



Cluster III: Specific issue

Statement by

Ireland

At the

2019 Preparatory Committee Meeting of the Parties to
the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
(NPT)

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Thank you, Chair.

1. Ireland considers improving the effectiveness of how we conduct our work during the Review Cycle of utmost importance. A key element of this is broadening our discussions beyond traditional security issues and embracing a fresh approach. Sometimes what we need is a change in perspective; in this instance, a gender perspective.
2. The 2020 review cycle of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons has given rise to an increased awareness on gender considerations in nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, and Ireland has been to the forefront of these efforts. In 2016, Ireland funded research by UNIDIR and ILPI on *Gender, Development and Nuclear Weapons*, to support NPT delegations to step outside traditional, one-dimensional approaches to addressing security concerns. At the 2017 and 2018 Preparatory Committees for the 2020 Review Conference, Ireland submitted working papers on the role of gender in the NPT. These papers explored the gendered dimensions of the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons, and the importance of the full, meaningful and equal participation of women and men in discussion and decision-making.
3. This year, Ireland is proud to have submitted three working papers to this Preparatory Committee meeting. Two of these were submitted jointly with our partners in the International Gender Champions Disarmament Impact Group in Geneva (Canada, Namibia and UNIDIR), along with Australia and Sweden. A third paper, submitted by Ireland, draws on the working papers submitted throughout this review cycle on the issue of gender and makes concrete recommendations for the Review Conference in 2020. Ireland is also delighted to have co-sponsored a side event on the meaningful participation of women in the NPT, and is looking forward to host an event that

addresses a range of gender perspectives, on Thursday at lunchtime in Conference Room B.

Chair,

4. There are a number of ways in which NPT States Parties can begin to take a gender perspective today: by incorporating a substantive gender analysis of issues under the NPT; by promoting diverse participation and the full, meaningful and equal participation of women and men in NPT discussions and decision making; and by promoting discourse that overcomes harmful gendered stereotypes about power and security. I'll briefly address each of these in turn.

5. Firstly, a gender analysis is an examination of the relationships between persons of different genders, including their access to and control of resources, and any constraints they may face relative to each other. A gender analysis can be integrated into policy development, implementation and review, to ensure that gender equality is promoted. Ireland jointly submitted to the 2019 NPT Preparatory Committee meeting, a working paper that provides a sample framework to assist States Parties in applying a gender analysis in their work under the NPT. Looking forward to 2020 and beyond, Ireland sees great merit in the consideration of gender perspectives in the substance of work across all three pillars of the NPT.

6. A number of States Parties have already utilised a gender analysis in identifying the higher risk posed by nuclear weapons to women and girls; namely, through the disproportionate impact of ionising radiation. Research has shown that while the detonation of one or more nuclear weapons would cause catastrophic humanitarian impacts for persons regardless of their sex, over the longer term, of those who are exposed to ionising radiation from a nuclear weapons detonation, women and girls face particular consequences. These include a greater incidence of some types of cancer and

impacts on reproductive and maternal health. Ireland considers that this serious consequence of nuclear weapons is worthy of States Parties' further recognition and for this reason, encourages the Chair to reflect the need for further discussion in his recommendations to the 2020 Review Conference.

7. Secondly, the issue of diverse participation and the full, meaningful and effective participation of women and men is also worthy of immediate action by States Parties. Studies show that diversity and differing perspectives make group prediction and problem-solving more effective. However, newly published research by UNIDIR showed that at last year's Preparatory Committee meeting, women accounted for 33% of delegation membership; still some way from equal representation. A notable trend in the NPT is that the proportion of women heads of delegation typically drops at Review Conferences. As we approach the 2020 Review Conference, States Parties to the NPT have an important opportunity to encourage women's active influence over nuclear policymaking. In another working paper submitted to this 2019 Preparatory Committee, Ireland along with our partners has outlined practical suggestions for promoting diverse and gender equal participation.
8. And lastly, another issue worthy of our immediate consideration is the language that States Parties employ in NPT discussions, that too often promotes dichotomies between State security and human security, and perpetuates gendered stereotypes of 'hard' and 'soft' issues, respectively. Again Chair, Ireland encourages States Parties to overcome traditional security policy discourse and promote an inclusive working environment that enables progress on all three pillars of the NPT.

Chair,

9. Ireland firmly believes that these efforts to promote gender perspectives in the NPT review cycle will improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the Treaty, in line with the

Sustainable Development Goals, UN Security Council Resolution 1325 and the UN Secretary-General's Agenda for Disarmament. Ireland looks forward to working with NPT States Parties so that progress on these issues can be achieved.