hard work – political will is essential, but may not be

enough. The United States remains committed to pursuing dialogue and to working hard to find common ground so that all of us will be able to count on a strong NPT as we continue our journey toward a world without nuclear weapons.