



ICELAND

Third Session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2010 Review Conference of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty

General Debate

**Statement by Dr. Gunnar Pálsson
Permanent Representative of Iceland to the United Nations
5 May 2009**

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Allow me, Mr. Chairman, to congratulate you on your election and assure you of my delegation's full support in the days ahead.

The Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) remains a bedrock of our global security. While the treaty has stood the test of time, it has confronted numerous challenges in recent years, including risks of further proliferation, the acquisition of nuclear weapons by non-state actors and nuclear terrorism. In a year which marks the 40th anniversary of the opening for signature of the NPT, such challenges should harden our resolve to strengthen the NPT's universality, effectiveness and authority.

In this context, Iceland remains concerned at the way questions continue to rise with regard to the commitment of individual countries to nuclear non-proliferation. In particular, we urge the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, to comply with the relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions, to rejoin the Six-Party Talks and resume cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). Furthermore, we encourage Iran to cooperate fully with the IAEA regarding its nuclear programme and abide by the applicable United Nations Security Council resolutions.

In order to optimize the chances of a successful NPT Review Conference in 2010, it is essential that all three mutually reinforcing pillars of the treaty; non-proliferation, nuclear disarmament and peaceful uses, be vigorously pursued. This year, there have been encouraging signals in the political arena, raising hopes that we might be entering a new era of arms control and disarmament. To build on this momentum, we the states parties to the NPT must now do our share. We must seize the opportunity to agree on an agenda for the review conference, as well as on concrete recommendations to be presented in a consensus-based Chairman's summary.

Allow me to mention a few issues of key concern:

Iceland believes that steps should be taken towards the ultimate goal of ridding the world of all nuclear weapons. What may have been a distant vision in this respect at the Reagan-Gorbachev summit in Reykjavík in 1986, has become a realistic working goal. Major reductions in overall nuclear arsenals have been accomplished after the Cold War. But nuclear disarmament that is both transparent and verifiable needs to be accelerated. We urge all nuclear weapon states to take bolder steps to this end and welcome the recent announcement by US President Obama and Russian President Medvedev of their intention to pursue a legally binding successor treaty to the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START), as well as the latest

nuclear disarmament measures introduced by the United Kingdom and France.

Furthermore, a verifiable Fissile Material Cutoff Treaty (FMCT) is vital to the lasting success of the NPT regime, as is the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). Iceland welcomes the renewed commitments of signatory states in that regard and urges all countries, particularly the remaining Annex 2 states, to ratify the treaty at the earliest opportunity.

Turning to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, Iceland acknowledges that it is the sovereign right of any country to decide its own mix of energy supply. At the same time, ways must be found to reconcile the right to peaceful uses with the goal of non-proliferation. This is particularly urgent at a time when states, driven by a widening gap between demand for energy and available energy resources, are increasingly exploring the nuclear power option.

Here, the indispensable role of the IAEA in promoting safe, secure and peaceful nuclear technologies needs to be fully recognized. The Agency's Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement, combined with the Additional Protocol, is essential in pursuing this objective. Ensuring nuclear safety and the security of people and their environment, whether on land or in the sea, is a matter of valid concern. We would like to underline the importance of adherence to the relevant conventions and guidelines which aim at strengthening the international safety and security regime.

Tighter controls of the fuel cycle and the peaceful use of nuclear technology should be regarded as compatible goals. Further discussions on the multilateralization of the fuel cycle should be pursued with a view to helping prevent sensitive nuclear technologies from falling into the wrong hands.

The realization of a world free of nuclear weapons is the common ambition of the international community. There have been setbacks on that road and the lack of success at the 2005 Review Conference was undoubtedly a disappointment for all. In moving towards a "Global Zero", we must now look beyond the failures of the past, revitalize our efforts and capitalize on the current sense of optimism. This, Mr. Chairman, should be our guiding light as we chart the road ahead towards a successful NPT Review conference next year.

I thank you.