



European Union

General Statement

By

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Preparatory Committee for the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the

Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT)

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Mr. Chairman,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union.

The Candidate Countries Turkey, North Macedonia*, Montenegro*, Albania*, as well as the Republic of Moldova, align themselves with this statement.

Allow me to congratulate you on the assumption of your duties and assure you of the EU's full support.

The EU's positions and actions during this review cycle of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) continue to be grounded in our conviction that a **multilateral approach** to security, including disarmament and non-proliferation, provides the best way to maintain international peace and security. Hence our commitment to uphold and strengthen the integrity of the NPT, promote its universalisation and enhance its implementation.

As we approach the 2020 Review Conference, we expect all States Parties to reaffirm their unequivocal support for the NPT as the cornerstone of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime, the essential foundation for the pursuit of nuclear disarmament in accordance with Article VI of the NPT and an important element in the further development of the applications of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. We call on all States that have not yet done so to join this Treaty as non-nuclear weapon States, and all States Parties to implement the Treaty obligations and the commitments undertaken during the previous Review Conferences.

The NPT remains a key multilateral instrument reinforcing international peace, security and stability. It is a historic success and its full implementation is needed more than ever. Against a background of increasing international strain on the non-proliferation and disarmament architecture, all parties must contribute to improving the overall strategic context for disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control and avoid further erosion of the rules-based international system.

Under these difficult circumstances, we invite all States Parties to engage constructively and in good faith in efforts to identify common ground that would enable us to achieve a successful outcome in 2020 to mark the 50th anniversary of the NPT. As a first step, this Preparatory

* *North Macedonia, Montenegro, and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.*

Committee session should adopt the agenda of the Review Conference and confirm the nomination of the President.

The Dutch and Polish chairmanships of the 2017 and 2018 Preparatory Committee sessions invested significantly in improving the effectiveness and continuity of the review process, making it more transparent and inclusive, and laying a solid foundation for this session. The EU will contribute to the process by providing dedicated funding to regional and thematic outreach activities by the leadership of the 2020 Review Conference. These activities, to be implemented by the UN Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA), will include three thematic seminars for States Parties on nuclear disarmament, nuclear non-proliferation and peaceful uses of nuclear energy; up to four regional meetings in the Asia-Pacific, Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, and the Middle East; and two side events during the upcoming UN General Assembly First Committee session and the 2020 NPT Review Conference.

The EU underlines that **gender equality** and the empowerment of women is an important horizontal priority for the EU, and the women, peace and security agenda continues to feature prominently in EU external action. As the UN Secretary-General reminds us in his Agenda for Disarmament, women must be fully involved, through active and equal participation, including in leadership in non-proliferation and disarmament efforts. The EU and its Member States also support further engagement of civil society and academia in addressing and discussing challenges related to the NPT.

The EU strongly supports all three pillars of the NPT and will continue to promote comprehensive, balanced and full implementation of the 2010 Review Conference Action Plan. Its concrete, equally important and mutually reinforcing steps on nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and peaceful uses of nuclear energy remain valid and provide a mutually acceptable basis to advance towards the ultimate objective of a world without nuclear weapons. We are resolved to seek a safer world for all in accordance with the goals of the Treaty in a way that promotes international stability, and based on the principle of undiminished security for all. We call for further progress on all aspects of disarmament to enhance global security.

We welcome the meeting of the UN Security Council on the NPT, held on 2 April, and we note with appreciation that all Security Council members underscored the enduring value and the mutually reinforcing character of all the commitments taken under the NPT.

The EU notes the severe consequences associated with nuclear weapons use and emphasises that all States share the responsibility to prevent such an occurrence from happening.

Mr. Chairman,

EU Member States remain committed to the pursuit of **nuclear disarmament**, in accordance with Article VI of the NPT. We stress the continued need for concrete progress towards the full implementation of Article VI, especially through an overall reduction in the global stockpile of nuclear weapons, with the ultimate goal of total elimination of those weapons.

We recall that the two nuclear weapon States with the largest arsenals carry a special responsibility in the area of arms control and nuclear disarmament. We encourage the United States and the Russian Federation to seek further reductions to their arsenals, including strategic and non-strategic, deployed and non-deployed nuclear weapons. The EU attaches the highest importance to the **New START Treaty** as a crucial contribution to international and European security. By increasing predictability and mutual confidence amongst the two largest nuclear weapon States, this Treaty limits strategic competition and increases strategic stability. The reduction of strategic nuclear arsenals under the Treaty, enhanced notably by its robust verification mechanism, contributes to the implementation of Article VI of the NPT. We encourage early and active dialogue on the future of the New START post-2021 and the potential new arms control arrangements between the US and Russia which is important to preserve strategic stability and lock in the achievements reached on nuclear disarmament beyond the existing Treaty.

Over the past 30 years, the **Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty** has made an enormous contribution to European security and broader international security and stability. Almost three thousand missiles with nuclear and conventional warheads were removed from European soil and verifiably destroyed, constituting a tangible contribution by the two nuclear weapon States to the implementation of their NPT related disarmament obligations. The EU has repeatedly noted that the Russian missile system raises serious concerns regarding Russian compliance with the INF Treaty and we urge Russia to address these concerns in a substantial and transparent manner. We emphasise the continued importance of full and verifiable compliance under the Treaty prior to the expiry of the six-month withdrawal process, which represents the last opportunity for dialogue and for taking the necessary measures to preserve the Treaty.

Given the heightened tensions, we must be careful not to enter the path of a new arms race that would offset the significant reductions achieved after the end of the Cold War. We encourage initiatives that can contribute to dialogue, confidence-building, transparency, verification activities, reporting and risk reduction, including strategic risk reduction measures such as transparency and dialogue on nuclear doctrines and postures, military-to-military dialogues, hotline agreements among nuclear weapon possessors, “accident measure” agreements, and notification exercises, as well as missile launch notification and other data exchange agreements. All States, in particular nuclear weapon States and other States possessing nuclear weapons should engage in such efforts. We welcome the continuation of the P5 conferences which can help to decrease tensions, increase collective security and should also contribute to the NPT review process.

We call on all States that have not yet done so, in particular the remaining Annex II States, to sign and ratify the **Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT)** without further delay. Pending the entry into force of the CTBT, the EU calls on all States to uphold their moratoria on nuclear weapon test explosions or any other nuclear explosion, and to refrain from any action that would defeat the object and purpose of the Treaty.

The EU reaffirms its commitment to verifiable, treaty-based nuclear disarmament and arms control and underlines the need to revitalise multilateral negotiating bodies, in particular the Conference on Disarmament (CD). We recall our position on the need for immediate negotiation in the CD of a **treaty banning the production of fissile material** for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices (**FMCT**) and support starting such negotiations in accordance with the document CD/1299 and the mandate contained therein. In the meantime, we call on all States possessing nuclear weapons that have not yet done so, to declare and uphold an immediate moratorium on the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices.

In light of these long-standing commitments, the EU has decided to become a supporter of four actions on the **UN Secretary-General’s Agenda for Disarmament**, including on promoting the entry into force of the CTBT and commencing immediate negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament on a Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty, in accordance with the above mentioned EU position.

The EU and its Member States welcome that consensus was found on the report of the Group of Governmental Experts on nuclear disarmament verification and support work also in other fora, such as the **International Partnership for Nuclear Disarmament Verification (IPNDV)**.

The EU calls on all nuclear weapon States to reaffirm the existing **security assurances**, noted by relevant UN Security Council resolutions. As recommended by the 2010 NPT Review Conference, the Conference on Disarmament should begin discussion with a view to elaborating recommendations on all aspects of the issue, without excluding an internationally legally-binding instrument.

Mr. Chairman,

All **proliferation** crises must be addressed in a resolute way.

Regarding the **Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK)**, the EU looks forward to a renewed momentum of the diplomatic process that has contributed to easing tensions over the past year. The EU urges the DPRK to seize this historic opportunity and engage seriously in the negotiations with a view to abandoning all its nuclear weapons programmes as well as its delivery systems in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner, and achieving lasting peace and security on the Korean Peninsula. It is of utmost importance that the DPRK maintains its declared suspension of nuclear tests and ballistic missile launches and complies with its obligations under multiple UN Security Council resolutions. Until this happens, we will continue to strictly enforce existing sanctions and call on all other States to do the same. The DPRK cannot have the status of a nuclear-weapon State in accordance with the NPT. We call on the DPRK to return to compliance with the NPT and the IAEA Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement, and sign and ratify the CTBT.

The EU reiterates its continued support for the **Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA)**, which is a key element of the global nuclear non-proliferation architecture and an achievement of multilateral diplomacy, unanimously endorsed by UN Security Council Resolution 2231. As confirmed by the IAEA in 14 consecutive reports since Implementation Day, the JCPOA is delivering on its intended goal, which is to ensure the peaceful nature of the Iranian nuclear programme, and contributing to regional and international security. As long as Iran continues to fully implement its nuclear related commitments, the EU will remain committed to the continued full and effective implementation of JCPOA. We fully support the professional, technical and

impartial work of the IAEA in verifying and monitoring Iran's nuclear-related commitments under the JCPOA. We believe that the continued implementation of the JCPOA significantly strengthens the NPT.

The EU recognises that the lifting of the sanctions constitutes an essential part of the JCPOA and deeply regrets the re-imposition of sanctions by the United States, following the latter's withdrawal from the JCPOA. The EU welcomes the broad international support for the JCPOA and underlines the efforts undertaken to preserve economic and wider benefits for Iran as foreseen by the JCPOA. These are being intensified through the initiative by France, Germany and the United Kingdom, to operationalise the Special Purpose Vehicle, which has now been registered as a private entity, with a view to providing a positive impact on trade and economic relations with Iran, but most importantly on the lives of Iranian people.

The EU reiterates the need for Iran to continue to implement all of its commitments, to continue to cooperate fully and in a timely manner with the IAEA and to ratify the Additional Protocol. Furthermore, we call on Iran to refrain from any ballistic missile related activities including launches that are inconsistent with UN Security Council Resolution 2231, to play a constructive role in the region, and to respect all relevant UN Security Council Resolutions, in particular those related to arms transfers to State and non-State actors in the region.

The EU deeply regrets that the **Syrian Arab Republic** still has to remedy its non-compliance with its Safeguards Agreement under the NPT, in addition to its other grave violations of international law. We once again urge Syria to resolve all outstanding issues with regard to its nuclear programme, in full cooperation and transparency with the IAEA, and to conclude and bring into force the Additional Protocol.

The EU reaffirms its full support for the establishment of a zone free of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and their delivery systems in **the Middle East**. We consider the 1995 Resolution valid until its goals and objectives are achieved and strongly support the outcome of the 2010 NPT Review Conference on the Middle East. We deeply regret that it has not yet been possible to convene a Conference on the establishment of such a zone, on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at by the States of the region. The EU is ready to support efforts aimed at creating a conducive atmosphere and an inclusive process leading to the establishment of a WMD free zone in the Middle East, including through a new multiannual EU-funded project that will examine how to

move forward on the issue. We call on all States in the region, which have not yet done so, to join the NPT, the CTBT, the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention as an important confidence- and security-building measure.

The **IAEA's system of safeguards** is a fundamental component of the nuclear non-proliferation regime and plays an indispensable role in the implementation of the NPT. Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement, together with the Additional Protocol, constitute the current IAEA verification standard under Article III of the NPT. The EU calls for the universalisation of the Comprehensive Safeguard Agreements and the Additional Protocol without delay.

We recall that **UN Security Council Resolution 1540** and its follow-on resolutions set out a legal obligation to all UN Member States to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems to non-State actors. NPT States Parties are obliged to apply effective export controls, in accordance with Article III of the NPT. The EU is a strong supporter of the multilateral export control regimes. We invite all States to adhere to their guidelines and subscribe to The Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation.

Mr. Chairman,

The EU recognises the right of NPT States Parties to use nuclear energy for **peaceful purposes**, in accordance with Article IV of the Treaty. It is in our common interest to ensure that the development and use of nuclear energy takes place in a responsible manner under the most rigorous safety, security and non-proliferation conditions.

The IAEA's role is central in fostering a strong **nuclear safety** culture and a **nuclear security** culture and facilitating international cooperation, inter alia, to prevent accidents and incidents, illicit trafficking and terrorist access to nuclear and radiological materials. We urge all States to join relevant international treaties, such as the Convention on Nuclear Safety and the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and Radioactive Waste, the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism, and the Amended Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material (A/CPPNM). We should aim for the highest standards of nuclear safety and nuclear security worldwide. The safety and security of radioactive sources also needs to be improved.

The EU and its Member States are strong supporters of the **IAEA's Technical Cooperation Programme**, and fully appreciate the Agency's role in promoting the responsible development of peaceful applications of nuclear technology in areas such as human health, food and agriculture, water resources, environment, preservation of cultural heritage, nuclear and radiation safety, and nuclear energy, and see this as one of the cornerstones of the IAEA's mandate. We also strongly support the activities of the Agency to develop radiation and nuclear related science and technologies and to promote their application in the service of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The EU provides significant financial support in the fields of nuclear safety, security and safeguards and peaceful uses of nuclear energy and will elaborate on its assistance activities in the Cluster III statement.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman