



Kingdom of the Netherlands

Statement of the Kingdom of the Netherlands

delivered by

**H.E. Marjolijn van Deelen, Ambassador for the Treaty on
the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons**

at

**Third Session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2020
Review Conference of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation
Treaty**

on

Cluster I: nuclear disarmament

New York, 2 May 2019

Mr. Chair,

The need for progress on nuclear disarmament is evident. Our achievements since the end of the Cold War are at risk of being undercut, and many standing commitments on nuclear disarmament remain unfulfilled. Halting the increasing pressure on the international disarmament and non-proliferation architecture and finding a pathway for progress is our common endeavour towards 2020 and beyond. The goal, let me be clear, is and remains a world free of nuclear weapons.

For the Netherlands, progress on disarmament and improving the international security environment go hand in hand. Work on both has to continue simultaneously, to ensure that they strengthen and accelerate each other.

Progress on nuclear disarmament is of fundamental importance for the NPT. To ensure the credibility of the Treaty and to retain a balanced implementation of the three pillars within the Treaty. The full implementation of Art. VI requires leadership from the Nuclear Weapons States and we appreciate the work that was announced yesterday by China on behalf of the P5. But Non-Nuclear Weapons States also have an important role to play. As an important step, we call on the US and Russia to show leadership in their disarmament efforts, including on New START, and by engaging in consultations on possible further reductions in nuclear weapon systems, both deployed and non-deployed, strategic and non-strategic.

It is vital that NPT States parties not only reaffirm the aim of working towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons under Article VI, but also that we engage in serious discussions on how to get there. The initiative 'creating the environment for nuclear disarmament' is a useful step in that direction. As mentioned in our general statement, the Netherlands organised a colloquium in Geneva to discuss this issue, and we remain fully ready to engage further with all delegations on this issue.

Of course, having this dialogue is no substitute for pursuing other disarmament steps in the context of Article VI.

Mr. Chair,

The Netherlands believes that there are opportunities to make progress towards nuclear disarmament, whilst also improving the international security environment. Particularly in times of rising tensions, technical work and the

fulfilment of previously agreed commitments can build the confidence and trust that are necessary to move nuclear disarmament forward. Let me elaborate.

The NPDI-working paper on transparency provides some concrete measures on how to move this issue forward. The Netherlands also contributed by providing its transparency report contained in NPT/CONF.2020/PC.III/2. We call on the nuclear-weapon states to report the information asked in the NPDI-format, both as a confidence building measure and to provide a context for future arms reduction talks. We commend the UK for having done so already and look forward to discussing the information in their report.

Achieving and maintaining a world without nuclear weapons will not be possible without robust verification. The Netherlands continues to play an active role in developing the required disarmament toolbox, including within the IPNDV, and we are honoured to host the next meeting in the Netherlands this year. In this context, we also welcome the report adopted by the GGE on , which clearly highlights the need for further work by all interested States.

Mr. Chair,

The negotiation of a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other explosive devices remains a steadfast priority for the Netherlands. In our view, a pragmatic approach focussing on the end goal of a non-discriminatory, multilateral and internationally and effectively verifiable treaty, rather than on process, will help us achieve the best results.

The entry into force of the CTBT remains another unfulfilled promise under the NPT and we call upon all Annex II States to sign and ratify without delay. The Netherlands continues to actively contribute to the CTBTO and the development of its verification regime, including through a recently launched BeNeLux cooperation.

Mr. Chair,

2020 is a time to reflect, but more importantly, it will also be the time to start planning the next decade of our Treaty. The commitments contained in the 2010 Action Plan and those commitments made during previous Review Conferences remain valid and should form the foundation of our work. We need to get concrete on the implementation of these commitments and take the steps we have agreed on in a pragmatic manner.

Check against delivery

Thank you Mr. Chair