



PERMANENT REPRESENTATION OF ESTONIA  
TO THE UN AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL  
ORGANISATIONS IN GENEVA

## General Statement of the Republic of Estonia

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the UN and other International Organisations in Geneva

### Second Preparatory Committee for the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT)

Geneva, 24 April 2018

Mr. Chairman,

At the outset, allow me to congratulate you on assuming the Chairmanship of the second Preparatory Committee for the 2020 NPT Review Conference and assure you of our firm support towards your efforts to achieve a successful, comprehensive and balanced outcome of the meeting.

Aligning ourselves fully with the statement of the European Union and with the statement on the progressive approach made by the representative of Australia, we would like to highlight some specific issues of **particular importance to Estonia**.

Mr. Chairman,

For Estonia, the **Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT)** is truly the cornerstone of global efforts to pursue nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and peaceful uses of nuclear energy. We are approaching the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of this unique multilateral instrument, which plays vitally important role in international security, paving the way towards creating conditions for a world free of nuclear weapons, where the security interests of all countries are addressed. During this review cycle we have an opportunity to focus on common interests to support and strengthen this fundamental non-proliferation regime.

We reaffirm our full support towards all three pillars of the Treaty and to the implementation of all commitments assumed under it. Estonia is committed to making efforts in order to advance a tangible progress under the 2010 Action Plan in accordance with the progressive approach to be pursued in a pragmatic and responsible way. To this end, Estonia supported both the 2016 UN General Assembly resolutions on the Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty (FMCT) and on nuclear disarmament **verification**.

My country is proud to participate in the work of the High Level FMCT Expert Preparatory Group, whose mandate is to make recommendations on substantial elements for a future Treaty, without prejudice to national positions in future negotiations. It is our hope that this process will bring us yet another step closer to the commencement of the official negotiations in order to further advance the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. We also welcome the establishment of the Group of Governmental Experts to consider the role of verification in advancing nuclear disarmament. We are confident, that the only way to achieve complete elimination of nuclear weapons is through an **effective, verifiable and irreversible** nuclear disarmament.

The **Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT)** is of crucial importance to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, and we acknowledge the progress made in strengthening the verification regime. We encourage the remaining countries to seek early ratification of the CTBT and consider its universalization and entry into force to be a top priority. We urge the States, particularly those whose adherence is required for the CTBT to enter into force, to sign and ratify the Treaty without further delay.

As the only multilateral transparency and confidence-building instrument against ballistic missile proliferation, we continue to support the universality and implementation of the **Hague Code of Conduct (HCoC)**.

The nuclear and ballistic missile programmes of the **DPRK** in violation and disregard of multiple UN Security Council Resolutions remains a threat to global peace and security. We are convinced, that the international community should stand united and maintain pressure on the DPRK until the DPRK authorities will suspend their unlawful programmes and return to compliance in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner. We welcome the latest encouraging news from the DPRK and hope, that the planned high-level meetings in April and in May-June could open the way to the peace process on the Korean peninsula and its denuclearisation. We urge the DPRK to sign and ratify the CTBT without delay.

We regret continued non-compliance by **Syria** with its Safeguards Agreement under the NPT. We strongly urge Syria to resolve all outstanding issues in full cooperation with the IAEA and to adhere to the Additional Protocol as soon as possible. With regard to the use of weapons of mass destruction, Estonia condemns in the strongest possible terms the use of chemical weapons in Syria. The use of chemical weapons constitutes a breach of international law and is a war crime and a crime against humanity. The international community must end impunity for such war crimes.

The continued full and effective implementation of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (**JCPOA**) between the E3/EU+3 and Iran is of utmost importance and a key element of the nuclear non-proliferation global architecture and crucial for the security of the region and beyond. This is a multilateral, successful

endeavour, concluded in full conformity with the principles of the NPT. My country remains committed to supporting the JCPOA and its full implementation, as verified by the IAEA.

Mr. Chairman,

The three pillars of the NPT stand for peace, security and trust. In this regard, we believe without a doubt, that the strategic decision by the Ukrainian Government 20 years ago, to join the NPT as a non-nuclear state in favour of security assurances, was the right one. We regret that the Russian Federation has clearly violated the **Budapest memorandum** among other international agreements and norms. We call upon the Russian Federation to refrain from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity and political independence of Ukraine under the Budapest Memorandum of 1994. We call on Russia to honour international legal norms, as well as its international commitments, to end its illegal annexation of Crimea and to take immediate and concrete steps to fully implement the Minsk agreements.

Full compliance with the **INF Treaty** is crucial. In this regard, a Russian missile system poses serious concerns. We urge Russia to address these concerns in a substantial and transparent way, and to remain actively engaged in an active dialogue with the United States. We also encourage the US and Russia to extend the **New START Treaty** and pursue discussions on CBMs and further reductions of their arsenals.

Mr. Chairman,

Estonia values the role of the **IAEA's system of safeguards** in strengthening the nuclear non-proliferation regime and believes that it serves the interest of the development of nuclear applications for peaceful purposes. Nuclear technology has an essential role in contributing to the socio-economic development, science, innovation and technology all around the world. In order to ensure the safe use of nuclear energy, it is important for all NPT States Parties to follow the highest safety and security standards. We look forward to the adoption of the Code of Conduct as well as its supplementary guidance to enhance safety and security of radioactive sources. We are a committed donor to the IAEA Nuclear Security Fund.

Mr. Chairman,

We believe that the 2018 Preparatory Committee should reflect on practical progress on many items of the 2010 NPT Action Plan, including on developing **nuclear disarmament verification** capabilities, increasing **transparency measures**, negotiating the **FMCT** and achieving the early entry into force of the **CTBT**. Focusing on common goals and engaging constructively in advancing realistic and achievable objectives, will help to strengthen the NPT and move towards our shared goal of a world without nuclear weapons.