



Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland

**General statement by Finland
NPT Prepcom II, Geneva
Head of Delegation, Ambassador Jarmo Viinanen**

Mr. Chairman,

Allow me to congratulate you on assuming the chairmanship of the second Preparatory Committee meeting of the 2020 NPT Review Conference. I want to assure my delegation's full support to you in your demanding task.

Finland fully associates itself with the statements delivered by the European Union and Sweden on behalf of the five Nordic States. Let me make some additional remarks on behalf of the Government of Finland.

The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty is a resounding success. It is a cornerstone of global peace and security. It has prevented nuclear weapons from spreading in the world. A vast majority of countries have committed to never to possess or acquire nuclear weapons. At the same, the NPT has made it possible for millions of people to benefit from peaceful applications of nuclear technology. Not least, the NPT lays the foundation for nuclear disarmament, eventually paving the way to our common goal, a world without nuclear weapons.

The 50th anniversary of the NPT in 2020 deserves to be a celebration of this success story. At the same time, we cannot ignore the challenges we are currently faced with. In today's difficult security environment, with the rules based order increasingly under attack, the main aim for this review cycle should be clear: to strengthen the NPT so it can continue to serve us the coming 50 years and more.

Mr. Chairman,

For Finland all three pillars of the NPT are equally important. They are intertwined and mutually reinforcing. Strengthening any one of them will strengthen the whole.

Today, proliferation of nuclear weapons and other nuclear devices poses the most acute nuclear threat. The nuclear and missile programs of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea are continued grave concern. While we are encouraged by the on-going diplomatic efforts, we continue to strongly urge the DPRK to fully comply with its international obligations, in line with relevant UN Security Council Resolutions.

The JCPOA, agreement between the international community and Iran, is an important contribution to nuclear non-proliferation. Moreover, it is proof that there are ways to work together, despite our different standpoints. We urge all parties to live up to their commitments and to continue to implement the JCPOA fully.

Another major proliferation risk is the risk of nuclear devices or material falling into hands of non-state actors. This, more than anything, has to be tackled together. Finland participates in several initiatives to this end, the most prominent being the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism, where 88 nations and 5 organisations work together to strengthen nuclear security. The United States and the Russian Federation co-chair the network. Finland serves as the international coordinator for the initiative until summer 2019. I will use this opportunity to welcome you all to a side event on this topic on Thursday, 26 April at 5 p.m. here at Palais.

Mr. Chairman,

We must ensure that nuclear weapons will never be used again.

In arms control and non-proliferation, confidence is everything. Every actor and every action can contribute to increasing mutual trust – or to corroding it. Irresponsible rhetoric on possible use of nuclear weapons can do nothing but harm the global sense of security.

We encourage the United States and Russia to continue their dialogue on strategic stability. We value highly the bilateral arrangements by the two parties, notably the New START and the INF Treaty. We urge the parties to resolve any dispute regarding these agreements.

Further reductions by the two biggest nuclear weapon states in their arsenals are a key in building confidence and gradually advancing our ultimate goal, the global zero. In this context, I would like to draw your attention also to non-strategic nuclear weapons, which are not covered by any legally-binding arrangement. This is an important issue for us as there are thousands of tactical nuclear weapons stationed in our region and in our close vicinity. Discussions on how to address the normative gap for non-strategic nuclear weapons should be launched without delay.

Further, Finland is of the view that non-nuclear weapon states that are committed to the NPT have a legitimate right to receive legally-binding negative security assurances from nuclear weapon states. These commitments would be a strong outcome of the current review cycle, also contributing positively in the currently polarised atmosphere.

Finland supports a pragmatic approach with concrete steps in nuclear disarmament. One important step is the creation of a multilateral verification mechanism. Finland is an active participant in the International Partnership for Nuclear Disarmament Verification (IPNDV) and the Group of Governmental Experts to consider Nuclear Disarmament Verification. Another important step forward is to swiftly negotiate and conclude a treaty banning weapons-grade fissile material production (FMCT).

We are a long-standing supporter of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). We reiterate our call on all states, especially the annex II states, to sign and ratify this central treaty without further delay. We are encouraged by the recent statement of the DPRK to cease nuclear testing. A natural step to follow would be the ratification of the CTBT.

Mr. Chairman,

I am proud to say that Finland was the first country to sign the Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement with the IAEA. We signed and ratified the Additional Protocol without delay. We urge all states to do the same to show their commitment to non-proliferation with maximal transparency.

Finland has a long tradition of close cooperation with the IAEA. Developing national expertise has been central in ensuring the safety and security of our national nuclear programme. Nuclear energy continues to be an important part of our energy mix. Through our bilateral support program we have lent our national expertise to the Agency to develop the safeguards system and train international inspectors. This year marks the 30th anniversary of our bilateral cooperation.

Peaceful applications of nuclear energy and other nuclear technologies can bring enormous benefits to and raise the quality of life of millions of people. Full gains from peaceful applications require the highest standards of nuclear safety and security – and with full commitment to non-proliferation in line with NPT obligations.

Mr. Chairman,

The NPT is far too important a treaty to let fail. It is up to us, the State Parties, to make the Review Conference 2020 a success. We must seize this opportunity to reaffirm the significance and relevance of the NPT in the global security architecture. My Government sees many opportunities to do that through building mutual confidence.

Let us see the forest through the trees and act together to make the NPT stronger and truly universal.